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NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

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March/April 2022

bulletin

TEACHERSCHANGELIVES.CA

EDUCATION WEEK 2022



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We just concluded another successful Education Week, under this year's theme of **A Place to Grow/Un espace pour s'épanouir**. I'm sure 86 years ago, when Education Week started, the creators never envisioned a celebration of learning taking place through virtual Google Meet school-wide events, provincial digital art contests and tweets! But once again your Association has been inspired by the creativity and dedication shown during Education Week. You will find some highlights from the week in this issue of *The Bulletin*.



A big thank you to everyone who participated, especially the Communications/Political Action/Membership Engagement Committee who decided the theme and structure of the week; our Special Interest Councils who provided many teaching resources for the week; the students across the province who took part in our logo and art contests; and our members who took time to plan special events and activities throughout the week.

Also in this issue of *The Bulletin* you will meet one of our dedicated Administrators, learn about one of our new Special Interest Councils and find information about a couple of upcoming awards to celebrate educators in the province.

Take care and stay safe.
 Jennifer

THE bulletin

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Submission Deadlines:

May/June: May 2

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NLTA Group Insurance
New Rate Changes for 2022-23



VISIT GROUPINSURANCE.NLTA.CA FOR DETAILS

UP FRONT WITH THE NLTA PRESIDENT



Morale is a state of mind. It is steadfastness and courage and hope. ~ George C. Marshall

Colleagues/Friends,

Since the last UP FRONT article, we have seen a return to full 'in-person' learning, a gradual lifting of pandemic restrictions, and changes to public health guidelines. The current perspectives of our membership are certainly diverse with thoughts being ultimately dependent upon the personal situations of each member and their families. The common thread being that we all want what is best for our students, schools, families, and working conditions.

Your Association has been closely tracking your experiences as it relates to scheduling workloads, combining of classes, increased coverage/duty, substitute teacher shortages, etc. With the true number of COVID-19 cases unknown, attendance rates have been fluctuating throughout the province with numbers changing from school to school and region to region (daily). It has certainly not been 'business as usual'. We have been advocating heavily with Government and the School Districts for clear guidelines and support for enforcement in our schools given that we are on the frontlines and understand the realities on the ground.

A consistent message that I have heard is that teachers are tired (of these challenges as well as the uncertainty) and are longing to get back to real educational experiences with their students. Those positive interactions are certainly on the rise thanks to your devotion and diligence in dealing with this terrible hand that we have been dealt.

In her article, *Seven Ways to Cope with Uncertainty*, Christine Carter outlines several strategies to help us "best cope when everything seems out of control" (Carter, 2020):

1. Don't Resist (Instead of resisting, we can practice acceptance)

2. Invest in Yourself (Self-care is not selfish)
3. Find Healthy Comfort Items (If we are to stay safe and flexible, we need to feel safe and secure)
4. Don't Believe Everything You Think (It's important not to believe thoughts that argue for the worst-case scenario)
5. Pay Attention (The opposite of uncertainty is presence)
6. Stop Looking for Someone to Rescue You (Trade the false power of victimhood for the real power of creating the life we want)
7. Find Meaning in the Chaos (Meaning and purpose are wellsprings of hope)

I do believe that an active and intentional approach to processing our current challenges can be quite beneficial.

The regular operations of your Association have continued in support of your individual and collective well-being through the work of your Provincial Executive and NLTA Staff Members.

Some current items of note:

- **Independent Review of the Teacher Allocation Model** – This review is under way; you will have received email correspondence/updates informing you of your opportunities for input. I cannot overstate the value and importance of this opportunity for our profession and the creation of a well-resourced public education system. Please make every effort to have your say.
- **CTF Constituency Days** – Our Executive Director and I met with Minister O'Regan recently as part of the Canadian Teachers' Federation's (CTF) Constituency Days. Some key items of advocacy during the meetings were a call for a National Education Advisory Table, recruitment and retention of teachers, mental health and well-being of teachers, as well as specific challenges facing our remote and rural schools. Invitations

have been sent to all MPs in the province.

- **Zoom Town Halls** – We have started our series of Zoom Town Halls with our first having been conducted in the Burin and Placentia Branches. Please stay tuned to one coming to your area.
- **Ad Hoc Committee on Teacher Mental Health & Well-being** – The Committee has been formed and some preliminary data collected from Branch Presidents; opportunities will follow for your input and engagement. There are distinct timelines assigned within the terms of reference of this committee with the objective of compiling tangible recommendations for immediate action.

In recent weeks, we have re-initiated school visits and I am valuing spending time dialoguing with you in your staff-rooms and classrooms. Continue to be vocal and active as we aim for better times; our collective efforts will serve us well. If you have individual concerns or thoughts, please do not hesitate to reach out to me directly.

Here's to a strong lead up to the Easter break, longer evenings, and hopefully better weather.

Yours in Solidarity,

(Carter, Christine (July 27, 2020), 'Seven Ways to Cope with Uncertainty', downloaded from the WWW on March 1, 2022, http://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/seven_ways_to_cope_with_uncertainty)

PROVINCIAL/NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL

NEWS

TORBAY

Holy Trinity High united for Ukraine

Under the direction of teacher Kevin Martin, who is a member of the Military Reservists community, Holy Trinity High in Torbay is coordinating a card campaign for the women and children who have been displaced from their country of Ukraine. The hope of these cards is simply to offer a comforting message in this terrible time in their lives. A simple card just might make a mother or child feel comforted, perhaps even put a smile on her face.

“A huge thank you to all the teachers at Holy Trinity High who participated with me in this, especially, Mrs. Barbara Billard Martin, Mr. Keith Connors and Mrs. Karen Channing who took a leadership role within their classes to help make these cards and to the Administration for supporting the staff with this initiative,” said Mr. Martin.



Sampling of cards sending messages of comfort to Ukraine.

NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR

YMCA's Enterprise Olympics

The YMCA's Enterprise Olympics Program is a province-wide initiative for students in NL that encompasses four separate programs designed to progressively introduce the concept of entrepreneurship to students as they move through elementary, junior high, and high school. The Enterprise Olympics Program guides students as they build businesses and tap into their entrepreneurial potential. The YMCA is inviting all schools in the province to participate in this program and provide your students with entrepreneurial learning opportunities.

Create A Logo Competition (Grades 4-6): Elementary students are asked to identify a need in their community, build a theoretical business to meet that need, and represent their idea with a brief description and logo. Submission deadline: April 29, 2022

Community Matters Competition (Grades 7-9): Junior high students are asked to identify a need in their community and plan business or social enterprise to fill that need, they're expected to research and develop their business concept, and use the medium of their choice to articulate the idea (video, PowerPoint, essay, prototype, etc.) Submission deadline: May 6, 2022

Enterprise Olympics Competition (Grades 10-12): For students in grades 10-12, enrolled in Entrepreneurship 3209 course at their school (noted: not all high schools offer this course). High school students are asked to identify a gap or problem in their community, region, or province and develop a business or social enterprise that will fill that gap or solve that problem. A fully comprehensive venture marketing plan (business plan) is required for submission and entry for a chance to attend the Conference (teachers nominate the top 5 business ventures from their class). The top 15 student-entrepreneurs province-wide are selected (out of the submitted teachers' top 5s)

to attend and compete at a provincial, year-end, entrepreneurship conference called The Enterprise Olympics. Selected students are required to present their Venture Marketing Plans to a panel of judges/business professionals. The conference includes extensive professional development and experiential learning opportunities. Submission Deadline: April 14, 2022

*There is a Creating Businesses Student Workbook available for each participating student to use as a guide throughout building their business that aligns with the course curriculum. Please let us know how many copies you will need for your class ASAP.

