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bulletin

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NOBODY SHOULD HAVE TO WEAR A BRAVE FACE TO SCHOOL



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It's been another challenging and rewarding year for the membership and as the 2021-22 school year comes to an end, we hope you are able to enjoy a much needed break. The Association will continue to use all its platforms to advocate for and highlight the work of the membership. We have created great momentum this year with our major media campaigns – Teachers Change Lives, Invest in Our Kids, and Class Size Counts. We will continue that momentum over the summer months and encourage you to continue sharing and promoting these important campaigns.

Thank you to all those that have volunteered their time to be part of NLTA committees, Special Interest Councils or at the Branch level, and thank you to all those that have contributed to *The Bulletin* over this school year. Enjoy your summer break...see you in September!

Jennifer



THE bulletin

Editor

Jennifer Tulk
jtulk@nlta.nl.ca

Editorial Assistant/Advertising

Michelle Lamarche
mlamarche@nlta.nl.ca

Design • Printing • Distribution

John Bishop, Elliott Green

Published five times a year (September-June) by the Newfoundland & Labrador Teachers' Association, 3 Kenmount Road, St. John's, NL, A1B 1W1; Tel: 709-726-3223; 1-800-563-3599; www.nlta.nl.ca

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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 5,600 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 or completed online from the main page of our website: www.nlta.nl.ca/rtanl.

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



UP FRONT WITH THE NLTA PRESIDENT



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

Colleagues/Friends,

On behalf of your Provincial Executive and the NLTA staff, I want to send along a message of thanks and support as we conclude the school year and head into the summer months.

Each of us has had another year of shifts and 'roller-coaster' experiences on professional and personal levels. We have heard your stories and have made every effort to loudly voice these issues with the school districts, government, and in the public arena. The substitute teacher shortage, challenges of the SMARTFIND system, and the severe impacts on day-to-day operations (i.e. loss of preps, internal coverage, extra duties, combining of classes) have dominated messages and efforts in recent weeks. We are meeting with the decision makers to continually press our concerns and to offer clear solutions for the effective recruitment and retention of educators in this province.

Some current items of note as we work to support your individual and collective well-being:

Cost of Living – All residents of Newfoundland and Labrador are feeling the crunch of inflation and the related cost of living (e.g. gas and grocery pricing); it is no different for teachers. The delay in processing of teachers' tax returns due to the 'red tape' associated with the Eligible

Educator Tax Credit program further exacerbates these concerns. The financial well-being of members is a focal point of your Association (and the Canadian Teachers' Federation) through advocacy efforts and collective bargaining.

NLTA Members in Labrador – The challenges facing our members teaching in Labrador are not new. It is also blatantly clear that the challenges vary from region to region within. Your Association has been making efforts to advocate with policymakers and government representatives in the region (through formal meetings) to start conversations and influence efforts for improvements.

Provincial Executive Meeting (Stephenville & Area) – In late April, your Provincial Executive held its meetings in Stephenville allowing our Executive Members to visit seven schools and converse with teachers during their stay. We appreciate the kind welcome of the teachers and schools in the region.

Independent Review of the Teacher Allocation Model – By now, many of you would have participated in data collection and focus groups related to the review process. The Association is anticipating conclusion of the review and recommendations late in the summer of 2022.

Zoom Town Halls – We are continuing our series of Zoom Town Halls, with our

most recent taking place in the Baie Verte-Deer Lake-Corner Brook region. Please stay tuned as we schedule events in the fall in other parts of the province.

I value meeting with you in your staff-rooms and classrooms during school visits. I am well aware that morale does not come automatically. It is earned when the employer and policymakers identify public education as an essential service that requires financial investment, is rooted in long-term objectives, and addresses the needs of the people on the ground.

My hope for you this summer is that you can truly take advantage of some downtime, rejuvenate, and hit the new school year knowing that you are supporting a larger movement to improve the public school system in this province for students, families, and certainly for teachers.

If you have individual concerns or thoughts, please do not hesitate to reach out to me directly or to our staff.

Yours in Solidarity,

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Recruitment, Retention, and Resiliency

Moving Forward After COVID-19

by Stefanie Tuff

As two and a half years of COVID-19 dust begins to settle on (and continues to swirl around) the “living with COVID” world, I have been thinking about what we have learned and, perhaps more importantly, what the new light of the post-pandemic dawn has revealed for us moving forward. A couple of overall “themes” have emerged for me.

Firstly, I have never been more proud of and grateful for the opportunity to work for and hold a leadership role with the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association, and NLTA members are the reason for this. Just recently, I was reviewing with President Trent Langdon some images he was putting together as part of his presentation during a panel discussion, hosted by the MUN Faculty of Education, on what we have learned in education over the past two and a half years. In addition to the creativity, ingenuity, dedication and incredible work ethic of teachers that the pictures demonstrated, I was struck by the difficulty of choosing from amongst so many examples of how NLTA members have gone, and continue to go, above and beyond to support, engage and create the best learning opportunities they can for their students in a challenging and ever shifting context. I have had the privilege of working closely with Provincial Executive members and Branch Presidents who have stayed the course, accepting without question additional demands on their own time as volunteer governance leaders and engaging fully in critical meetings, including the 2021 BGM, which had to be moved to a virtual format. NLTA Special Interest Councils persevered and, in many ways, found new opportunities to support their colleagues and showcase their expertise. NLTA staff have been unwavering in their commitment, doing all they can to assist, advise and represent Association members, maintaining programs and services for teachers, and responding to record levels of member contacts in circumstances that were sometimes changing daily.

And, I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge the incredible hard work of our two “pandemic presidents” – Dean Ingram, who rose to every challenge as

his second term as NLTA President was consumed by COVID-19; and, current President, Trent Langdon, who has hit the ground running with no time for any sort of “eased in” transition, quickly finding his stride as an effective spokesperson for the Association and tireless governance leader in the midst of ongoing, if not unfamiliar, pivots and shifts.

Another point of pride is the solid state of the Teachers' Pension Plan funding – since negotiating pension reform and the Joint Sponsorship Agreement with government, the TPP has, under the management and oversight of the TPP Corporation and its expert Board of Directors, consistently exceeded expected performance levels during difficult times in the world of finance and investments. As per the recent update to NLTA members, the value of the pension fund has grown significantly – considering the TPP funding ratio was 62.7% in 2015, it is worthy of note that, as of December 2021, the funding ratio has increased to an estimated 121.5%. Continuing to build and protect a secure retirement future for members is a priority for the NLTA.

