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T H E

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2023-2025 NLTA PROVINCIAL EXECUTIVE

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As the 2022-23 school year comes to a close, we all can take time to reflect on the successes and challenges of the last year.

Your Association will continue to use all its platforms to advocate for and highlight the work of the membership and we encourage you to continue sharing and promoting these important messages.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank and recognize one valued member of the NLTA team.

Michelle Lamarche, Editorial Assistant for *The Bulletin*, is retiring at the end of the summer after an over 30-year career with the Association. Those that know Michelle know her dedication and commitment to the NLTA, and if you have been privileged enough to work with Michelle, you have experienced her thoughtfulness and friendship. We have all truly enjoyed working with you, Michelle, and we wish you all the best!

To our members, we hope you can enjoy a much needed break and return in September renewed.

See you in September!

Jennifer



THE bulletin

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UP FRONT WITH THE NLTA PRESIDENT



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

Colleagues/Friends,

As another school year concludes, we undoubtedly find ourselves with mixed emotions. I will not speculate on the wide variety of emotions that may be present; however, I am sure that fatigue is quite high. I heard this from you frequently as I have read your emails, taken your calls, and chatted with you in your staffrooms.

With that being said, I have been impressed and personally motivated by your steadfastness and dedication to building a quality educational experience for your students. As stated by the highly respected reformer and public sector advocate, the 'Father of Canadian Health Care', Tommy Douglas: "the measure of a nation is the quality of its national life, what it does for the least fortunate of its citizens and the opportunities it provides for its youth to live useful and meaningful lives." Your individual efforts have gotten us through many difficult situations, while prioritizing the needs of our students and continuously demonstrating your professionalism; for that you are to be commended.

Your Association continues to fight the larger battles with Government and the employer, expressing your needs with the decision makers and doing so publicly when deemed valuable to do so. Our staff also continue to work diligently on your behalf behind the scenes. It is through this unwavering pressure within our own spheres of influence that I strongly believe we will continue to see change and improvements to our working conditions. It is through this lens that we must remain steadfast in our professional practice and support one another, 'on the ground', as we know our students, communities, and the profession will be the benefactors of this fight.

As a means of an update on a couple of primary items, please see the following:

Recruitment, Retention & Resources

– After lengthy pressure to have Government commit to the development of a plan for addressing the teaching shortages in our province, discussions have begun on the establishment of a formal framework. Your Association has been working with the school districts suggesting tangible opportunities for improvement. We have seen some success, particularly in the filling of 'hard to fill' positions. Suggestions are being exchanged with Government that are solution-focused and provide tangible approaches to filling the gaps that we are experiencing.

In line with this, you will have seen our new media spots, as part of our larger 'Invest in Our Kids' campaign, that highlight the teacher shortages being experienced throughout Newfoundland and Labrador. If there is hope for a stable and vibrant public educational system, it will need to be rooted in incentivization, comprehensive external recruitment strategies, protection of our workplace experience, and building an educator workforce from within.

Collective Bargaining

– Negotiations continue with the employer as we seek a fair deal that is respectful of NL teachers and reflective of the realities within our province and schools. Our 'Bargaining Brief' is the primary means of information sharing during the negotiating process; however, in-person and virtual meetings will be scheduled when a tentative agreement is struck, allowing ample time for questioning and explanatory positions.

2023 NLTA Biennial General Meeting

– Our primary democratic and decision-making event for the Association was held from April 11-13, in St. John's during the Easter school break. Your elected leaders from your Branches, Special Interest Councils, and Provincial Executive (along

with the support of our Association staff) invested in these three days to debate, collaborate, and set the path for our Association for the next two years.

Provincial Executive – I would like to thank our outgoing members: Derrick Baker, Vice-President Maureen Doyle-Gillingham, and Derek Drover. Your commitment to the Association during these tumultuous times has been highly valuable and greatly appreciated.

I would also like to extend congratulations to the following individuals who were re-elected during BGM 2023 and will be returning to the Provincial Executive Table: Angela Dawe, Darryl George, Kelly Loch, Tracey Payne, Colin Short, Sheldon Slaney, Della Way, and Sean Weir. As well, a congratulatory note and welcome to Hollis Cull, Vice-President Elect Dale Lambe, and Russell Stockley as they start their respective terms on the Provincial Executive Council. I look forward to pressing forward with you in a united effort in support of our members and an improved workplace and school system for all.

And finally, I would like to take this opportunity to wish you a safe and rejuvenating summer break with a challenge to stay informed on the work of your Association as we move toward a new school year in the fall.