Y-LEARN Competition: For LEARN (Literacy Enrichment and Academic Readiness for newcomers) newcomer and refugee students (noted: not all schools offer this curriculum) in intermediate and secondary education levels. Students are asked to identify a community-wide issue or gap in newcomer services, and present a business-based through the medium of their choice that fills that gap or solves that issue. Deadline for submissions: TBD (competition has not launched yet as communication with LEARN Teachers within the NLESD is still ongoing)

Class, region, and provincial certificates and prizes are up for grabs for participating schools and students at 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place per grade!

To confirm your participation, ask questions, or request clarification on the program, please contact Jess Rice, Enterprise Olympics Coordinator, at jess.rice@nl.ymca.ca or 709-765-5303. The YMCA looks forward to seeing your students' innovative business ideas this year!

CANADA

Prime Minister's Awards nomination deadline extended

The nomination period for the 2022 competition for the Prime Minister's Awards for Teaching Excellence, Teaching Excellence in STEM and Excellence in Early Childhood Education is extended until April 21, 2022 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Canada's educators are showing unparalleled resilience and commitment to students in the face of COVID-19. If you know an educator who has gone above and beyond, nominate them for a Prime Minister's Award for Teaching Excellence, Teaching Excellence in STEM, or Excellence in Early Childhood Education.

Download your nomination package today. Submit your nomination electronically or by mail by **April 21, 2022.**

Prix du premier ministre : la date d'échéance des mises en candidature est repoussée

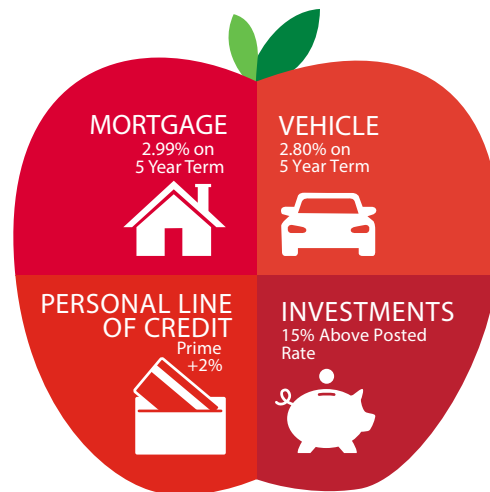
La période de mise en candidature pour l'édition 2022 des Prix du premier ministre pour l'excellence dans l'enseignement, l'excellence dans l'enseignement des STIM et l'excellence en éducation de la petite enfance sera prolongée jusqu'au 21 avril 2022 en raison de la pandémie de COVID-19.

Les enseignants du Canada font preuve d'une résilience et d'un dévouement inégalés dans le contexte de la COVID-19. Si vous connaissez un enseignant qui a surpassé les attentes, présentez sa candidature dans le cadre des Prix du premier ministre pour l'excellence dans l'enseignement, l'excellence dans l'enseignement des STIM et l'excellence en éducation de la petite enfance.

Téléchargez un dossier de mise en candidature dès aujourd'hui. Soumettez-le ensuite par courriel ou par la poste d'ici le **21 avril 2022.**

PAID ADVERTISEMENT

TEACHERS CARE PACKAGE



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



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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.

Johnson Insurance launches Educator of the Year Award

Johnson Insurance has launched the **Educator of the Year Award** to honour an active or recently retired educator who goes above and beyond to support their students by creating the best learning opportunities for them.

What is an Educator of the Year? They show:

- Exemplary educator practices
- Remarkable initiative and support for their students learning and development
- A distinguished personal service beyond the classroom and in their community

The winning educator will be presented with a \$10,000 grand prize. \$5,000 for the educator, and \$5,000 for their school.

Applications close April 26, 2022. For more information visit EducatorAwards.ca.



So much continues to change, and the pandemic has had a tremendous effect on everyone's daily lives.

But the one thing that has remained constant is that we know children and youth are coming to school hungry.



We know children are living in homes with no food, and sadly, this pandemic has brought to the forefront that families are struggling – and they continue to do so.

It is through the generous financial support of our partners and donors, and the dedication and commitment of *you*, our school administrators and teachers, that during times of uncertainty, together, we were able to help our school-age children and youth when they need it the most through our Breakfast at Home Emergency Fund.

As we continue to adjust and look forward to the remainder of this school year, one thing we are certain of is that together, we are here to ensure that our children and

youth have access to food, and that we will always find a way to serve.

**Every Breakfast. Every Child.
Every School Day.** *We will be there.*

Kids Eat Smart Breakfast Clubs will continue to be there for our children, to provide them with access to food at school at no cost to families.

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

**Every Breakfast. Every Child.
Every School Day.**

Together, with your support,
we ensure access to food, at no cost to families.



Correction Notice Jan/Feb 2022 Bulletin

In the news story titled "Schools send Christmas cards and messages to soldiers" in the January/February 2022 issue of *The Bulletin*, it was reported that Octagon Pond Elementary in Paradise was one of the schools who wrote some of the over 1100 Christmas cards to our brave soldiers. In actual fact, the school should have been reported as **Paradise Elementary**. The author apologizes for this error.

FLORA ALTHEA (BALL) BOYD, 1932-2021

Flora was the first of three children for Pastor Wilfred Ball (Laurenceton) and Evelyn Taylor (Porte de Grave). After Evelyn's death in 1936, Wilfred married Olive Hudson (St John's). They had ten children. Both parents were ministers and that meant many moves. The oldest of thirteen siblings, Flora took her 'big sister responsibilities' seriously! She learned to manage: children, house, school and relocating.

Flora lived in Laurenceton, Deer Lake, Windsor, St. John's, Twillingate, Corner Brook, and graduated high school in Springdale. After attending MUN summer school in 1949, she taught K-11 on Samson's Island, Notre Dame Bay, with students her age. She created lasting memories as teacher, preacher, mentor and friend, as personal management skills met classroom management needs. Flora even made silk flowers (a skill learned from her mother, Olive), for the winter burial of a baby who died that year. In 2018 Flora met Joe, the great-grandson of the baby's mother. Flora and Joe hugged and cried and prayed.

The 1950 MUN summer session led Flora to Windsor, where she taught and became entrenched in the community as a passionate medical, social justice, and church, volunteer and leader. Flora met Claude Boyd, (born in Tizzard's Harbour). After an exciting three-year courtship, they married on January 1, 1955 and had four children, all of whom spent some time teaching. Flora was a beautiful soloist and choir director. At five she sang to a group of soldiers on the train from Windsor Station to St. John's. Her singing always delivered joy and comfort. Recently she sang at the christening of her great-granddaughter, memorial services for friends and relatives, and her church's 90th anniversary celebration. Her volunteer work continued until her sudden death on May 8, 2021.

Flora studied at MUN and McGill University. She enjoyed four years volunteer-teaching at the Grand Falls Vera Perlin School while her children were young. In the Pentecostal school system, Flora influenced the lives of students at all grade levels, until her retirement in 1988 as P/E Exceptional Children Specialist.

After the 2012 heart attack death of her youngest son, Byron, and Claude's 2013 heart attack and bypass surgery, they moved to their "St John's winter home" in November 2013, but spent each May to November in their "Laurenceton cottage home".

Flora will be remembered for her compassion and unconditional love and acceptance for all, especially each student that she taught.

(Submitted by Claudette (Boyd) Coombs)

HUBERT LANGDON

On February 19, 2022, St. Jacques-Coomb's Cove lost a dedicated servant and a champion. Past mayor Hubert Langdon passed away at the Connaigre Peninsula Health Centre.

Hubert not only served on Council but also served the people of our town and the Coast of Bays in many ways. Hubert served as Principal of Fitzgerald High School and Fitzgerald Academy for most of his years as an educator. He served as an example and a mentor to many teachers who served with him. His number one priority was providing the students that were entrusted to him with the life skills necessary to live in a rapidly developing world.