The second “theme” that has settled in my mind is about where we go and what we seek to achieve from here. The Association has consistently advocated for a needs-based, as opposed to budget-based, approach to the allocation of human resources in the provincial K-12 public education system. The longstanding issues of large class sizes, complex class composition, inadequate instructional resource teacher and student assistant time, overwhelming demands on school administrators, among other issues, need to be acknowledged and addressed. In this regard, the ongoing review of the Teacher Allocation Model is a critical process, and one in which the Association and its members have been active participants, ensuring that the Review committee has the benefit of teacher and administrator experiences, expertise, and perspectives as they work towards a report and recommendations to come hopefully this summer.

The NLTA continues to closely monitor and insist upon consultation with government regarding any plans for actioning certain recommendations from

the report of the Premier's Economic Recovery Team last year. To date, we have seen no significant impact on Association members. We continue to engage with the Department of Education on the transition process for the NLESD, with the goal of ensuring that changes to management and operational structures do not result in downloading of additional responsibilities to already overburdened staff at the school level.

The final (though I could go on with more) "where we go from here" area of focus that I will reference recently gelled for me as a sort of new "three 'Rs'" for education. They are not the "Rs" we (or at least people as old as me) might initially think of, but in the best interests of the future of the K-12 public education system, we need a renewed focus on: Recruitment, Retention, and Resiliency. If the pandemic has taught us anything, it is that our public schools impact on and are essential to so many aspects of our communities, our economy, and society as a whole. Unfortunately, it took a pandemic forcing most students and teachers out of the physical, in-person school environment for that fact to be truly appreciated.

Current school resourcing issues are, unfortunately, exacerbated significantly by a growing shortage of teachers. While not always obvious or visible to the public, it is not business as usual in our schools – schools struggle daily to secure enough substitute teachers to cover off even regular staff absences, not to mention the increase caused by COVID-19 illness and screening. Reliance on retirees and unqualified individuals with emergency licences is not a long-term solution. Students are in school, but the impact of this reality on teaching and learning is significant and not sustainable. The NLTA has been reaching out to government and other stakeholders, initial discussions have taken place, and Association advocacy is ongoing for a comprehensive provincial strategy to address teacher recruitment and retention.

As well, schools need to be more prepared and resilient. Our schools remain the largest daily indoor gatherings where physical distancing is not possible, the places where all of our homes, workplaces and community contacts come together. Reducing class sizes and improving school ventilation and air quality are issues that need to be on the front burner moving forward.

To close, for me, the past year has provided much to be proud of, while also bringing into sharper focus the work that must continue and expand. For all NLTA members, I hope you will have opportunities to rest and recharge over the summer months.

.....
Stefanie Tuff is Executive Director of the NLTA.

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(Not) All the Time in the World Employer Investigations and Delay

by Miriam Sheppard

For privacy reasons, some parties are not identified, and some details are omitted.

On March 17, 2022, your Association received the most recent ruling regarding a grievance that the Association referred to Arbitration. This grievance dealt with the issue of delay in the context of employer investigations.

A parent, on behalf of a student, made a complaint to the police that the Grievor, X, had committed a criminal offence against them when they were a student. The Grievor was removed from the workplace pursuant to Clause 10.06 of the Provincial Collective Agreement, which states:

10.06 Teachers under investigation or charged will not automatically lose pay or benefits while under a period of suspension prior to the determination of guilt or innocence. If upon investigation, the School Board feels that disciplinary action is necessary, such action shall be taken in accordance with the provisions of the Collective Agreement. In situations where the School Board is unable to investigate the matter to its satisfaction, but where the Board feels that the teacher should be removed from his or her current assignment on an interim basis, the teacher shall not lose pay or benefits.

Some eight months later, the police investigation ended without charges. A similar complaint on behalf of the student was then made to the Grievor's employer, and the employer started its own investigation into the complaint. A second parent also filed a complaint on behalf of a different student. The Grievor remained on leave pursuant to Clause 10.06, pending the outcome of these complaints. After five and a half months, despite numerous inquiries as to the status of the matter, the employer had not finished its investigation. The teacher filed a grievance, claiming that the employer had not investigated in a reasonably expeditious manner, and asking that the investigation be concluded. Some seven and a half months later, the investigation concluded. There was no finding of wrongdoing against the teacher as a result of either complaint. The Employer denied the grievance.

The majority of the Arbitration Board identified the issue as whether the District investigation of the complaints breached Article 39.01 of the Collective Agreement, and, more specifically, whether the investigation was an unreasonable exercise of management rights by the District against the Grievor. In considering these issues, the majority opined that it was required to examine the duration of the investigation conducted by the Employer, determine whether there were reasonable explanations for delays that occurred and, if the delays were reasonable, consider whether the delays were balanced against the adverse effects to the Grievor. The majority adopted a three-part framework for assessing the reasonableness of delay in employer investigations, as follows:

1. Establish the relevant time frames to determine whether there has been delay sufficient to warrant further consideration.
2. Once it has been established that the delay is sufficient to warrant further consideration, attention should be directed to the reasons for the delay, and specifically whether the employer bears the responsibility for the delay.
3. Then, the effect of the delay is to be considered, and specifically whether the Grievor has been or will be prejudiced by the delay.

1. Relevant Time Frames

With respect to the first question, noting that the Grievor was on 10.06 leave for the purposes of the employer investigation for approximately 230 days, the majority found that the active part of the investigation entailed: (i) an interview with Complainant #1; (ii) clarifying questions to Complainant #1; (iii) an interview with the Grievor; and, (iv) clarification questions to the Grievor. The Grievor required two days to respond to the written questions provided in (iv), leaving some 228 days for the District to account for. The Board found that the resulting 228 days created a prima facie requirement to conduct further analysis and to require explanation for the particular delays.

2. Reason for the Delay/ Employer Responsibility

In considering the second part of the analysis, the Board considered the different reasons for the delays in the investigation of the first complaint, which included issues with procuring documents from an outside entity, delays in conducting the interview of complainant #1 due to poor health, delays due to changes in employer staffing, delays in providing follow-up questions to the Grievor after they were interviewed and an additional two-week period after the investigation was concluded. It also considered the reasons for the delay in the investigation of the second complaint against the Grievor.

Respecting the first complaint, the majority found that the delay associated with attempts to get the documents from an outside entity was reasonable on the facts, and that the District was justified in pursuing the documents because the complainant had presented an allegation but no further information. Noting that the District had a duty to investigate the allegations and to use reasonable means to determine the specifics of those allegations, the Majority found that until such time as the District had obtained the services of a person to interview Complainant #1, the time spent attempting to obtain documents was, in the opinion of the majority, time spent reasonably by the District. Further, delays for roughly a month after an investigator was retained were not material to the delay of the overall investigation since the District had begun pursuing an independent interview process.

While delays in interviewing for the first complaint due to the poor health of the complainant were deemed reasonable in the circumstances, an unexplained delay of a month in setting up an interview at the beginning of the process was deemed unreasonable. In that regard, the majority opined, "The District has an obligation to explain delays in the investigation process so that the Board can determine the reasonableness of those delays. In the absence of an explanation for the delay, the delay must be considered unreasonable and the employer must bear responsibility for it."