Yours in Solidarity,



Knowing fully that you cannot always see or hear our media presence, a listing (with links) of our media coverage can be viewed on the NLTA website at the following link: www.nlta.nl.ca/nltapresident-trentlangdon-2/.

PROVINCIAL/NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL
NEWS

BURGEO

Down Syndrome/Cerebral Palsy awareness at Burgeo Academy

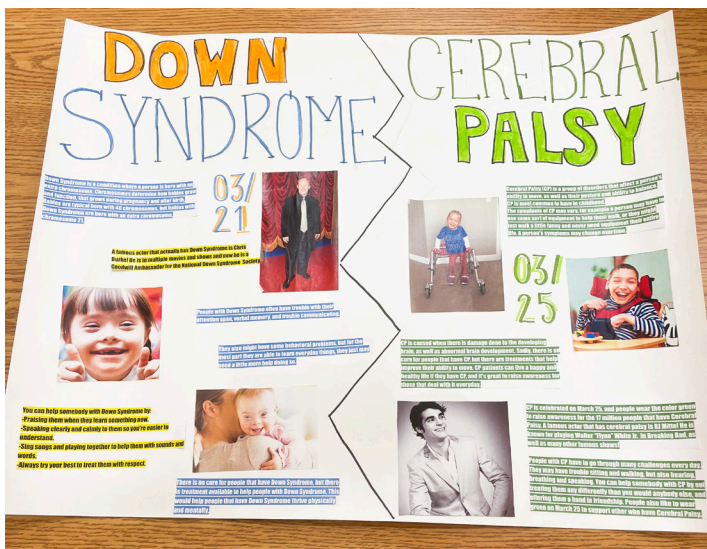
Students from the Grade 8/9 Health class at Burgeo Academy celebrated World Down Syndrome Day on March 21 and Cerebral Palsy Awareness Day on March 24.

“Our special students at Burgeo Academy were celebrated with posters informing the student body of their special needs,” said Wayne Vivian, a teacher at Burgeo Academy.

Students were given the following questions to answer on their posters: Definition of DS/CP; What causes DS/CP?; How does it affect children?; Is there a cure?; Give an example of a famous person (picture also) who has these health issues; Give three examples of how we can support DS/CP.

The entire student body was asked to celebrate Down Syndrome Day on March 21 by wearing odd socks and Cerebral Palsy Awareness Day on March 24 by wearing green.

Below is one of the many posters created by students to bring awareness to Down Syndrome and Cerebral Palsy.



Escape Room Project at Burgeo Academy

On April 6, students at Burgeo Academy participated in an Escape Room Project.

Thirteen students from the Grade 6/7 class were divided into three subject rooms (Math, Social Studies and French). One student in each group was responsible for building a cardboard escape box to simulate the locked room and the remaining members were given the task of selecting at least two clues, riddles or puzzles, each to be solved by the remainder of the student body (70) who were also divided into three groups (K to 12).

As each clue was solved, a number was given for the combination of the escape box and the three groups took turns “breaking out” of each of the subject rooms.



Burgoe Academy students work together in the Math escape room.

EDMONTON

Science Team NL rocks the National Science Fair

A huge congratulations goes to the members of Science Team NL who excelled at the Canada Wide Science Fair 2023, May 15-19 in Edmonton. The team, representing all regions of the province and both the English and French school boards, won a total of four medals and three special awards.

ON LOCATION

The team consisted of six students selected from the in-person 2023 Cenovus Energy Eastern Newfoundland Science and Technology Fair: Gonzaga's Orpa Hawlader and Tanish Bhatt, Holy Heart student Jude Almutawa, Ryan Cullen from Holy Trinity High, Alpita Patro from Macdonald Drive Junior High and St. Bonaventure's College student Sophia Zhang as well as four students from the 4th annual Labrador, Western and Central Newfoundland (LWCN) Virtual Fair: Emily Baker from Fitzgerald Academy, Haley House from French Shore Academy, Simon Penney of Ecole l'ENVOL and Hampden Academy student Hailey Ropson. Accompanying the students were chaperones/delegates Yvonne Dawe, Oishi Hawlader, Ysabelle Hubert and Natasha Janes. More information on this year's fairs can be found at <https://nlsciencefairs.ca>



The NL Team competed against 400 students from junior and senior high schools from all Canadian provinces and territories.

OTTAWA



The NLIA was represented at the CTF/FCE Women's Symposium which took place in Ottawa from May 17-19. Executive Members Angela Dawe and Kelly Loch are pictured here with Lorraine MacNeil, a substitute teacher from La Scie.