Hubert was also a man of great personal faith and served many years as a licensed lay minister in the Anglican Parish of Belleoram, leading worship at St. Thomas at English Hr. West and other churches in the surrounding communities. Hubert also served on the Board of the Coast of Bays CBDC. The board provided support to local entrepreneurs in starting and developing businesses in the region.

Hubert's greatest service and dedication was to the delivery of health care in Fortune Bay North Shore, the Coast of Bays and all areas served by Central Health. He served on the Citizen's Health Group, the Ambulance Committee, the Connaigre Health Centre Community Advisory Committee, and as Board Member and Trustee for Central Health. In the past several years he served on the Coast of Bays Community Advocacy Group. That group was tasked by Central Health to develop a comprehensive model for the delivery of primary health care in the Coast of Bays. The work of that committee was ongoing because of delays caused by the COVID Pandemic.

In addition to serving on various health committees and boards, he was a passionate advocate for health care. He wrote letters to local health care leaders, the Minister of Health, and the Premier advising them of issues facing our local health care system and the Community Health Clinic at Mose Ambrose. He was persistent in fighting to maintain our level of health care and offering suggestions on improvements to best meet the health care needs of the people of our communities.

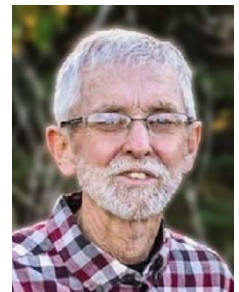
Hubert's leadership, service and dedication on behalf of our citizens will be greatly missed.

Well done, thou good and faithful servant!

(Submitted by Mayor Bruce Vallis)



Flora (Ball) Boyd



Hubert Langdon



Filling Vacant Teaching Positions

An Overview of the Collective Agreement Process

by MIRIAM SHEPPARD

As summer fast approaches, questions often arise surrounding the obligations of school boards when it comes to filling advertised vacant positions. Do transfer requests have priority over other applications? Does preference in hiring have to be given to replacement and substitute teachers over applicants who have no prior experience with the school board? How does the reassignment of teachers who have been declared redundant factor into the process? If a teacher is in a part time position, and a “better” position becomes available during the summer, or after school starts, what are their rights? What does the new “seniority hiring” clause mean to permanent and replacement teachers? When filling Teaching and Learning Assistant (TLA) or Administrative (Program Specialist, Principal, Vice Principal, and Department Head) positions, do employers have to consider seniority? These types of issues are addressed in Articles 6 and 9 of the Provincial Collective Agreement and Articles 42 and 47 of the Labrador West Agreement.

Article 9 (Article 47 of the Labrador West Collective Agreement) sets out the manner in which school boards must deal with redundant teaching positions. If, based on seniority and an appropriate assessment of capability, a permanent teacher cannot be kept at their school, the teacher “shall have priority, based upon seniority, subject to capability to perform the job function required, to vacant teaching positions and teaching positions held by junior teachers, in the following order of priority: (i) within the community; (ii) within the nearest community, within the school district, where such a position exists.” The process of determining redundancies and offering reassignments for the coming school year takes place by May 7 of the current school year. Teachers who decline their reassignment are deemed to be laid off and will not be considered for recall until after the last day of June. However, those teachers who refuse

reassignment can apply for positions between May 7 and the end of the school year and compete for positions along with other permanent teachers seeking transfer under Clause 6.11(a) (Article 44 for Lab West), as further explained below.

Vacant teaching positions that are advertised between early May and the end of June, and from July 1 onward – after any reassignments and recalls of laid off teachers have been addressed – are filled in accordance with Article 6 of the Provincial Collective Agreement (Article 42 in Labrador West is substantially similar), in particular:

6.03: The basic criteria for the selection of teachers shall be competence, suitability and qualifications as assessed by the School Board.

6.11: In filling vacant positions in accordance with Clause 6.03, the Board shall:

- (a) make a reasonable effort to accommodate requests from teachers already employed with the Board in a continuing contract. When filling permanent positions only, if more than one such teacher makes a request for the same permanent teaching position, all of whom are assessed as competent, suitable and qualified, preference shall be given to the teacher with the greatest seniority as defined in Clause 9.01 (a).*
- (b) subject to Clause 6.11(a), give consideration to applications from teachers who have served in replacement and/or substitute teaching positions with the Board before applications from teachers with no previous experience with the Board. (Emphasis added.)*

While Administrators and TLAs fall within the definition of “teacher” for most collective agreement purposes, the collective agreements do not require that seniority be considered when considering transfer requests for either group of positions. Seniority transfer does not apply to recognized positions of admin-

istrative responsibility or to TLA positions. It is also important to note that for Clause 6.11(a)'s seniority provisions to have application, a teacher must be:

a. A permanent teacher

b. Applying for a permanent position and

c. Competent, suitable and qualified for the position.

The seniority provisions are minimum standard language, and the provisions are not a comparison or a question of degree. When permanent teachers – who are competent, suitable and qualified for the job in question – apply to move to a different permanent position with the same school board, preference in hiring will be given to the most senior applicant. The reasonableness standard established in the first portion of Clause 6.11(a) (and 42.05(a) of the Labrador West Agreement) does mean, however, that teachers who apply to move positions after the start of the school year may well be refused, due to the disruption inherent in such changes.

Seniority transfer provisions have no application in the filling of replacement and term positions. Similarly, seniority transfer positions do not apply when substitute or replacement teachers apply for permanent positions.

School boards have the right to establish, in good faith, the required currently modern standards in qualifications, competence and suitability for teaching positions and to evaluate and assess applicants on the basis of those standards. After making a reasonable effort to accommodate requests, such as transfers, from teachers employed in continuing contracts, school boards are then obligated to consider their term contract and substitute teachers before moving on to consider applications from teachers who are new to the board. This language in the Collective Agreement creates three distinct pools of applicants for vacant positions: 1) teachers who have continuing (permanent) contracts; 2) teachers who have worked in term contracts or as substitutes; and, 3) teachers who have never been employed by the board before. The same process is followed for TLA positions. Hiring for administrators is completed pursuant to Clause 6.04 of the Provincial Collective Agreement or Clause 42.04 of the Labrador West agreement (depending on where the position is located), which provide, respectively:

6.04 Where competence, suitability and qualifications are comparable, preference in appointment of teachers to positions of administrative responsibility within the bargaining unit shall be given to those who have entered into continuing contract with any School Board in the Province.

42.04 In selection of teachers for positions of additional responsibility, the Boards will give preference to applicants already in the employment of the Board who are qualified, experienced and suitable.

With respect to the filling of term and replacement positions, teachers should be aware of Clause 6.11(c), (Clause 6.12(c) for TLAs), of the Provincial Collective Agreement, which states: Notwithstanding Clause 6.11(a), in filling term and replacement teaching positions that arise after July 15, the employer shall not be required to give consideration to teachers already employed in a continuing contract. This means that, in filling term or replacement vacancies that come into existence after July 15, the school districts are not obligated to consider permanent teachers who apply. Permanent teachers can still apply for such positions but should understand that the employer may choose not to consider permanent teachers for term/replacement vacancies that arise after July 15. The same holds true for TLA positions, as per Clause 6.12(c). While the Association advocates for the “betterment” of teachers (usually understood to mean the ability to move to a higher percentage position) during the hiring season, “betterment” is not a concept that is explicitly recognized in the collective agreement. There is no exception under Clause 6.11(c), or its Labrador West equivalent, for permanent teachers who are applying for higher percentage positions than the contracts they hold.

Finally, it is important for all teachers who are applying for positions to ensure that their individual teacher profile is up to date and contains all information relevant to their qualifications and previous employment, as well as up to date references.

Teachers who have questions about the hiring process or feel that their rights under the Collective Agreement have been violated in this or any other respect, should contact an NLTA Administrative Officer in Programs and Services for assistance and advice.

.....
Miriam Sheppard is an Administrative Officer in Programs and Services at the NLTA, msheppard@nlta.nl.ca.