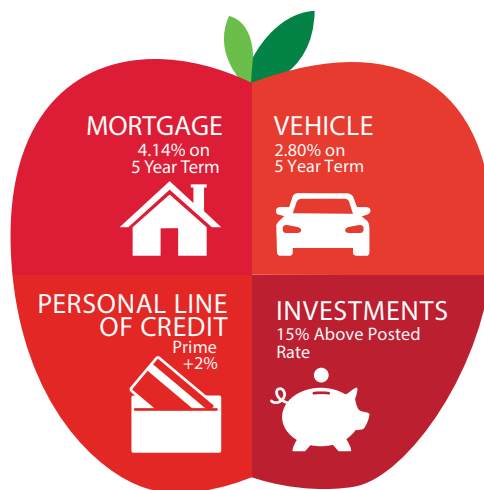
With respect to delays due to a change in Employer personnel, the majority noted that no evidence was brought before the Board to demonstrate reasonableness resulting from resources constraints, or to explain the delay other than identifying transactional delay caused by the departure of an employee. The majority reiterated that, in the absence of an explanation for delay, the delay cannot be presumed to be reasonable. The majority also found that an almost two-week delay before the personnel change was not immaterial and was not explained by the departure of the original investigator.

No explanation was provided by the District to account for the two weeks required to develop the follow-up questions with respect to the first complaint, nor for the two weeks required to complete that investigation. Noting again that at issue were: (i) a primary interview with the Complainant; (ii) follow-up questions to the Complainant; (iii) a primary interview with the Grievor; and, (iv) follow-up questions to the Grievor, and that there was no evidence of physical materials that required examination; no evidence of expert reports that required writing or review; and no evidence of any forensic or accounting evidence that required review, the majority stated that no evidence was called by the District to explain the time required to process the information it had on file and no evidence was called by the District to explain the time required to finalize the investigation. Again, absent an explanation for the delay, responsibility for the delay rested with the Employer. Consequently, the majority found that the time required to obtain follow-up information from the Grievor and to close the investigation was not explained and constituted unreasonable delay.

(cont'd.)

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With respect to the second complaint against the Grievor, the majority divided the time spent investigating into two periods: an initial 105 day period, and a subsequent period of approximately three weeks. The majority found that there was no record of an attempt to coordinate interview times for Complainant #2 during the first period of 105 days. No justification was provided for this delay and neither Investigator was called as a witness to provide evidence related to the delay. Once again, given the absence of any explanation for a material delay, the first period of delay was considered unreasonable. With respect to the second period, the Majority found that the investigation of Complaint #2 proceeded with reasonable speed at that time. The record indicated multiple emails and telephone calls that were relevant to the investigation process, and the delay for that period was not unreasonable.

3. Prejudice

All parties agreed that the allegations, investigation, and time required to address the matter had a substantial personal impact on the Grievor. However, the District and your Association disagreed whether the harm experienced by the Grievor was a relevant consideration in determining whether the delays in the investigation were prejudicial to the Grievor. Counsel for your Association asked the Board to consider social prejudice in conjunction with procedural prejudice and to consider that actual prejudice need not manifest itself for this Board to find that the delays were prejudicial to the Grievor. Noting that while there may be a reasonable basis to conclude that the delayed investigation did contribute to some manner of social harm to the Grievor, the majority found that detailed analysis on that issue would raise issues of attribution and causation that were beyond an analysis of whether the District breached Article 39.01 when conducting its investigation.

The majority also did not accept the District's submission that the Grievor was required to demonstrate actual prejudice to their ability to mount a defence to the allegations and that such prejudice cannot be established because there was no defence to mount. Opining that, "time, in and of itself, had a prejudicial impact upon the Grievor's ability to mount a defence against allegations where no physical evidence exists for either party to rely upon", the majority found that "where oral evidence is the only evidence available in an investigation, the ability to identify and record direct witness testimony is paramount. That evidence has a natural shelf life as memories fade over time. We find in this instance, the ability of the Grievor to find witnesses in support of [their] position would

have been degraded as time progressed. That degradation would have to be weighed against the factors for delay in the District's investigation." The majority continued that the prejudicial impact on the Grievor caused by the passage of time must be balanced against the explanations for delay provided by the District, and that prejudicial impact, in and of itself, "does not render an investigation unreasonable; it is the balance of justified delay against prejudicial impact that determines whether the District conducted itself in a reasonable manner".

The majority concluded that, during the 7½ month investigation, there were delays that were either (i) beyond the control of the District, or (ii) reasonable in the circumstances for the District to have incurred. It also found that several delays were not justified and were therefore the responsibility of the District. The delays that were beyond the control of the District, or that were reasonable in the circumstances for the District to have incurred, outweighed the prejudice that was incurred by the Grievor due to the passage of time. In contrast, though, the delays that occurred as a result of delay by the investigators were not explained by the District and the balance on those delays favoured the Grievor. The majority opined that there are several factors that may be considered as part of the reasonableness of a particular investigation, including the context in which decisions are made, the complexity of the investigation, whether specialized resources are required and whether there is time-consuming examination of physical evidence. In this case, certain delays remained unexplained, the investigation was not particularly complex, and there was no need for outside resources or examination of physical evidence. Ultimately, the investigation was comprised of two interviews and some follow-up questions; the majority ruled that absent explained delay, such an investigation should not take 228 days to complete. In the result, the investigation as a whole was found to be unreasonable and the grievance was allowed, with a declaration issued to that effect.

This is an important arbitration and reinforces that, when investigating, the employer must proceed in a reasonably expeditious fashion. While every case will need to be assessed on its individual facts, the majority's findings should be instructive to the parties well into the future.

Teachers with questions should contact an Administrative Officer in Programs and Services.

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



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

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Arbitration Decision: Returning to Work After Sick Leave

by Ian Crewe

On December 14, 2021 the Association received the ruling on a grievance that the NLTA had referred to Arbitration.

This grievance dealt with the issue of a teacher who had been off on sick leave and was attempting to return to work during a period when schools were closed to in-person learning and teachers were teaching online.

The teacher (the Grievor) was on sick leave and notified their school administration that they were able to return to work. During the time in question, teaching/learning was taking place virtually (as opposed to in person) due to Public Health recommendations and teachers, for the most part, were teaching from home. The Grievor provided a medical note indicating that they could return to work. The District took the position that the note was insufficient and directed the Grievor to have a Functional Abilities Form filled out by their doctor/medical professional. The Grievor had the form filled out and submitted it to the District. The District then indicated that, because the form did not clear the Grievor to continue to work when in-school instruction eventually started up again, the Grievor would have to remain off on sick leave. The Grievor remained on sick leave for a short period of time after this in order to obtain updated medical documentation which indicated they could return to in-school work with use of proper personal protective equipment (PPE). The Grievor returned to work, but filed a grievance with respect to the delay in returning to work caused by the District's actions. The majority ruling of the arbitration panel was in favour of the Association and found that there was an unnecessary delay imposed by the District on the Grievor's return to work. The decision ordered reinstatement of the sick leave used by the Grievor (in this case, 6 days) in relation to this delay.