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HELEN BLANCHE MURPHY, 1946 – 2022

Helen Blanche Murphy, sister, aunt, and dear friend, passed on June 23, 2022 to the greater, and her mighty spirit is now part of the cosmos. Helen lived a principled life. Her commitment to equality, social justice, inclusion and the environment were guideposts in her life. Music and relationships were Helen's joy. Poetry with its economy of words, distillation of thought and rich imagery inspired her, brought stillness and focus. Indeed, Helen's spiritual practice was the way she lived life.

Helen loved the imagery of circles and her life was filled with many. The circle that worked for women's rights and equality, seeking social justice for all, and intent on making the world a better place for those who are marginalized and in need of a friendly hand. There was the circle of care for the environment, ecology and protection of our home Mother Earth. The trees, the rivers, the air have lost a friend and advocate.

And Helen's circle of music was ever present. Its roots were in her family home and then moved on to her early career as a school music teacher. She introduced the joy of music to children, and formed many lifelong friendships. And then there was her pride and joy, Stella's Circle Inclusion Choir. As the first volunteer choir director, Helen helped grow the choir, and they helped her grow too.

Helen's family, her circles of friends, and chosen families feel great loss and celebrate her stellar life.
(Submitted by Bobbie Boland)

WILLIAM (WILL) F. MURPHY, AUGUST 18, 1940 - FEBRUARY 11, 2023

Will was born on August 18, 1940, one of eight children to Tim and Anne Murphy of Colliers, Conception Bay. He was a member of the very first graduating class at Roncalli Central High School in Avondale in 1968. He showed much bravery and tenacity over the years to complete his Bachelor of Arts/Education at MUN (1991), all the while raising a family of four with his beloved wife Judy, as well as simultaneously making remarkable contributions to his community via his countless volunteer hours with the Immaculate Conception Parish Council, Colliers Recreation Commission, and numerous youth groups in Conception Bay Centre.

Will began his teaching career in 1970 at Norman's Cove Elementary in Norman's Cove, and then moved closer to his beloved hometown of Colliers to finish out the remainder of his teaching career at St. Anne's Elementary School in Conception Harbour. He spent most of his teaching years in

Grades 4 and 5 classrooms but his love of activity and sport, along with his athletic prowess, afforded him the opportunity to teach Physical Education as well and he became affectionately known to his students as "Mr. Gym".

He lived by the "Three Fs ... friendly, fun, and fair", not only in school, but in life. Throughout his career, he extended his genuine love of children, dedicating much of his non-school time to helping youth in communities throughout Conception Bay Centre. He was an active member of 251 Southern Cross Cadet Corps for many years as Capt. Murphy. He coached fastpitch softball, hockey, volleyball, and probably even "tiddly-winks", as Will was very much a lover of folklore, culture and preserving tradition.

Family was everything to Will; his wife, children and grandchildren were the pride of his life and he filled their every day with tonnes of "love squats", even from afar. His love of people did not end there and throughout his years, his humour, quick wit, love of song and his special gift of connecting with people, saw his "family" grow way beyond that of his immediate family.

Will loved life and it showed in just about everything he did. He lived a very full life of teaching, gardening, singing, playing sports and coaching, doing crossword puzzles, and playing cards – nothin' like a good ol' fashioned game o' growl, hearts, patience, crib, – you name it, he played it. His courage to stay strong and true to himself through multiple health challenges over the last few years was truly admirable.

A famous sociology professor, Morrie Schwartz once said, "As long as we can love each other and remember the feeling of love we had, we can die without ever really going away. All the love you created is still there. All the memories are still there. You live on – in the hearts of everyone you have touched and nurtured while you were here." To all those whose lives he touched – it is through our hearts and yours that he will live forevermore.

(Submitted by the Murphy Family)



Helen Blanche Murphy



William F. Murphy



Reflections on a Recent Human Rights Decision in Public Education

by Stefanie Tuff

The Board of Inquiry decision in a complaint filed with the Newfoundland and Labrador Human Rights Commission by the parents of a student, Carter Churchill, against the Newfoundland and Labrador English School District was recently released. This case received a great deal of media attention at all stages of the process, and no doubt many NLTA members are aware of it. I followed with interest as much of the online streaming of the hearings as I could when they were held during August and September of 2022, and I have read the final decision closely. The ruling is a significant one for this province, our public K-12 education system, teachers and students.