The Importance of Reviewing Your Group Insurance Benefit Statement

by DARRIN PIKE

Each year, all active, retired and survivors of deceased teachers are mailed a copy of their Group Insurance Benefit Statement directly from Johnson Inc., the NLTA's Group Insurance Plan Administrator. Many of us will quickly open the notice we receive in the mail and then move on to other things. Our best advice is to take a few minutes to read what is contained on that sheet to save you or your family possible problems in the future. These benefit statements contain important information regarding your mailing address; the current insurance policies that you have been automatically enrolled in or have personally applied for; the amount of coverage you have within each of the various policies; the type of coverage you have (single or family); and the name of the primary beneficiary you have named to your life insurance policies.

It is critical that each year when you receive your benefit statement, you take the time to review the information and ensure that you have the necessary coverage to protect you and your family in case something was to happen. It is also important to understand that if you wish to change your coverage or your beneficiaries, you must notify Johnson Inc. officials of such changes. Failure to enquire or to notify Johnson Inc. of any benefits or changes can have devastating consequences to you and/or members of your family.

Advice Regarding Life Insurance Policies

The NLTA Group Insurance Plan contains five life insurance policies: A1-Basic Life; A2-Voluntary Life (Member); A3-Accidental Death and Dismemberment; A4-Voluntary Accidental Death and Dismemberment; and A5-Spousal Life. For each of these policies, it is important that the insured member name both a "Primary" beneficiary (name usually appears on Benefit Statement), as well as a "Contingent" beneficiary(ies) (names do not always

appear on Benefit Statement, but are filed at Johnson Inc., if previously named). The main reason for naming both a primary and contingent beneficiary(ies) is in case of the death of both the member and the primary beneficiary at the same time. By not naming a contingent beneficiary, the value of the life insurance policies would be payable to the estate of the member and would be subject to the appropriate probate and estate taxes before any beneficiary would be entitled to receive the benefit. If, however, the member had named a contingent beneficiary(ies), then the value of the life insurance policies will be made payable to the beneficiary(ies), tax free, without passing through the member's estate.

Since all insurance policies that are applicable to each member are available online, we strongly recommend that you access the My Insurance – Johnson's new customer website by going to groupinsurance.nlta.ca or www.johnson.ca

To obtain information about the coverage available to you or to make any changes to your current coverage, contact Johnson Inc. at 737-1528 or 1-800-563-1528.

If you have any questions regarding the NLTA's Group Insurance program, please contact an Administrative Officer of the NLTA at 726-3223 or 1-800-563-3599.

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

JOHNSON 

The Conference on New Teaching and Classroom Techniques

CONTACT 2022

**Take 2: Teachers reflecting
for learning and growth**

**August 2 (evening) - August 5 (noon)
St. Francis Xavier University, Antigonish, NS**

Plenary Sessions, Keynotes and Your Choice of Concurrent Sessions

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

Application Guidelines

1. FORWARD YOUR APPLICATION **DIRECTLY TO THE NLTA**

by Friday, May 6, 2022.

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

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



CONTACT 2022 APPLICATION FORM

Name:

School/Address:

.....

..... Postal Code:

Tel: (s)..... (h).....

Mobile:

Email:

Home Address:

..... Postal Code:

Have you attended CONTACT before? No Yes; Year

Branch:

If you are not selected in the initial process, do you wish to be waitlisted and contacted in the event of a cancellation? Yes No
(Waitlisted applicants will be considered up to June 30, 2022)

Date:..... Received:.....

Deadline Date: May 6, 2022
Late applications will not be considered.

Return to:

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

or

submit online at

www.nlta.nl.ca/contact2022guidelinesapplication/

EDUCATION WEEK 2022

A PLACE TO
GROW

The NLTA held Education Week 2022 from March 14-18. This year's theme was **A Place to Grow/Un espace pour s'épanouir**. We thank all our members and school communities who participated this year. There was a lot of great work happening in schools across the province to help celebrate Education Week.

SOCIAL MEDIA CONTEST WINNERS

SCHOOL WINNERS

HENRY GORDON ACADEMY,
CARTWRIGHT

CENTREVILLE ACADEMY
CENTREVILLE

CLASSROOM/TEACHER WINNERS

MARCUS ADAMS
ST. JOSEPH'S ELEMENTARY

DANIELLE BISHOP
ST. MATTHEW'S SCHOOL

TERRI LYNN MORRISSEY
HOLY REDEEMER ELEMENTARY

DONNA BRUSHETT
MARYSTOWN CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL

KELLY SHEA
GANDER ACADEMY

SUSAN TOBIN-BURSEY
MARYSTOWN CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL

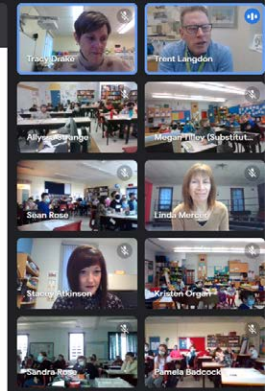
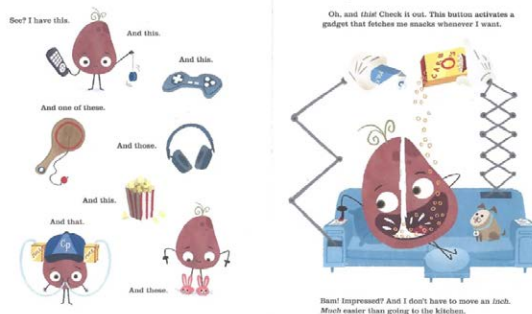
KATHLEEN CULL
WHITE HILLS ACADEMY

BRIANNA MULLINS
PEACOCK PRIMARY

LORI BOONE
ST. PETER'S ELEMENTARY

JENNIFER HATCHER
ST. JOSEPH'S ELEMENTARY

ALL HALLOWS





ALL HALLOWS



HENRY GORDON ACADEMY

HENRY GORDON ACADEMY



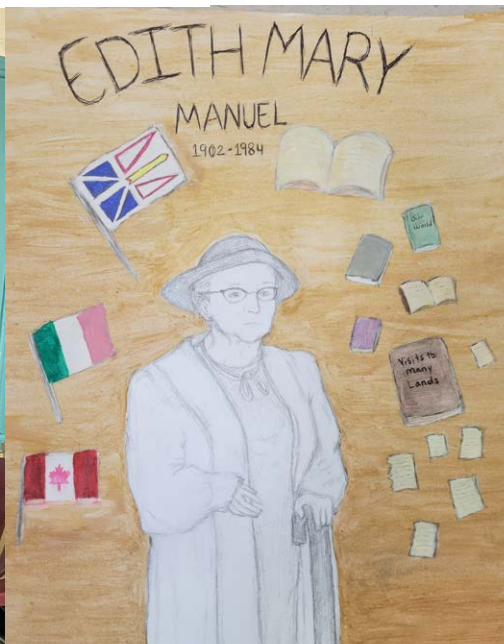
EAST POINT ELEMENTARY



GOULDS ELEMENTARY

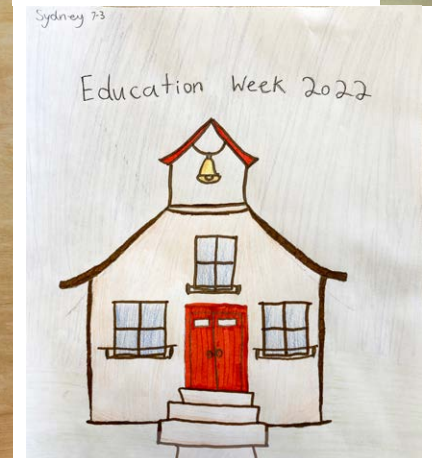


PAIGE SPRY LOGO CONTEST WINNER



EMMA HODDER XAVIER JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Faculty of Education Art Contest Entry



SYDNEY WISEMAN XAVIER JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Faculty of Education Art Contest Entry



An Interview With...