Some key points considered by the panel were:

- Whether the Employer was entitled to insist on medical clearance before returning the teacher to their teaching duties;
- Whether the information provided to the Employer at certain points in time was sufficient for it to then

have allowed the teacher to return to work;

- Whether the assessment of the teacher's functional abilities at any point in time should properly be based only on their ability to work in the context in which the work was then being performed, namely virtually/from home, or should the medical documentation include an assessment of whether they could also work in person, from the classroom when schools resumed in-class instruction; and,
- Was this a case where what the teacher was requesting was an accommodation and should therefore be dealt with through the medical accommodation process?

Relevant Sections of the Collective Agreement:

Article 15: Sick Leave

15.01: A teacher is eligible for sick leave with pay when the teacher is unable to perform duties because of illness, injury or other disability provided the necessary sick leave credits have been accumulated and provided the other requirements of this Article have been complied with.

15.04: Sick leave with pay in excess of four (4) consecutive teaching days at any time or seven (7) teaching days in the aggregate in any school year shall not be awarded to a teacher unless a medical certificate satisfactory to the School Board has been submitted in respect thereof. In any case where the School Board is satisfied that it is not possible for the teacher concerned to secure a medical certificate, a certificate of another health care professional, such as a registered nurse, or any other person designated by the School Board shall be accepted in place of a medical certificate, provided the certificate is satisfactory to the School Board.

Article 39: Management Rights

39.01: Except as specifically abridged, delegated or modified by this Agreement, management functions, rights and power now existing are recognized by the Association as being retained by the School Boards and the Government as the case may be.

Important Points to Note

1. The District was within its rights and acting reasonably in asking for medical clearance before the Grievor's return to work.

This is commonly accepted in most employment situations following an absence on sick leave of any significant duration and an accepted labour practice.

2. The District could not, in the circumstances where use of the Functional Abilities Form requirement was not a matter of Employer policy that was applied consistently and made known in advance to employees and the Association, treat the failure to provide the Functional Abilities Form as an impediment to returning to work if it otherwise had a medical clearance.

This is an important point and remains relevant at this time. The District does not have a return to work policy, has not informed teachers or the Association that such a policy is being drafted. According to this arbitration decision, the employer cannot rely upon the failure to provide a Functional Abilities Form to prevent a teacher from returning to work following a period of sick leave. If any teacher is facing a delay in their return to work due to a requirement to provide medical documentation they were unaware would be required, they should reach out to the Association for advice and assistance.

3. The District could not prevent the Grievor from returning to work simply because the medical clearance was for teaching from home (and not for in-class instruction) because at the time in question, teaching was taking place virtually/from home.

The panel noted:

Article 15.01 is an eligibility clause. One is eligible for sick leave when one is unable to perform one's duties and when that inability arises due to illness, injury or other disability.

In this case, the grievor would have to have an illness that made them unable to work. This is clearly not the case. The Employer by requiring [them] to continue on sick leave because [they are] unable to return to work in a classroom within 24 hours is imposing an additional condition not present in the Collective Agreement, that of [their] illness making [them] unable to report to school for in school work within 24 hours.

For the reason that the Collective Agreement does not provide the Employer with a right to do that, the Employer is relying on the management rights clause contained within the Collective Agreement, to say that it has that ability.

Such a rule adding the requirement of a guarantee that the teacher must be able to return to the usual workplace before returning to work at home is inconsistent with the Collective Agreement because, under Article 15:01, when one is not both sick and unable to perform

one's duties one is not entitled to be on sick leave.

This point is also important as it establishes the requirement that the assessment of a teacher's ability to return to work can't be measured against some other future working conditions/context. In this case, the Grievor's initial medical clearance did not encompass working in person, at school when they first sought to return to work. However, the majority of teachers were working virtually/from home at the time. For the District to prevent someone from working (who was capable of doing so) because school would, at some point, return to in-class instruction would establish a precedent that would allow the District to assess an employee's health or abilities against a future situation. Accepting the District's position in this regard would mean that if schools did not resume in-person instruction as anticipated, this teacher would continue to be off work, using their sick leave, while being fully capable of fulfilling their professional duties, with someone else being paid to do their job. The arbitration panel did not agree that the District's assessment of a teachers' ability to work in circumstances that might exist at some point in the future could be used to determine their ability to work under current conditions.

4. The panel determined that this situation was not a request for accommodation as the Grievor was asking only to do what other teachers were already doing in the same manner in which they were doing it (teaching virtually from home). This was the Association's position from the start.

5. The panel did indicate that, even if the Grievor's situation could be construed as a request for accommodation, they were entitled to be accommodated because to do so in the manner requested (teaching virtually from home) would not have amounted to undue hardship for the District.

The standard for accommodations requires an employer to facilitate an employee's need for accommodation (including medical/disability needs), up to the point of undue hardship. Undue hardship is a high bar and will not be met simply because a certain course of action or way of doing things is desired/preferred by or more convenient for the employer. Members should be aware that the Association's experience with the provincial school districts on accommodations has generally been positive, but we encourage all members to reach out to the NLTA for advice or assistance when applying for a workplace accommodation. An excellent overview of the process and points to be aware of can be found in the Jan/Feb 2022 Bulletin posted on the NLTA website www.nlta.nl.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Accommodations.pdf.

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Ian Crewe is Assistant Executive Director of the NLTA.



Learning to Manage Stress More Effectively

by Kathy Taylor-Rogers

If there is anything we should have learned from the past two years, it is that we have to practice effective self-care strategies if we want to manage our stress levels. We have all lived through probably the most challenging two years of our personal and professional lives. Everything that had been our “normal” disappeared and our lives were forever changed. Change for most of us is difficult at the best of times but having it thrust upon us in a way that no one has ever experienced before made it a lot worse. The messages we were getting have been constantly changing and the ways we had to adapt changed just as much. On-line learning was thrust upon you with little to no preparation. No one asked if you were comfortable with it or provided you with guidance on how to do it – each teacher was left on their own to figure out how to best move forward with the shift. Then throughout the pandemic there has been a constant shifting back and forth between in-classroom learning and on-line learning. The need for flexibility has been taken to a whole new level.

“...we all face challenges, but it is important to learn to manage our thoughts, mood and behaviors related to those stressors.”