The Human Rights complaint filed by the student's parents alleged that the District discriminated against their son, who is deaf, by failing to implement appropriate accommodations so that he could access K-12 education services that are offered to the public. My intention in this short piece is not to opine on the specific outcome of the case, the Chief Adjudicator's findings that discrimination did occur, or the remedy granted. I will not comment on the past or current status of K-12 education services and supports for students who are deaf or hard of hearing as this is not my area of expertise. However, there are some key takeaways from this decision that stand out for me which I think are important for all NLTA members to be aware of:

1. Teachers and School Administrators care about their students and do the best they can, as professionals, with what they have to work with; but, they do not determine or control the allocation of human resources to schools. Based on the evidence in this case, the adjudicator found that,

The school was trying to provide the best education it had with the resources it was allowed by the District. (p. 46)

2. The expertise and experience of teachers in the field, on the front lines in our schools should inform employer decisions on the allocation and deployment of resources in a manner that will best meet student needs. Decision makers should be listening to teachers, not ignoring them or preventing them from discussing their ideas and recommendations with parents and guardians. The adjudicator stated,

I reiterate that during this school year the roster of Itinerant Teachers of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing [ITDHHs], re-submitted their proposal that the District establish a Satellite Support Classroom for Students who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing, a proposal which would have responded to the requirements of the [student's] ISSP. ... It was not pursued by the District. (p. 55)

... the roster of ITDHHs repeatedly raised concerns with District personnel. ... The ITDHH submitted proposals recommending significant changes in the delivery of education services for this cohort [of students]. ... The proposals were summarily rejected without being adequately evaluated and explored. ... I also find that when the roster of ITDHHs raised concerns with their superiors they were discouraged from discussing their concerns with parents. ... The Churchills were deprived of the opportunity to advocate for the satellite classroom proposal or other similar change. (pp.86-87)

I am particularly concerned by the District's ... failure to respond to the concerns raised by its roster of ITDHH. These teachers were sounding the alarm with respect to the programming being offered to students with severe language delays ... At times they explicitly framed this as a Human Rights issue. ... Their proposals were dismissed summarily without being properly explored or evaluated by the District. (p. 106)

3. Inclusion does not always mean that all students are best served by being in the regular classroom setting with their peers all the time. There should be an adequate continuum of supports and services, offered in the most appropriate setting and respecting the dignity of the student(s). In this case, the adjudicator found that the teachers' recommended approach was the correct path forward,

In my view the implementation of the DHH Classroom (Grade 4 onward) appropriately responds to Carter's needs. (p. 72)

The only solution which appears to adequately address Carter's need was to remove him from the mainstream and offer an alternative setting where he could receive intensive intervention ... This seems to have been understood by the District's roster of ITDHH and it motivated them to seek changes in programming. (p. 83)

In his decision, the adjudicator referenced and relied upon the 2012 Supreme Court of Canada ruling in *Moore v. British Columbia (Education)*, which was the final culmination of a Human Rights complaint filed in British Columbia by the parents of a student with a learning disability, Jeffrey Moore. This was a landmark decision on disability rights in which the Court ruled that supports for students with disabilities must be adequate to ensure students have meaningful access to education services. Interestingly, the NLTA's 2016 written submission and detailed presentation to the Premier's Task Force on Improving Educational Outcomes focussed particular attention on the issue of inclusive education and the potential impact of the Moore decision in Newfoundland and Labrador. This was the same school year that Carter Churchill started kindergarten. To summarize, very briefly, the Association argued in its brief to the Panel that, in its approach to resourcing the Inclusive Education Model,

... it seems the Provincial Government is not living up to its human rights obligation to provide to students the required accommodations they need to fully participate in the public education system, leaving the NLTA to question how many Jeffrey Moores we have in this province. (p. 13)

During the period of time reviewed by the adjudicator in the Churchill decision, I had the privilege of working with some of the teachers in question, providing support for them in appropriately and professionally bringing their concerns and ideas to the

District's attention. Overall, I see this ruling as a win from the educators' perspective. Teachers are highly qualified professionals; they are on the ground, in schools with students; they know when resources are being spread too thinly, they can see what is working and what is not, and they have the knowledge to advise on solutions. In the case of Carter Churchill, the DHH teachers' assessment of the problems and suggestions for resolving them proved, in the end, to be what was needed. Their colleagues in the school and on the student's ISSP/IEP teams, and the student's parents should not have been left to make decisions without the benefit of their expertise and considered assessment of the situation.

Regardless of the end result, I also recognize that nobody wants to be called as a witness in such matters, whatever the outcome. I have been in that chair, multiple times, and it is always stressful, regardless of the strength and integrity of one's evidence. Hopefully, one of the lessons learned and impacts of this decision moving forward will be greater acceptance of and respect for the professional perspectives of and proposals from NLTA members who are on the front lines every day with the students of our province. Students and teachers deserve no less. It is clear from the decision that things could have been very different had the teachers been listened to earlier.