School Administrator Christina (Cox) Hearn

Christina Hearn is the Assistant Principal of Amalgamated Academy in Bay Roberts. Christina has been teaching for 22 years and has been an active member of the School Administrators Special Interest Council (SAC) for the last eight years. She has participated in planning committees for provincial and national conferences of school administrators. Christina holds a B.A., B.Ed. (Secondary), Master's Degree in Education (IT) and a Diploma of Adult Education, all achieved at Memorial University.

As an introduction to the membership in her role as an Administrator, Christina answers a series of questions.

Q. What is your main priority as a School Administrator?

A. My main priority as a school administrator is to assist students, staff and families to the best of my ability on each given day knowing that no two days bring with it the same questions, concerns and needs.

Q. Describe the importance you place on the role of school administrators as “lead teachers”, providing instructional leadership in a collegial model of school leadership.

A. I find this a very interesting question because since moving into administration eight years ago the role of “lead teachers” has changed substantially. It is always an honour and pleasure to bring new ideas to staff for them to consider implementing within their classroom environments; however, this has to be done with a balanced approach. Too often the phrase, “oh wait a while and this too shall pass” is often the feeling of many staff members. This is not the feeling new leading opportunities should create. As a

lead teacher I feel it is important for my staff to know the value and importance of specific initiatives and that they are supported if they so choose to integrate within their learning environments. Let's face it, new initiatives bring with them a workload aspect for staff and after the past number of years during the pandemic, my personal thoughts are less is more moving forward.

Q. You are quite active in the NLTA Special Interest Council for School Administrators. What do you see as the biggest challenge/opportunity for NLTA SICs in this province?

A. Time is the biggest challenge and opportunity for any SIC and as a school administrator I cannot give a specific time and day that I can say I know I will not be interrupted during a meeting time due to some issue. I am sure the same can be said for anyone working in the education field. Consequently, the alternate option then is to gather during personal family time which is also very precious, so again, balance is the best approach.

However, we cannot be deterred from being a part of any SIC for any reason because it is during these SIC meetings that the real grits of the everyday running of schools exist in conversation with colleagues along with highlighting concerns and brainstorming on how to address/support these issues. No one is left to feel alone and this is the best support system anyone in the education system can be a part of.

Q. What do you consider your greatest achievement?

A. My greatest achievement is my family. I have three adult children, four beautiful grandchildren and I have recently remarried in 2019, hence the name change from my maiden name Cox. The reason

I say my family first before speaking about work is that I want to remind all educators that your family comes first; sometimes we stray from this. I am proud of the work I do on a daily basis but unless careful, this work, despite best intentions, can consume personal time. Technology and some people's expectations has allowed work to continue outside of our buildings and sometimes this takes us from our families. Again, there is a balance and once you find this you have success in all your achievements.

Achievements specific to work as my administrator role occur daily; however, I do not see them as my greatest achievements but rather that of my staff members who work very hard to implement with me in the supporting role, and thus this makes this list too many to list here because all my staffs that I have worked with since becoming an administrator have been awesome. These include St. Paul's Intermediate (St. John's), Frank Roberts Junior High (Foxtrap) and now my current staff at Amalgamated Academy (Bay Roberts).

Q. What motivates you to work hard?

A. I have been very fortunate to be influenced by a number of strong women who carry the name of Christina during my career. My first role model in education and life was my mom, Christina Cox (Senior), who was an educator for her whole career and was a lifelong member of the NLTA up until her death on January 27, 2021. My mom did her teacher training for six weeks at the local community college in Burin before becoming a teacher. She often spoke about how some of her students were the same age as her when she began teaching. She worked her entire career in her home community of Lawn, NL and her attitude was always positive and very hopeful throughout her whole career working as an elementary teacher for all her learners, despite ability. My mom retired the year that I graduated from Memorial with my teaching degree. When I asked her "why retire?" because she enjoyed her work so much, she said it was time to make room for new teachers because education has changed a lot from when she began. Ironically, my best friend and classmate growing up, Jeananne, went into mom's position to start her career and is now the principal at the school in Lawn.

Q. Which historical figure do you most identify with?

A. There are so many great historical women and men who have influenced me over the years; however, the one that stands out the most to me is Ms. Nellie McClung from Manitoba. In 1999, I had the opportunity to bring a group of Pathfinders from St. John's to Winnipeg for Canadian Mosaic Summer Camp and during their visit we all learned much about the impact Ms. McClung, along with the Famous Five, had on the opportunities for females in society. It is trail blazers like Nellie who have afforded my mom, myself as an administrator, and all women, an opportunity to have an impact on society. As educators we need to continue to advocate for opportunities and equity for everyone so that society can continue to grow and prosper.

Q. What do you like to do in your free time?

A. In my free time one of my passions is that I am an amateur photographer, and when I can get the chance to grab my camera and go take some pictures, I do. I would be remiss if I did not note many of my photoshoots are of my grandchildren, but this is just wonderful. In addition, I am very fortunate to be part of the Provincial Skills Canada Technical Team for Photography. I also enjoy being a part of my new community since moving to Harbour Grace in 2018. I am part of the town's community garden, which provides an opportunity to grow and cultivate some food items, but the best part is the new people I have met in the garden. I am part of the town's Civic Committee which helps promote various opportunities for community involvement, and I am a volunteer for the Conception Bay Museum which is a treasure trove of historical information relating to the Conception Bay North Region and prides themselves on the preservation and promotion of this region's history. Finally, I would like to conclude by saying my husband and I really enjoy taking our quad, enjoying the hard work and dedication of the CBN T-Rail Association who have done a tremendous job of revitalizing the historical trail bed for recreational and healthy living purposes – life is short get out and enjoy what you can!

If you would like to suggest someone in your school community that you think the entire membership should get to know a little more, send your suggestion to jtulk@nlta.nl.ca.



Planting the Seeds of Self-Reg

by KENDA RIGGS

“The well-being of children is inseparable from the well-being of all the critical adults in their lives.”
~ Dr. Stuart Shanker

As teachers and educators, you are one of the most critical adults in a child’s life. You are the heart of your school, which is why your well-being is of utmost importance. You experience high levels of stress every day in the teaching profession, as you continue to navigate the many uncertainties facing you. Coping with high stress on a daily basis can be energy depleting and exhausting.

Self-Reg is based out of the MEHRIT Centre and founded by Dr. Stuart Shanker. It is not a ‘program’ to be learned, rather a lifelong ‘process’ that develops a whole new way of thinking, feeling, and being. You may wonder how adding additional workload of Self-Reg courses could actually help reduce stress levels? The more you learn about Self-Reg, the more grounded you become. Self-Reg brings you to a place to go deeper and becomes a part of who you are, As I finish up my Self-Reg certification, I would like to share my Self-Reg learning with you by ‘planting seeds of Self-Reg’.

What is Self-Reg?

Self-Reg is a method for understanding stress and managing energy and tension levels. Stress is anything that requires you to burn energy to maintain some internal balance. A stressor is something that impacts you, and there are two types of stress – overt and hidden. You may be very aware of overt stressors in your life as these stressors are often apparent, like time restraints of getting report cards completed, the stress of a busy morning routine prior to work, or financial stress. However, there are many hidden stressors around that you may not even be aware, such as bright lights or noises, hunger from not eating lunch, overconcentration on a particular situation, or overexposure to technology. A stressor for one person may be different than another person, depending on the individual, hence the importance of ‘Self’ in Self-Reg.