On a personal level, this past two years has also taken a large toll on many. We are all living in very different circumstances, but many of us who live alone or live with someone who is not a great support have really suffered during this very isolating time. Many of us have purposefully kept away from our main support sources for fear we might unintentionally pass Covid on to loved ones that were possibly more vulnerable. Throughout this pandemic fear has been a predominant emotion. Fear that if we don't do everything “just right” then we could possibly get

extremely ill and die or someone we love could get ill and die. If one of the ways we maintained our mental health was travel, then we became isolated from that enjoyment. Many of us were unable to celebrate joyous family events together such as weddings, graduations, births, showers, anniversaries, birthdays. For any of us who experienced a significant loss during the pandemic, the ways we typically get our support during our grief were taken away from us.

There is little wonder why stress levels have reached an all-time high. The Oxford Dictionary defines stress as *a state of mental or emotional strain or tension resulting from adverse or very demanding circumstances*. That pretty much summarizes the past two years. Some common reactions to a stressful event or to prolonged stress can be:

- Disbelief
- Feelings of fear, shock, anger, sadness, worry, frustration
- Changes in appetite, energy, desires and interests
- Difficulty sleeping or nightmares
- Difficulty concentrating, focusing and making decisions
- Physical reactions, such as headaches, body pains, stomach issues
- Increased use of tobacco, alcohol and other substances
- Feelings of isolation, withdrawal or worthlessness
- Unexplained weight loss or gain
- Feeling like “you are not yourself”
- Changes in your levels of tolerance and patience
- Constant anger and irritability
- Loss of interest in activities

The Achieve Center for Leadership uses another way to determine our stress level, which is a four-phase system.

- Phase One: **High Functioning** and is when we are managing our stress well and our motivation is high and we are engaged in both work and home.
- Phase Two: **Becoming Disillusioned** and is when we start to feel overwhelmed by pressures of home and/or work. In the second phase we often start to

disengage and start to avoid certain people or tasks and our overall life satisfaction begins to suffer.

- Phase Three: **Withdrawing** and at this phase we are feeling a general sense of dissatisfaction. The flow of negativity between home and work lives is now open and we start to find both draining. We begin to find many people and tasks major irritants and our enthusiasm for most things in our lives is diminished or nonexistent.
- Phase Four: **Complete Disengagement**. In this last stage, the stress has been so overwhelming that the individual is no longer able to cope with the everyday demands of life at work or home and is “burnt out”. There is complete disengagement from expectations at home and work and a high risk of depression.

It is very important that we each do a self-assessment and critically reflect on our stress levels now that we are approaching the end of this school year. Be mindful that sometimes high levels of stress can become the “new normal” so we may not think we are very stressed, but once we really take a deeper look, we do realize that we have been experiencing a number of these symptoms. The reality is that we all face challenges, but it is important to learn to manage our thoughts, mood and behaviors related to those stressors. How you respond to anything in your life is a choice and once you figure this out you can figure out how to make positive changes to manage the stress more effectively.

I'd like to talk now about some of the most effective coping strategies we can use to help us manage our stress:

- Take breaks from watching, reading or listening to news stories, including those on social media. While it is good to be informed, at a certain point it can become overwhelming and have a negative impact on our mental health.
- Take care of yourself – exercise, get at least 7 hours of sleep per night, engage in relaxation activities that you enjoy.
- Learn Deep Breathing and practice it daily.
- Talk to those closest to you when something is bothering you. Sometimes talking about something bothersome becomes less stressful when we talk it through with a supportive listener.
- Although alcohol, nicotine and caffeine can temporarily reduce stress, the negative impacts over time can increase negative stress reactions.
- Eat well – it has been proven that well-nourished bodies cope better than bodies that are running high on carbs and fatty foods. Avoid comfort foods and emotional eating as both are negative coping strategies that decrease our coping ability.

- Carve out time for hobbies or activities that make you feel good.
- Practice meditation, yoga or other mindful-based stress reduction activities. Bridgethegapp.ca is a website with many free resources and some free mindfulness apps are: My Life Meditation, Insight Timer, Smiling Mind and Healthy Minds.
- Spend time with your pet; this has actually been proven to assist with people's stress management.
- Take a holiday that is truly a break. This can be a staycation somewhere or a trip away. Whatever you plan needs to be something truly relaxing and enjoyable.
- Consider seeing a counsellor to develop a stress management plan that works for you.

Some people might think, “I know all of this stuff” and while I will readily admit that these are not new strategies, ask yourself the question: “Have I actually really critically reflected on each one of these strategies and examined how they fit into my life?” Bill Phillips is quoted as saying, “There is a World of Difference between knowing what to do and actually doing it.” This is true for stress management, as for many other aspects of our lives. Another potent quote that he has used is, “Food is the most widely abused anti-anxiety drug in America, and Exercise is the most potent yet under-utilized antidepressant.” Think about both these quotes and consider what they mean to you and how you might be able to use them to decide on some changes that you can make to improve your life. While managing stress takes critical reflection and a commitment to make positive changes in your life, the benefits are immeasurable.

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



Math-Science
Special Interest Council

To view our latest Making Connections newsletter, visit:
www.nlta.nl.ca/mathscience-sic/ or
<http://mssic.nlta.ca/newsletters/>



An Interview With... Program Specialist Karen Yetman

Karen Yetman is a program specialist at NLESD's Avalon Region Headquarters in St. John's and her work focuses on all curricular areas related to Kindergarten to Grade 6. Karen has been an educator and member of the NLTA for 30 years. She has served as NLTA School Representative for 28 years and is a member of the Executives of the St. John's Centre Branch, the provincial School Administrators' Council (SAC), and the Math-Science Special Interest Council (MSSIC). Karen holds a Bachelor of Elementary Education, Bachelor of Special Education, and a Master's Degree in Education (Curriculum, Teaching) from Memorial University.

As an introduction to the membership in her role as a Program Specialist, Karen answers a series of questions.

Q. What is your main priority as a program specialist?

A. As a program specialist, my main priority is supporting teachers in their daily practice and working directly with them on their professional learning goals. Whether our connections are in person or virtual, the work I engage in can look very different each and every day – it all depends on the area of focus chosen by the teacher. Our learning conversations are often related to new curriculum implementations; exploring evidence-based instructional and assessment practices; using the seven determinants of the School Development Model to enhance student engagement and becoming more familiar with and implementing Responsive Teaching and Learning (RTL), Universal Design for Learning (UDL), and Deep Learning and Social-Emotional Learning (SEL). Supporting teachers in their professional practice leads to our ultimate goal as educators – providing the best educational opportunities possible for the students of the province.