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

References:

- *Churchill v Newfoundland and Labrador English School District, 2023 CanLII 16071 (NL HRC)*
- *Moore v British Columbia (Education), 2012 SCC 61 (CanLII), [2012] 3 SCR 360*
- *NLTA Submission to the Premier's Task Force on Improving Educational Outcomes (http://files.nlta.nl.ca/wp-content/uploads/public/documents/ptfsubmission_jan17.pdf)*

ADMIRALTY HOUSE Free Admission for Teachers

Located in Mount Pearl, Admiralty House Communications Museum was originally constructed in 1914 by the Marconi Telegraph Company during the First World War as the top secret H.M. Wireless Station for the British Royal Navy. The museum offers exhibits, programs, and events regularly through the year. Admission is free to anyone with an NLTA membership card. The museum also offers school tours, educational programs, and more. For more information please visit www.admiraltymuseum.com or call 709-748-1124.



Filling Vacant Teaching Positions An Overview of the Hiring Process and the Collective Agreement

by Ian Crewe

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? What does the new “seniority hiring” clause mean to permanent and replacement teachers? These types of issues are addressed in Articles 6 and 9 of the Provincial Collective Agreement.

Article 9 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), as further explained below.

Vacant 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, 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.)*

What this all means is that 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 process is the same, but separate, for Teaching and Learning Assistant (TLA) positions, in accordance with Clause 6.12 of the Provincial Collective Agreement.

PROGRAMS & SERVICES

With respect to the seniority provisions under the Provincial Collective Agreement, these apply to permanent teachers applying to move to a different permanent position – what is often referred to as “transfers”. This is minimum standard language, not a comparison or a question of degree. The language ensures that, 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. Seniority hiring *does not apply* to recognized positions of administrative responsibility (Program Specialist, Principal, Vice Principal, and Department Head) or to TLA positions. The “seniority transfer” language in Clause 6.11 has no impact on the rights of replacement and substitute teachers when applying for positions.

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).

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. Please reach out by emailing mail@nlta.ca or calling 709.726.3223.

Ian Crewe is the Assistant Executive Director at the NLTA.

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Seniority Service, Outside Service and Pension Service More Differences to Unravel

by Deana Hatcher

The purpose of this article is to outline the various requirements to have service credited for salary steps and sick leave accrual, and pension credit, and to address some common questions regarding how this impacts service for seniority. These are different and separate processes, and service that counts for one may not count for another. For instance, if a member takes parental leave, that service counts for seniority, salary increments, sick leave accrual and is eligible to be purchased for pension purposes. While purchasing the period of leave for pension purposes is valuable, seniority will accrue either way. For the member who doesn't purchase the pensionable year, they may find their seniority to be higher than their pensionable service. Conversely, if a member were approved for regular unpaid leave for one school year, in most cases a maximum of 10 days would be eligible for seniority whereas the full year could be purchased for pension purposes. For the member who does purchase the pensionable year, they may find their seniority to be lower than their pensionable service. Therefore, a member should not rely on their seniority to determine their retirement eligibility and likewise should not rely on their pensionable service to determine their seniority.

Seniority

In most cases, seniority is captured internally by the CSFP and NLESD through their records. If a member worked for both Districts, they should check to see that seniority from both districts has been combined. If a member taught in schools in Churchill Falls and schools in Conne River, that service would also count for seniority, but would not be captured internally by CSFP or NLESD and the member would need to make their employer aware of such service, to be included in their combined seniority.

In cases where service is eligible for both salary increments and for pensionable service, members must follow different steps for each separate process. The following information provides a general overview of the differences between these two types of service credit.

Outside Service for Salary Increments and Sick Leave Accrual

Only service with CSFP and NLESD is automatically credited in the payroll system for salary steps and sick leave accrual purposes. Everything else is considered "Outside Service", including other teaching and specialized service in and outside the province. If you have outside service experience that may be eligible for credit, you will need to contact your former employer(s) to send confirmation of that information for assessment in accordance with the provisions of the Collective Agreements. While you can do this anytime, members should also be aware of the time limits to have service credit applied retroactively, as per Clause 21.07 of the Provincial Collective Agreement, which states in relevant part:

(h) Notwithstanding (a) to (g) above, teachers with prior service are responsible for providing the required documentation to the Registrar of Teacher Certification within ninety (90) calendar days of becoming employed with a School Board. If the teacher fails to do so within this time limit the retroactive application of prior service shall be to the first day of the month in which the teacher provided the required documentation. This clause does not apply in cases of demonstrated clerical error or in extenuating circumstances as determined at the discretion of the Registrar.