Self-Reg is a process of noticing stressors in your life and then finding a way to manage that stress to experience calm. A main assumption of the Self-Reg approach is recognizing that we all experience stressors, which is anything that causes our body to burn energy to return to that calm, alert state, but we need to find ways to manage that stress. Not all stress is

bad for you, as positive stress creates energy, but it is negative stress that depletes energy. As stress uses high levels of energy, through Self-Reg you learn to become a stress detective to investigate what may be the root cause of your energy depletion. Self-Reg helps you to explore what overt and hidden stressors may be causing your stress behavior, which can often be mistaken as misbehavior (agitation toward others, late for deadlines, disorganization, low motivation). I invite you to think about what are some overt and hidden stressors around you, professionally and personally.

Allostatic Stress Overload

When many of you contact the Employee Assistance Program, you often describe that your energy feels depleted, along with feeling that you have no work-life balance, with some feeling close to burnout. Most of you have never heard of the term ‘allostatic stress overload’, which essentially means excessive stress loads in different areas of your life. It means that you had to expend too much energy trying to maintain internal balance (homeostasis), and you become depleted. The effects of stress overload can accumulate over time and can lead to poor health situations.

Self-Reg breaks down stress into five domains of experience: Biological, Emotional, Cognitive, Social and Prosocial. Each of these domains has its own unique stressors, but they are interlocked in a way that stress in one domain can exacerbate stress-reactivity in another. When your energy resources are used to cope with stress, you may experience physical or **biological stressors** such as reduced sleep, headaches, poor diet; **emotional stressors** such as anxiety, sadness, or agitation; cognitive stressors such as brain fog, or forgetful memory; **social stressors** such as spending less time with family or friends, feeling alone; or **prosocial stressors** such as tuning in frequently to national or international news, overuse of social media, or compassion fatigue.

When there is stress in one or more of the five domains of experience, there is no longer balance. When you carry chronic negative stress over time, a stress cycle of energy depletion can develop, and you become stuck in a negative stress cycle. When you are overstressed to the point that demands on your

system are so great due to cumulative negative stress, recovery mechanisms become compromised.

Understanding the Brain When Stressed

In Self-Reg, you learn about the Triune Brain model by Dr. Paul McLean. The reptilian (brown) brain, or brain stem, is responsible for your survival functions such as regulating digestion and heart rate, but tries to keep you safe when under severe threat. The limbic (red) brain known as the emotional brain, is also designed to keep you safe. This part of the brain triggers a fight or flight reaction as it scans for threats through neuroception, whereby neural circuits distinguish whether situations are safe, dangerous, or life-threatening. When excessive chronic stress occurs, neuroception can become distorted, and your limbic system can perceive threats that do not exist, resulting in negative bias. The limbic system can become stuck in this negative stress cycle, whereby your brain senses threats when there are none. You enter a constant state of low energy/high tension in your body. Finally, the neocortex (blue) part of the brain is for conscious thinking, and is responsible for rational thoughts, planning, working memory, speech, and problem solving.

When you are calm, your thinking brain is alert and working strong; however, it is difficult to access the neocortex when experiencing excessive levels of stress. When you are overly stressed, it is difficult for you to think clearly as your limbic brain is in constant action. The Self-Reg approach highlights that having blue brain-red brain balance is of utmost importance, because energy expenditure and recovery are counter-balanced, and this leads to a healthy 'self'.

Be Your Own Gardener

When you experience increasing levels of stress, the cumulative effects of depleted energy due to being stuck in a negative stress cycle can have serious health impacts. Dr. Shanker discusses a five-step process to managing stress: Reframe the Behaviour; Recognize the Stressors; Reduce the Stress; Reflect; and Respond. The 'Respond' step of Self-Reg requires soothing the limbic system with a conscious effort on reducing stress. The focus is on restoring your own energy by weeding your own garden. As gardens need care and maintenance, and weeds need to be pulled for good healthy growth, that is the same for you. You need to nurture yourself with self-love, compassion, and care. You need to devote time to yourself, examine what stressors (weeds) are in your own garden adding to your negative stress cycle. The goal is to break the negative stress cycle and restore you to a state of experiencing calm, to establish homeostasis through awareness.

Through the process of restoring your energy through Self-Reg, this balance should begin to bring your energy expenditure and energy recovery in sync. The restoration time frame will be different for people because this is your individual journey. Self-Reg is about restoring self, and you can change your trajectory through this Self-Reg process. You must view yourself with compassion known in Self-Reg as "soft eyes".

As this is your Self-Reg journey, you must find restorative strategies that work for you. Some restorative practices to consider:

- Relaxing experiences such as mediation, spiritual practice, yoga nidra, relaxation massage, listening to calming music
- Embracing strategies that activate the senses of nature such as visiting the park or beach, gardening, bird watching, trail walking, berry picking, fishing, or try aromatherapy
- *Listening to ice cracking under your feet, rain on the windows, or watching the sunset*
- Resume or trying activities such as dancing, playing music, knitting, hiking, drawing, swimming, kayaking, pottery, painting, reading, baking, geocaching, flying a kite, biking...be creative!
- Rest, sleep, prepare healthy planned well-balanced meals/snacks, replenish
- Create time to spend and be with your family and friends
- Cry, allow yourself to release deep emotions, laugh from your soul, and allow yourself to feel genuine happiness
- Limit technology, media exposure, time spent watching television
- Be kind, give to others, experience the helpers high, release negative energy
- Explore Self-Reg journaling
- Calm. The essence of homeostasis is feeling calm. Take time to breathe deeply, relax, and be. Allow yourself to be grounded in this moment.

It is never too late to learn and practice Self-Reg. Every person can embark on this lifelong Self-Reg journey. If you would like to explore more about Self-Reg and the work of Dr. Shanker and his team, please visit www.selfreg.ca.

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Kenda Riggs is a Coordinator with the Employee Assistance Program for Teachers. For confidential assistance contact Kenda (ext. 265) or Kathy Taylor-Rogers (ext. 242).

References

Shanker, S. & Barker, T. (2017). *Self-Reg: How to Help Your Child (And You) Break the Stress Cycle and Successfully Engage with Life*. Toronto, Ontario: Penguin Canada

“Self-regulation is how well we manage stress, how much energy we expend, and how well we recover.”

~ Dr. Stuart Shanker

Learning That Makes a Difference

New resources help bring lifesaving power of organ donation to your classroom

by JENNY RYAN & STEPHANIE LAROCQUE

If you ask anyone working in the organ and tissue donation and transplantation community what they feel is the biggest obstacle in improving donation rates, they might say it's the lack of education and awareness on the topic. Educators and healthcare professionals across the country are working together to resolve this issue.

Bernie Boulet, a grade two teacher from Lethbridge, Alberta and an advocate for organ donation hopes that age-appropriate teaching resources will spark important conversations both at school and at home.

Bernie's son, Logan Boulet, was a defenseman with the Humboldt Broncos, a junior hockey team which was travelling to a game in Saskatchewan when their bus was struck by a transport truck in April 2018.

Logan had registered to become an organ donor and made his wishes known in the weeks before his death. Knowing his wishes helped his family know what to do when organ donation became a possibility for Logan. He was able to donate his heart, lungs, liver, both kidneys and both corneas. News of that generous final act produced what became known as the "Logan Boulet Effect," as more than 100,000 people across Canada were inspired to register to become organ donors in the weeks that followed.



Bernie Boulet (right), with husband Toby Boulet, know first-hand the importance of discussing organ donation with children at home and in the classroom.

In 2019, on Green Shirt Day (April 7), a day created to honour Logan's legacy, Bernie discovered a challenge. She wanted to share her son's story with her class on Green Shirt Day to encourage family discussions about registering as an organ and tissue donor. But when she went looking for elementary-level educational materials about organ donation in Canada, she couldn't find any.

"I had a voice, but I didn't have the resources," she said.