Q. Describe the important role program specialists play in the education system in this province?

A. Program specialists play a critical role in the education system of the province. As members of a systems team, program specialists work directly with teachers and other stakeholders at the school level to support student engagement and learning for all. From KinderStart to Level IV, we are the link that connects educators directly with curricular programs, educational policies and learning opportunities from the District, Department, and other partners in education. For the most part, we are the first line of contact for teachers at the District level. Being responsive to requests from individual teachers, school administrators, families, and District and Department staff constitutes the majority of the work we do on a daily basis – whether this is accomplished via email, phone calls, virtual and in-person meetings, or professional learning sessions.

One of our main goals is to help build capacity in our schools such that teachers feel comfortable and confident in their ability to meet students where they are as learners, and to design and structure learning opportunities such that their students meet with personal success. For example, through the review of school data, we can assist school staffs with the identification of strategic issues and provide support for school-specific plans related to the School Development process. Likewise, in a consultative role, we review the data collected for individual student profiles and are available to support the development of programming plans of individual learners. We liaise and collaborate with our colleagues at the Department of Education on curriculum development and program implementation, provincial assessments, school development, and other policies/frameworks related to education. The scope of the work that a program specialist engages in can vary depending on the curriculum area(s) and/or discipline for which they are responsible.

Q. You have been an educator for many years. How have you seen the role of program specialist change over the years? And what do you see as the future of that role in the education system?

A. This is a timely question, indeed! The role of program specialist has definitely changed over the years and continues to evolve. Historically, program specialists were hired to work in subject-specific curriculum areas, to offer professional learning opportunities based on new curriculum and assessment in their area of expertise, and to lead the school improvement process with a select number of individual schools within their region. Today, you will see the work of program specialists taking on a much broader scope across both subject areas and grade levels. Increasingly, our daily work is happening directly in schools with teachers, administrators, and students in a variety of learning spaces. We have worked very hard over the years to foster greater collaboration and communication among our Curriculum and Student Services colleagues, which allows us to collectively contribute to programming options for students.

Our focus on responsive teaching has resulted in ongoing professional learning alongside our teachers as together we explore new pedagogies and evidence-based practices. Professional learning has become more teacher-driven and is facilitated rather than led. It is also embedded in practice and rarely does it occur in isolation. While the pandemic continues to interrupt our usual ways of knowing and doing, one silver lining that has surfaced over the past three years is that our ability to connect with teachers and other stakeholders has greatly improved. We have found through the use of new and innovative ideas, technologies and applications students are becoming more engaged. School Development has become the driver for all things happening in schools and it is the expectation that every school in the province is involved with the process. While some subject-specific positions still exist, the majority of positions encompass a number of disciplines and span the full gamut of K-12. The work we do in professional learning has also moved to be more individualized in nature. We are all learning together!

I do see the position of program specialist existing in the future. What that might look like and sound like is difficult to say. We will be in a much better position to speculate on that once details of the merger of NLESD and EDU are made available.

Q. What do you consider your greatest achievement?

A. I think one of my greatest achievements in this wild, crazy beautiful world thus far is staying true to my authentic self. With so many influences and distractions out there – both at home and at work – at times this can be a little challenging. I often find myself having to do a quick check-in to remain grounded. I am fiercely loyal when I believe in someone or something and will go to bat for them whenever needed. Regardless of whether something is related to my personal or professional life, I try to commit 100% of myself. Finding a balance between the personal and professional has always been my Holy Grail. While I am not there YET, I keep trying! The relationships that I have shared and continue to grow with family, friends, colleagues, and students are real and bring me great joy. Anyone who knows me knows that I am a “people person” and love to offer support to others in any way I can. In actual fact, these genuine relationships are some of my greatest accomplishments.

Q. What motivates you to work hard?

A. I believe that my motivation to work hard is inherently innate and has been a part of my character since I can remember. My parents were both extremely hard workers and were true role models for me and my siblings as they demonstrated on a daily basis what it meant by the saying, “An honest day’s work for an honest day’s pay”. Setting a personal or professional goal, planning its execution, and working hard to bring the goal to fruition is also intrinsically motivating for me. I do get much satisfaction in a job well done. That sense of accomplishment one feels when you have reached your target gets my endorphins flowing. When I was in the classroom prior to coming to the District in 2009, every year I would invite my students to reflect on the statement: Good enough is good enough. Through discussion and exploration, the students would come to appreciate that good enough is only good enough if it is your very best effort. Life Lesson #1!

Adding to my motivation is that I truly enjoy the work I engage in on a daily basis, and I especially appreciate the connections that I share with fellow educators, students and colleagues. Being part of and contributing to a collaborative team working towards a common goal is very rewarding. Steve Jobs once noted, “Your work is going to fill a large part of your

life, and the only way to be truly satisfied is to do what you believe is great work. And the only way to do great work is to love what you do. If you haven't found it yet, keep looking. Don't settle. As with all matters of the heart, you'll know when you find it."

Q. Which historical figure do you most identify with?

A. Rather than concentrate on an individual, there are a number of significant historical events that have impacted who I am and how I live. Social justice has always been an area of interest and I am naturally drawn to anyone or anything that advocates for or promotes issues related to human rights. For example, the Canadian Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms is particularly significant. I remember being in school when the Constitution Act of 1982 was signed and knew that this was something big – not necessarily understanding at that time the magnitude of the Charter nor how important it would be for all Canadians. The work Amnesty International and the ending of Apartheid in South Africa in 1991, including the release of Nelson Mandela in 1990, continue to have an impact on the rights and freedoms of individuals globally. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, first adopted in 1959, has had a tremendous impact on how children are treated and viewed in modern times. Recognizing and celebrating children's rights to education, play and health care, to name a few, is an important part of the work I do with the District and with the volunteer organizations of which I am a member. Finally, over the last few years I have been reviewing aspects of Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, particularly the Calls to Action that directly relate to education and have participated in a number of self-directed professional learning opportunities related to the same. Having a good understanding of how and why each of these historical documents and events transpired and how we can promote their importance in an informed manner is important as both an educator and an individual citizen.

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

A. In my free time, I love to get outside and walk, explore new culinary dishes, meet up with friends and family, and travel. I also dabble in a little bit of gardening – nothing too serious. While I do enjoy my personal time and space, I adore socializing and

entertaining. Regardless of where I work, you will always find me an active member of the social committee trying to help bring spirit and fun to the workspace or hosting something at home. These last few years of living through the pandemic have seriously impacted some of the things I have been able to do in my free time and as things continue to open, like most people, I am looking forward to getting back to creating a new normal for me. As the weather improves and the days get longer, I cannot wait to get out to hit the trails. Walking does wonders to clear my head after a long day's work – just getting away from technology for a few hours is invigorating. I love to cook and try new recipes. My mom worked wonders in the kitchen, and I loved watching her create the most amazing meals out of the most simple of ingredients. I am much more adventurous when it comes to mixing ingredients and creating my own recipes, and I love to entertain friends and family. One of my greatest pleasures is spending quality time with my great-nieces, Lucy and Darcie, and watching them grow into these amazing humans. Travel continues to be a passion of mine – I have been very fortunate to be able to visit a number of different cities and countries over the years and cannot wait to start that again. There are a few places left on my Bucket List that I want to visit over the next few years and am hoping to start planning for another trip to Europe for next year – I am still a little nervous about international travel, so I am putting that on hold for another year. This year I am going to stick to exploring some of the sights and sounds our beautiful province has to offer and to participate in as many Come Home Year events as I am able. It will be good to reconnect with friends and loved ones that I have not seen in a few years.