(i) Subject to retroactivity being conditional upon the teacher's responsibility as set out in Clause 21.07(h), upon a teacher being hired by a school board, including being accepted on the substitute list, the school board shall notify the teacher in writing of the requirements of Clause 21.07(h).

You should contact Teacher Certification for further information and the necessary forms. Confirmation of service from former employer(s), using the required forms, must be submitted directly to the Registrar of Teacher Certification, who then completes an assessment. If approved, the Registrar then sends the information to Teachers' Payroll for processing. Members should review Article 21 of the Provincial Collective Agreement for the full list of eligible service. The Registrar will cross reference

your information with Clause 15.05 to determine whether your service also counts for sick leave accrual. Teacher Certification can be reached at (709) 729-3020 or teachercertification@gov.nl.ca, and most information is available online at www.gov.nl.ca/education/k12/teaching/certification.

Pension Service

Pensionable service with CSFP and NLESD is automatically credited in either the Teachers' Pension Plan (TPP) or the Government Money Purchase Plan (GMPP) for substitute teacher service. Some other types of service may also be credited automatically (teachers in Churchill Falls and members in seconded positions, for example), but in most cases, members must initiate a process to have other pensionable service as a teacher transferred to and credited under the TPP. Pensionable service, in Canadian provincial teachers' pension plans, for example, can be transferred to the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Pension Plan, as long as the pension funds were not withdrawn from the other plan. Under certain conditions, direct plan transfers are also possible from other pension plans, including those outside of education. You must also be actively contributing to the TPP when making a request to transfer pensionable service from another plan into the TPP. For example, members pay into the TPP when in a permanent or replacement contract, after 20 continuous days of substitute teaching, or when working in a "vacant time" claim for any period of time. Substitute service in the GMPP can also be transferred to the TPP when a member is in a position in which they are contributing to the TPP. Some transfer options are new, so don't rely on old information if you were told in the past that transferring pensionable service to the TPP was not possible. Members are advised to visit the Teachers' Pension Plan Corporation website at www.tppcnl.ca, or email memberservices@tppcnl.ca (you will need to provide your pension ID or the last 4 digits of your SIN) for information about pensionable service transfer eligibility and for the necessary forms to begin the transfer process.

It is important for members to know which types of service are eligible for salary steps, for sick leave accrual, for pensions and for seniority as these can impact salaries, available sick leave credits, retirement eligibility and hiring decisions. Members who have questions regarding service credit should contact an NLTA Administrative Officer via mail@nlta.ca for information and assistance.

.....
 Deana Hatcher is an Administrative Officer in Programs and Services with the NLTA, dhatcher@nlta.ca.

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The Walking Meditation

by Kenda Riggs

“Every path, every street in the world is your walking meditation path.” ~ Thich Nhat Hanh

“The point of a maze is to find its center... The point of a labyrinth is to find your center.”

As you head into the summer, I hope you find some time to rest, pause, reflect, and most importantly, restore some of your energy. It has been a very busy school year. Teachers often describe feeling tired at this time of year and are really looking forward to the summer break to try to replenish. Whether you plan on having a busy summer filled with activities and travel, or a more laid-back relaxing summer, be sure to take the necessary time for you. Remember to do the things that will be most helpful and make you feel good in your mind, body, and soul.

While you are away from teaching for the summer months, if you don't already practice, why not try some meditation? Meditation is a practice that can reduce stress, increase calmness and clarity, and promote happiness. Even just a few minutes per day can make a difference. In particular, mindfulness meditation is about paying close attention to the present moment, especially thoughts, feelings, and sensations. When we think of meditation, we often think of stillness, whereby someone is seated with their body relaxed and eyes closed, which people find extremely beneficial. Others, however, may find stillness difficult to do which is why it is important to have an awareness of other forms of meditation practice.

What is Walking Meditation?

Walking Meditation is a form of active meditation that takes place while the body is gently moving. This form of meditation occurs with open eyes and an active body. Some people like the idea of a walking meditation because it allows them to meditate while engaging in an active lifestyle. It is easy to practice, and enhances both physical, mental, and spiritual well-being.

To begin, simply stand in place and become aware of your entire body. Start with awareness of your feet. Your feet help balance your body and they are always adjusting to help you remain balanced. Notice how

your weight is distributed on both feet and the feeling of your toes touching each other. Take a moment and become aware of your standing balance before you start with your walking meditation. Take five deep breaths in through your nose and out through your mouth. As you do this, try to release any stress or negative energy.