To remedy that, an education portal with free resources to support educators across Canada in bringing this important topic to their classroom was developed. Resources on the Organs & Tissues for Life Education Portal are sorted by grade and subject, and range from comprehensive curriculum programs to posters, videos and lesson plans. The portal also delivers the *Orgamites*, an education program for K-8 teachers and students that teaches kids all about their **mighty organs**, how to keep **organs mighty healthy**, and of course what it means to be **mighty kind**.

Why it matters...

Alyson Cheeseman is from St. John's. In 2017, Alyson received a liver transplant thanks to the generosity of an organ donor.

Alyson's transplant journey began at age 13 when a minor car accident sent her to the Janeway Hospital where it was discovered that her immune system was compromised, and her liver wasn't functioning properly.

"I had liver biopsies and spent years on medication to try to control the issue. My liver was damaged and was filtering out the good enzymes while keeping the bad enzymes," Alyson explains.

Life went on and Alyson became a mom in October 2009. Soon after she was told she may need a liver transplant in the future.

"Fast forward a few years and I started feeling worse," she says. "I had all the symptoms of liver failure and had to be hospitalized."

Alyson spent a full year in the Health Sciences Centre waiting for an organ match for a full liver.

Alyson's large family helped her with her daughter along the way. Her four sisters made meals and took turns to ensure there was a regular routine.

"My daughter was seven when I was hospitalized and I was able to explain to her, with the help of my family, that mommy was sick, and needed to stay at the hospital for some tests. We explained that my liver wasn't working right and that the doctors were going to help me."

Alyson's family and her school community were very supportive. As we all know it takes a village... and helping a child understand the circumstances around a parent's illness can be daunting.

Alyson waited many months for the call that would tell her a match was found, and she was getting a new liver. Yet, many months came and went with no call.

"Finally, in August 2017 we got the news. A match was found for me, and I would be flying to Halifax in the morning to prep my transplant," Alyson shared. "I returned home with a new liver in October."

At any given time, more than 4,000 Canadians are waiting for an organ transplant. Last year alone, 276 Canadians died while waiting for an organ transplant.

"I'll be on my anti-rejection medication for life, but it's a small price to pay to be able to have a second chance at life," she says. "Because of the generosity of my liver donor, I'll be able to watch my child grow, to finish school, and maybe someday get married."

Alyson's story reminds us of the many lives that can be saved through organ donation and the hope, the time, and the memories that generous gift can give.



Alyson Cheeseman with her daughter, Abigayle, December 2021.

Knowledge is key to addressing young people's concerns about organ and tissue donation. It can help them feel empowered to talk about donation with their families and equip them to make informed choices in the future.

"I wish something like that was available to me when I was going through my transplant. It would have been so helpful for me to use with my daughter and for her teachers at school as well," Alyson said after hearing of the teaching tools and resources now available for schools.

"I definitely believe in the value of this program, not only for families that are going through it, but for everyone in general," she said. "It would be wonderful for it to be available to all schools as a resource if needed."

Educators and experts in the fields of organ donation and transplant from across Canada and around the world have worked to create the many comprehensive and age-appropriate resources found on this site. The materials have been carefully selected and reviewed. There are many cross-curricular links to many subjects and topics of interest including healthy living, social responsibility, science, and civics.

A resource page to support educators in Newfoundland and Labrador includes inspiring transplant stories like Alyson's and information specific to organ donation and transplant in our province as well as information about how this topic links to the curriculum.

Discover the Organs & Tissues for Life Education Portal at organtissuedonation.ca/en/learn. Get to know the Orgamites at Orgamites.ca. For questions contact: otdt@blood.ca.

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Retired Educator's Legacy Lives on in His Students

by ANDREW MERCER

Rendell John Mercer was born in Upper Island Cove in 1940. Upper Island Cove is a culturally rich community with a long history of talented musicians. As a young man, Rendell was exposed to music through local dances and kitchen parties. Rendell's grandfather was a fiddler and passed on the love of the instrument. Rendell's mother purchased the young aspiring musician a violin from the Eaton's catalog, and he went about learning the instrument from musicians in his community.

In his teens, Rendell formed the band, The Twilights, with his brother Verdon and three friends in the community. The Twilights quickly became a favorite live act and found themselves traveling throughout Newfoundland performing at packed dances and parties.

In the late 1960s Rendell attended Memorial University, during which time he and his bandmates had an opportunity to study privately with the renowned choral conductor and music education advocate, Ignatius Rumbolt. Each week the members of The Twilights would meet with Dr. Rumbolt for vocal harmony lessons. Dr. Rumbolt's passion for music education had a lasting effect on the young musician.

In 1969 Rendell graduated from Memorial University with a Bachelor of Education and began a career in the public school system. The majority of Rendell's career was spent as a school principal in Holy Redeemer School in Spaniard's Bay. This position gave him the opportunity to support and grow the music program in his school. He encouraged the study of music in his school and enjoyed performing for students at every opportunity. Rendell especially enjoyed teaching the fiddle and actively supported the growth of fiddle playing in the school and surrounding community.

In 1992, after 30 years of teaching in the school system, Rendell retired. At this point he turned his full attention to the fiddle.

Along with playing the fiddle, Rendell had always been interested in the art of violin making and restoration, so he began studying this in earnest. He

quickly became an expert, reading everything he could find on the topic and studying the craft with master violin makers. Over the years Rendell has restored and repaired hundreds of violins in his Spaniard's Bay workshop.

While Rendell enjoyed restoring violins, his real passion was in playing the instrument. For seven years Rendell and his wife Gladys spent their summers at the Cape Breton College studying Celtic fiddling with such masters as Buddy MacMaster, Jerry Holland, and Natalie MacMaster. He soaked up all he could from these teachers, oftentimes attending the same class three and four times a day so as to master the techniques. Working with these kindred spirits validated the work he was doing back at home and provided him with encouragement to resurrect the Newfoundland fiddle as had been done in Cape Breton. Upon returning to Newfoundland each summer, Rendell busied himself with practicing what he had learned in Cape Breton. After mastering the techniques learned abroad, he would pass it on to other local fiddlers through his own teaching.

Rendell began spreading his love of the violin from his home in Spaniard's Bay. He took on many fiddle students, both young and old. His passion for the instrument was contagious. Before long students were traveling from all around Conception and Trinity Bays to learn fiddle from Rendell. His reputation as a master fiddler quickly spread until people were visiting from all corners of the province. Whether to play a 200-year-old violin or learn a new jig, there was always someone playing the fiddle at Rendell's home. Rendell was instrumental in the establishment of the NL Fiddlers Association and has been an active long-time member. He has networked with fiddlers across Canada and the US and helped organize exchanges and the sharing of ideas and music far and wide.

From the years of performing with The Twilights, Rendell knew the value in making music as an ensemble and he realized that this opportunity was lacking for his students. In the mid-1990s there was no opportunity for young musicians in Conception Bay North to engage in high-level ensemble playing.



Rendell on stage with the NSO and the Baccalieu Fiddlers.

REFLECTIONS

To provide this opportunity Rendell decided to create the Baccalieu Fiddlers.

The Baccalieu Fiddlers gave young musicians an opportunity to come together and perform highly complex traditional music as an ensemble. This group performed throughout eastern Newfoundland and quickly made a reputation as a superb ensemble, both musically and educationally. Rendell incorporated traditional Newfoundland step-dancing with music for a well-rounded performance experience for his students. In 2000, the Baccalieu Fiddlers were invited to perform with the Newfoundland Symphony Orchestra as part of the NSO Annual Gala Concert at the St. John's Arts and Culture Centre. Many of these young musicians soon became teachers themselves and began to share Rendell's passion for the fiddle with their own students. Before long, hundreds of new musicians were fiddling up a storm all around the region.

Over the years, Rendell has been very active in advocating the use of the fiddle and the use of folk music in schools. For decades he has visited and worked with schools across Newfoundland and in Labrador to promote the instrument. He performed for students and provided professional development for teachers. His guidance has provided the foundation for the creation of fiddle programs in numerous schools throughout our province. Teachers have quickly seen that the violin and folk music was an exciting way to invigorate school music programs. Rendell also helped these teachers design programs that appeal to their students and satisfy the provincial curricular outcomes.