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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.

OF SPECIAL INTEREST...

STORYTELLERS ENGAGING STUDENTS THROUGH ENTERTAINING FRENCH LANGUAGE PROJECT

by Annette Warren

One might think one would need lots of flashy electronic gadgets to keep the attention of today's young people, but all that is needed, I have recently learned, is a piece of string. As part of the "Les Rencontres" series of Google Meets with five French Canadian storytellers offered through the Second Language Council of the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association over a five-month period, my students watched, transfixed, as the wonderful Anne Glover twisted and spun her simple string into the shape of a chair, a butterfly, and even a monkey climbing a tree. My class looked on with mouths wide.

My students enjoyed the series tremendously, but enjoyment was far from the only benefit of these stories. As they listened and participated, students learned and practiced new French vocabulary. As they saw other classes around the province who are learning French, just like them, they realized that they are part of a commu-

nity of language learners. They developed a concept of the rich cultures and traditions of Canada and its varied people, and learned that French is spoken all over our country. Finally, they heard tales with positive morals, such as perseverance and acceptance of others, that enriched their socio-emotional learning. While the "Les Rencontres" series was entertaining, it was also a rich educational experience for my students. For that, I would like to say "thank you" to all those who worked to make the series possible. Your work to create this series is important and appreciated.

The Second Languages Council gratefully acknowledges the support of the Government of Canada and the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador for their support of this project.

Annette Warren is a Grade Five French Immersion Teacher at Sprucewood Academy in Grand Falls-Windsor.

THIS WAS AN EXCELLENT EXPERIENCE FOR MY STUDENTS. THE OPPORTUNITY TO BE IN A FRANCOPHONE "SPACE" IS INVALUABLE, AND THE ENERGY OF THE PRESENTERS IS INFECTIOUS. IT IS EASY TO GET CAUGHT IN A SILO, AND SOMETIMES I'M CAUTIOUS TO SEEK OPPORTUNITIES IF I'M UNABLE TO VET THEIR QUALITY OR VALUE FIRST. HAVING IT CURATED IN THIS WAY IS EXTREMELY VALUABLE.

These storytelling sessions have indeed been an enriching learning experience for my students and also for me! The sessions, as well as the background information sent in advance, have provided the opportunity for us to get to know more about our own country - the geography, the history, the languages, the cultures and most importantly, the peoples and people. We are undoubtedly rich in all of these. In addition, the opportunity to hear Canadian French in authentic use is invaluable. I feel that these sessions help bring us together as a nation and as individuals.

"Les Rencontres" program was a very valuable authentic experience for my students. This program provided entertainment in French while offering an authentic interaction with a French speaker other than their teacher. Students were pleasantly surprised that they understood most of what they heard which engaged them throughout the sessions. It was a nice treat and a confidence boost for the students!

"Les rencontres" was a great way to bring authentic 'real life' experiences into the classroom! Not only did it provide an interactive session, but the students were able to learn a little about la francophonie canadienne and acknowledge that French is more than something to learn in school!



Weeks later I have caught my students still singing 'le chat fait dodo', one of the songs taught to us by the storytellers. Clearly a lasting experience that students will remember.

In our area of Newfoundland it is rare to meet a native French speaker. As my students laughed out loud at the camera tricks of Ti-Bert and ooh-ed and ahh-ed at the string pictures of Anne Glover, they also learned that French is a living language outside of the classroom in our country. As they heard the aboriginal stories of Cheyda Haremein, they were developing awareness of aboriginal culture that helped them meet curriculum outcomes. As they watched the cameras of the other classes participating, they saw that there are many others studying French, just like them, and that we can come together as a French-speaking community to enjoy time and cultural experiences together.

Having the opportunity to listen to someone else speak French other than their teacher, and being able to interact with a Francophone, made learning French more "real" for my students. It showed them the value of learning French beyond the classroom and introduced them to communities across Canada that value French. Finally, seeing other French classes participate in the presentations connected them to the local French community in a way that is normally not offered. Most importantly, they had a great time listening to the stories (lots of laughter!).

My learners really enjoyed these storytellers and their presentations. They were both entertaining and interactive. My learners were offered the opportunity to see authentic examples of la francophonie from across Canada. The timing was convenient as the class had a chance to relax and enjoy themselves. We will certainly be attending again in the future should this initiative continue. Merci!

OF SPECIAL INTEREST...

SECOND LANGUAGE COUNCIL FRENCH COURSES FOR TEACHERS

by Erin O'Leary

Teaching a second language is a unique experience, especially as a language learner myself. When I saw the offer to spend a semester taking a French course by distance from the ACFSJ, I thought it could be a great opportunity to brush up on my own French skills, and also an excellent way to connect with other mature learners across the province.

The ACFSJ distance courses provided a relaxed environment for our small class to engage in meaningful conversation and practice second language skills. Getting to connect with other professionals (teachers, lawyers and fellow francophiles) island-wide at various levels was both engaging and rewarding.

I discovered some new strategies for engaging my own students: a favorite activity I brought back to my classes is holding small debates of silly questions. I also found many activities that we did were appropriate to bring right into my classroom. Some of these will especially help prepare some of my students who will be writing the DELF B1 exam in May.

Despite being a weekly commitment, the time I spent in class helped me prepare to teach all of my students and time really flew by. It felt as though I was able to streamline my own planning and preparation through being a student myself!

Through participation in these courses, I feel as though I have become a better teacher. I feel I can better keep my own students engaged and as well, I've helped demonstrate to my students the value of being a lifelong learner. Thanks to the Second Language Council for making this opportunity available to teachers like me who work outside of the metro area.

Erin O'Leary is a French and Biology Teacher at Corner Brook Regional High.

LIONS OF LANGUAGE

by Laun Shoemaker

The Second Language Council's Ed Week Kahoot was a fun way of working and thinking in French. At about 45 minutes in length and consisting of some 70 questions, the Kahoot challenged students' knowledge of Sports, Popular Culture, Canadiana and Education themes and, of course, it was all in French. Across the province, the Grades 3-6 Kahoot was enjoyed by 166 participants, and the 7-12 Kahoot had 503 players. In the

3-6 game, Newtown Elementary had a strong showing; taking first and second place. In the 7-12 category White Hills Academy in Stephenville came out on top with first and third place wins.