Now that you have more awareness of your body, start walking with your chosen foot. When you take this first step, pay attention to how the step affects your entire body. Notice how each joint moves and interacts simultaneously to create a smooth walking motion. Focus your attention on your belly and chest. Let your shoulders hang freely and your arms flow naturally, as you breathe in and out. Pay special attention to how the wind moves around your body as you walk. Focus your thoughts on the things around you and the things going through your mind. If you have an overall tone of negativity or positivity, just notice it without judgment. During this walking meditation the point is to just be aware...slowly walk and breathe.

Keep your eyes softly focused on the area ahead of you. Do not look at any one thing in particular, just be alert and open. Try to achieve a balance of external and internal awareness. Continue meditating in this fashion for as long as you like. When you are ready, slowly stop your walking meditation and find a place to stand once again without walking and become aware of your standing, balanced self. Feel both feet fully and notice their connection to the earth beneath you. You have now completed your first walking meditation (Modified version taken from Jon Kabat-Zinn, 2014)

The Labyrinth

While some people like to do an in-the-moment walking meditation, others prefer to have a structure to follow like a labyrinth as an active walking meditation. A labyrinth is not a maze; rather it has



one clear pathway in, through the center and back out, which, like life, can offer many twists and turns. Research has shown that labyrinth walking can result in an increase in your focus and calm, along with a reduction in blood pressure. Labyrinths are used world-wide as a way to quiet the mind, calm anxieties, recover balance in life, enhance creativity and insight, self-reflection, and stress reduction.

As you enter the labyrinth, walk at a slow, relaxed pace, and follow the path to the center. As you walk, pay attention to everything you hear, without judgment. Listen to the sounds around you, like the birds chirping or tree leaves rustling. As you slowly walk, breathe deeply, and allow your shoulders to relax downward. If you feel any muscle tension, take a few deep breaths as you walk. Focus on the air you breathe to help relax your muscles.

As you continue to slowly walk, start noticing what may be around you. Really notice the colour, shape, and type of objects. Notice your reaction to what you see and try not to pass any judgement on what you see. Remind yourself you are just seeing, not judging. When thoughts and words come into your mind, release them, bringing your focus back to just seeing the world around you.

Sometimes choosing a peaceful word or phrase as a mantra to repeat while doing a walking meditation can be helpful. Some ideas include *I am peaceful*, or *This too shall pass*, or *I am going to be okay*. For some, listening to relaxing music while doing a walking meditation can also be nice. As there is no set ritual for walking a labyrinth, it is essential to enter the

labyrinth slowly, calming and clearing your mind. And when you reach the center, pause and reflect, then take your time slowly walking back out when ready.

There are labyrinths located worldwide, including a few in our own province. If you are interested in checking out an outdoor walking labyrinth, you can visit one at Bowring Park in the west end of the city of St. John's in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Finger Labyrinth Meditation

If you are not able to practice a walking meditation, there are handheld labyrinths that you can use with your finger as a meditative practice. Take deep breaths to begin to relax and focus. Place your pointer finger from your non-dominant hand on the entrance of the labyrinth. Slowly trace the pattern of the labyrinth with your finger allowing your mind to clear from extra thought and focus solely on following the path of the labyrinth. "Walk" to the center of the labyrinth and rest momentarily, taking deep breaths observing how you are feeling. Retrace your path out of the labyrinth. Sit back, breathe deeply, and relax. Observe and reflect on how you are feeling again.

Wishing you all a wonderful, rejuvenating summer break!

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Kenda Riggs is a Coordinator with the Employee Assistance Program for Teachers. For confidential assistance contact Kenda Riggs (ext. 265), kriggs@nlta.ca or Lori Hewitt (ext. 242), lhewitt@nlta.ca.



Autism Society NL

Acceptance and Understanding

by Leah Farrell

The Autism Society Newfoundland & Labrador (ASNL) is dedicated to promoting the development of individual, lifelong, and community-based supports and services for autistic people and continuously works to promote acceptance of neurodiversity through listening, actioning, and advocacy.

ASNL is part of an individual's journey; when goals are reached we cheer with them, when challenges arise, we listen and work together for a solution. We provide connection, support, and fun for Autistics, those who love them, and those who work with them.

ASNL is committed to promoting and educating around neurodiversity-affirming practices, primarily ASNL's Autism Acceptance and Understanding Presentations. The following article was developed from aspects of this presentation.