Today, Gladys and Rendell can be found at their home in Spaniard's Bay surrounded by their family and Rendell's well-played fiddles. Rendell's legacies of fiddle teaching and playing, and his love, joy, and enthusiasm of all things violin-related, live on through his students who can be heard today playing in concert halls and kitchen parties throughout the province.

Andrew Mercer is a CDLI Music Teacher and the son of Rendell Mercer.



Rendell with Baccalieu Fiddlers in ACC lobby after playing with the NSO.



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OF SPECIAL INTEREST...

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS SIC BUILT FROM YEARS OF EXPERIENCE

by Alison Edwards

"I think great English teachers make the world go round" ~ Taron Egerton

Despite Taron Egerton and his praise for English teachers, we don't really make the world go round (Geography teachers maybe?). However, in a world of visuals, literature, social media and more, we do help people in their quest to understand what's happening around them. And, there are times when an English teacher can't go it alone. We need each other as we work through all.

It all goes back to the English 3201 public exam marking board. Seven very warm days in the cafeteria at Macdonald Drive Junior High correcting the writing of students of Newfoundland and Labrador. My first year, I lost count of the number of teachers who told me 'This will be the best PD you will ever have'. The next year I found myself saying that exact phrase to newbies. Not only was the act of correcting good PD, but the connections between the teachers in that room were incredibly helpful and useful. We would talk about work as we ate the copious snacks in the room, different ways we taught different topics, assignments that we were proud of, assignments we knew we needed to change. After a while, we realized that we needed to make this official. From that, the English Language Arts Special Interest Council was born.

Now an officially recognized Special Interest Council, the English Language Arts group, or ELA SIC, is working hard to provide some of the informal PL and support found during those summers at the marking board. Our immediate goals include advocating for and providing PL sessions to aid in resource building and understanding in approaching the different levels of curriculum in regards to assessment and delivery. We also hope to provide PL for ELA teachers who are interested in Standards Based Assessment, Deep Learning and utilizing passion projects in the ELA classroom. English is a course all students have to complete to graduate high school, so finding ways to engage and empower students in their pursuit of understanding is important as we

move forward through their years with us. Among our group in this province we have so many experts; learning from each other with ideas and examples that have worked in our classrooms is so very important.

We also hope to engage our membership through activities on social media. We are in the process of building our social media and communication abilities to be able to interact with our members and encourage them to share their resource and activity examples and success. Through discussions on Twitter and Instagram, as well as a Facebook group, we hope this will be possible. In addition, we are working with the NLTA to build a website where we can share providers which have worked for members of our community for purchasing so that we may build more options for the classroom teacher hoping to expand their inventory of resources.

Our ELA SIC may be new, but we are built from years of experience and sharing. Now that we have officially started, our biggest challenge is figuring out where to start when we have so many goals and ideas! If you would like to be part of this group, our sign up form can be found at the following link: <https://forms.gle/RaDdCg1yJpTjoHP28>.

Alison Edwards is President of the English Language Arts SIC and a teacher at Prince of Wales Collegiate in St. John's.



English Language Arts Executive:

Alison Edwards- President
Maria Delahunty-O'Brien - Vice President
Jenna Thistle - Secretary
Emily Lockyer - Treasurer
Cheryl Tucker - Communications
Bonnie Campbell - At Large

HEALTH EDUCATION SIC TEACHER FOCUSED WELLNESS TIPS

The Health Education Special Interest Council's national body, Physical and Health Education Canada (PHE Canada), several years ago partnered with Cooperators and the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health to develop a program called Teach Resiliency. This online resource is available to educators to:

- Support mental health literacy and well-being in school communities.
- Equip teachers and related health and education professionals with quality evidenced-based resources and tools to foster positive mental health and resiliency among students.
- Identify future direction and developments for evidence and school-based health promotion including mental health, prevention of problems and early intervention practices for children and youth.
- Increase awareness and support for improved mental health policies for Canadian schools.

"We hope this place provides what you need: simple-to-use strategies and tools to assess both resilience needs and resources, information about evidence-based programs to promote and enhance both your own and your students' mental health, and teacher-to-teacher strategies, tips, and resources." ~ PHE Canada

Our schools and classrooms today are focused on educators' and students' Social Emotional Learning. This resource is a great place for teachers to find resources to help themselves and their students at specific grade levels, specific subject areas and categories. To find more information visit <https://phecanada.ca/programs/teach-resiliency/home>

teachresiliency

Teacher-focused Wellness Tips Created by teachers for teachers

Have a "go to" list of colleagues to contact for support.	Teachers' Federations can provide assistance.	You are not alone!
Seek out positive exchanges with others.	It's OK to ask for help .	Collaborate with positive people.
Remain honest and polite .	Remain non-judgemental .	Clarify, communicate and demonstrate interest .
Contribute to the creation of ideas, plans and options in finding a solution .	Demonstrate active listening skills.	Elaborate on personal perspectives .
Utilize emotional intelligence when having tough conversations.	Establish and maintain a positive working culture .	Take action to promote personal wellness: ensuring healthy life balance, eating & sleeping well, pursuing personal interests outside of school and developing strategies for coping with stress.
Know and be aware of when others need help .	Stress release: know what works for you.	Involve yourself in school activities that make you feel good .
Recognize the successes and gifts of others .		

**If you have any questions
re the NLTA Special Interest Councils, contact:**
Darlene Johnson, Administrative Officer, Programs & Services, NLTA
 Tel: 726-3223 or toll-free at 1-800-563-3599, ext. 241
djohnson@nlta.nl.ca

NEWS & EVENTS

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

Dates to Remember

March 2022

Mar 31 **Deadline:** Year-end retirement from contract

April 2022

Apr 15 **Deadline:** Notice for postponement of Deferred Salary or withdrawal from DSLP

Apr 21 **Deadline:** PD Fund applications

Apr 29-30 NLTA Provincial Executive Meeting

Apr 30 **Deadline:** Year-end resignation from contract

Apr 30 **Deadline:** Deferred Salary Leave applications

May 2022

May 6 **Deadline:** CONTACT 2022 Applications

May 7 **Deadline:** Notice by Board of teacher layoffs

May 19 **Deadline:** PD Fund applications

May 28 **Deadline:** Notice by Board of TLA layoffs

June 2022

June 10-11 NLTA Provincial Executive Meeting

June 16 **Deadline:** PD Fund applications

July 2022

July 31 **Deadline:** NLTA Scholarship Applications

DSS

DEVELOPING SUCCESSFUL
SCHOOLS INSTITUTE (DSS)

JULY 12-15, 2022

MOUNT ALLISON UNIVERSITY, SACKVILLE, NB

MORE INFORMATION
COMING SOON
CHECK BACK AT WWW.NLTA.NL.CA



FUNDING PROVIDED
MAXIMUM 10 PARTICIPANTS

**Employee
Assistance
Program**
for teachers

CONTACT:
eap@nlta.nl.ca
709-726-3223
ext. 242 **OR** ext. 265

**Ad Hoc Committee on
Teacher Mental Health
and Well-Being**



Kelly **Loch** – Chair
Sheldon **Slaney**
Miranda **Gosse**
Dave **Locke**
Niquae **McIntosh**

Karen **Power**
Sherra **Robinson**
Kerri **Windsor**
Bill **Chaisson** (Advisor)

MEMBERS

Have a Question or Concern?
Contact the NLTA

CALL
(709) 726-3223 or
1-877-711-6582
(toll-free in the province)

EMAIL
mail@nlta.nl.ca

OR
to send an email to a
specific staff member
visit www.nlta.nl.ca/nlta-staff