The Second Language Council thanks Kahoot Master and Edutainment Expert Glenn Cake for putting together the SLC Education Week Kahoot and teachers and students for making it such a success!



Charlee Moore (right) and Grace McGrath (left) take First and Second Place in the SLC Ed Week Kahoot.

SECOND LANGUAGE COUNCIL SCHOLARSHIP AWARDEES

by Laun Shoemaker

The Second Language Council congratulates our scholarship awardees Kaitlyn Little and Nicklas Dolomount. Nominated by Katherine Bussey and Jennifer Hunt (Kaitlyn) and Ashley Sheppard (Nicklas) for outstanding efforts during their internship, Kaitlyn and Nicklas were selected to receive their awards from a group of fine candidates. The SLC French Teacher Scholarship Fund is intended to promote and encourage the development of new teachers for French Language instruction.



Nicklas Dolomount



Kaitlyn Little

Laun Shoemaker is a teacher at Beachy Cove Elementary in Portugal Cove-St. Philip's.

CYRIL LINDBERG CUTLER, 1947–2022

Cyril was born on June 10, 1947 and passed away on February 3, 2022, with his wife Linda and his girls by his side.

Cyril was a true ‘MacGyver’ in life, in family, in skill, and in community. He was a lifelong mentor and a well-respected teacher (of 31 years) who guided many young lives. If anyone needed something, ‘check with Cyril Cutler’. If he needed something to be built, he built it. If something needed to be fixed, he fixed it. If something needed to be solved, he solved it. And whatever had to be done, he did it. Cyril was a leader and supporter of the Indian Bay Lions Club for many years. He was a well-respected member of the community and believed in its importance and strength.

Cyril’s dedication, skill and love of labour were portrayed through one of his most prized achievements – Juno. He started from scratch, researched his plans and design, and began his journey to build a boat, a lifelong dream. From cutting and milling the logs, to fiber glassing, to installing the motor and electronics, and finally setting sail in June of 2003, he did it all. Juno, the protector of women, was the name he chose to represent his love for his three girls and bride, “a forever safe haven for all the ladies of his life”. A beacon for all awaiting a journey, he loved to entertain and generously captained voyages for all.

Cyril is survived by Linda, the love of his life for 51 years, his three girls: Renee (Cyril), Rosina (Bill), and Rachelle (Terry), and his five treasured grandchildren: Jakob, Grace, Daniel, Alex, and Lily.

A beloved friend to many, his loud laugh filled a room. His infectious (and sometimes sly) smile will be fondly remembered. He will be remembered and reminisced about forever, “Where there’s one there’ll be the other, Music and friends”.

(Submitted by Rachelle Cutler)

LORETTA HAYES (PEDDLE), 1941–2020

“The best teachers teach from the heart, not from the books.” Loretta Hayes was, without a doubt, one of the best!

Loretta was the sixth of fourteen children for Lawrence and Ellen Mary Peddle (Fitzgerald) of Tilton. She married the love of her life, Bill, on December 28, 1967. She had two daughters and three grandchildren. She regarded her role as mother and ‘nanny’ with great pride.

Loretta lived in Tilton her entire life. She graduated from Littledale in 1958 and started teaching in Tilton in a one room schoolhouse. She later returned to university and completed her Bachelor of Arts. She eventually transferred to Cupids and finally Marysvale, where she spent the remainder of her career as teaching principal. Her number one priority as a teacher was to ensure every child felt loved and welcomed always. She finished her career in 1987.

Although Loretta dearly loved teaching, she enjoyed the next chapter of her life. She appreciated the simple things – walking “around the pond”, reading mystery books, and above all else, being a grandmother.

Loretta was a woman of great faith. She believed in helping others and treating everyone with kindness and respect. She was someone anyone could depend on.

Teaching was a calling she held with great esteem. Perhaps it was her love of the profession that influenced her two sisters, brother and daughter to follow in her footsteps. Even in her last few years, when Alzheimer’s had taken over, Loretta often relived her days as a teacher – a calling that never went away.

It is said that teaching is the greatest act of optimism. Loretta exuberated this, making everyone feel loved, capable and always valued. She will be forever missed and always remembered for her love, acceptance and support for all.

(Submitted by Regina Hayes)



Cyril Cutler



Loretta Hayes

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

June 2022

June 10-11 NLTA Provincial Executive Meeting

June 16 **Deadline:** PD Fund applications

July 2022

July 31 **Deadline:** NLTA Scholarship Applications

PRE-RETIREMENT SEMINARS 2022-23

Members eligible to retire by **June 2025** can register for an NLTA Pre-Retirement Seminar scheduled to be held this fall in Corner Brook, Grand Falls-Windsor and St. John's. One additional seminar will be offered virtually December 8-9.

Information and registration form can be found on the NLTA website at www.nlta.nl.ca/preretirement2022.

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, 2022



IMPORTANT NOTICE NLESD SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS

For approval to the Newfoundland and Labrador English School District (NLESD) substitute lists for the upcoming 2022-23 school year, all actively employed substitutes/temporary/casual employees and all employees that are on an approved leave of absence from NLESD at the end of the 2021-22 school year, are required to submit an internal Criminal Offence Declaration form within six months of application.

The Criminal Offence declaration is available on Step 10 of each teachers' online profile. This is a written declaration on the NLESD profile to be prepared by the teacher, listing the individual's charges and convictions for criminal offences under the Criminal Code of Canada and provincial legislation, since last submitting a Criminal Record Check or Criminal Offence Declaration to the District, up to and including the date of the declaration.

For new teachers, teachers who did not seek approval for the substitute list in 2021-22, or anyone who has terminated employment with the District and are planning to substitute in 2022-23, they are required to provide a new Criminal Record Check, as well as a Vulnerable Sector Check completed by the RNC or RCMP within six months of application to the substitute list. Due to the overwhelming volume of requests to the RNC and RCMP regarding Criminal Record and Vulnerable Sector Checks, it is recommended to apply early to avoid delays. Once obtained, these teachers will need to upload their Criminal Record and Vulnerable Sector Checks to their online NLESD profile.

Those applying to the substitute list are also required to complete the online Respectful Work Place and Ethics Training modules prior to starting work, and provide proof of their vaccination status (this requirement is subject to government policy review) in order to receive approval.

It is the responsibility of the employee to ensure the necessary steps are completed in their substitute application. If documentation is missing, the teacher will not be approved until it is provided. If further clarification is required, please visit www.nlesd.ca.

NLTA SUMMER HOURS

July 4 – September 2

Monday to Thursday

8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Friday

8:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.