Creating Connections – Understanding Self-regulation and Co-regulation on the Road to a Neurodiversity-Affirming Culture

When we encounter distress behaviors at school, work or home, it is important to understand how to make positive connections that can effectively de-escalate a situation and preserve the dignity of a dysregulated individual. This approach requires an understanding of self-regulation and co-regulation and promotes a more neurodiversity-affirming space.

Self-regulation is a term used to describe the ability to manage one's own behaviours and emotions. When working with neurodivergent individuals in a work or school setting, modelling positive self-regulation will set up an environment for **co-regulation** to occur. Successful co-regulation will more efficiently de-escalate distress behaviours than time-outs, punishments or reward-based approaches.

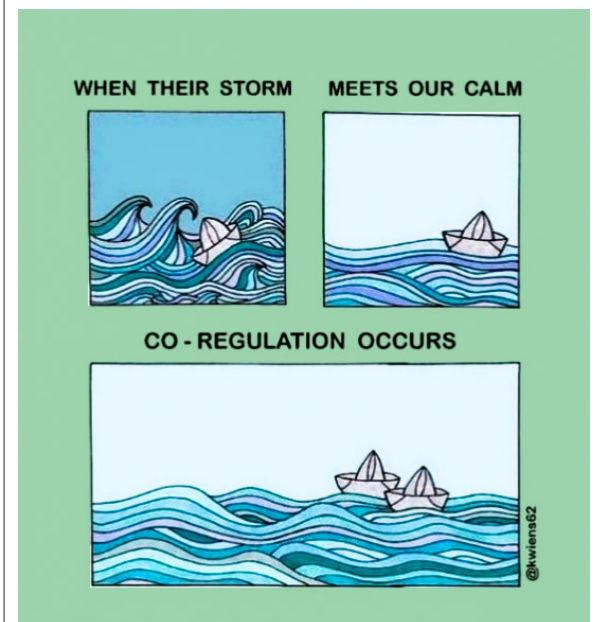
Self-regulation can look like maintaining a feeling of calm in the body, allowing for a normal rate of breath and a normal heart rate. Facial muscles are relaxed, and your voice is calm and reassuring without big variations in tone or intonation. There is a clear sense of thought and planning as well as an ability to ask for assistance if needed.

As Dr. Stuart Shanker points out in his book,

Self-Reg: How to Help Your Child (And You) Break the Stress Cycle and Successfully Engage With Life (2017), behavior is communication and there are five primary domains of regulation that we need to be aware of when considering distress behaviors.

1. Biological domain – hunger, lack of sleep, lack of movement, uncomfortable clothes etc.?
2. Emotional domain – was there a surprise, embarrassment, sadness, anger etc.?
3. Cognitive domain – are there new learning expectations, time pressures, forgetting, comparison to others etc.?
4. Social domain – was there group celebration, bullying, not fitting in, increase in social expectations, meeting new people etc.?
5. Prosocial domain – exposure to seeing others sad, hurt or angry? Feeling the stress of parents, family or friends?

Asking these questions will allow us to more fully understand what stressors may be responsible for the behaviour. When the stressor is detected, we can properly support the student or individual in a manner that meets their needs. This also allows for the



caregiver or teacher to bring awareness to the feelings the student is experiencing, in order to support their interoceptive understanding and the resulting distress behaviours. Working to shift the environment and remove the stressor, instead of trying to “fix” the student to suit the environment is what creating neurodiversity-affirming practice is based around. (Kennedy, 2023)

To bring a deeper understanding to the biological and emotional domains of regulation, it is important to explore the role **interoception** plays in distress behaviours.

Interoception is the collection of senses that bring awareness to the internal state of our body. Your internal organs send signals to your central nervous system about what they need. For example, your stomach begins to send signals to your brain to express hunger. You feel physical sensations within the abdomen which lets you know it's time to eat. Many people struggle to identify the physical sensation within their bodies and depend on emotions/thoughts from their brain to let them know when to act. Interoception highlights the importance of recognizing these physical sensations first, then identifying the emotion/thought connected to that sensation in order to act to satisfy a need.

As Occupational Therapist Kelly Mahler points out, some individuals may be less aware of these internal feelings and can miss out on clues their body is giving them about what emotion they may be feeling. Others can be overly aware of these senses, allowing for these feelings to be heightened and intense. Both of these situations can lead to distress behaviours. (Mahler, 2022)

Mahler continues by saying that “almost all of us can do things that enhance our interoceptive awareness or our ability to notice and understand the feelings coming from the inside of our bodies...One of the most well-established methods of improving interoceptive awareness is something called mindfulness...being able to pay attention to the present moment in a specific way” (Mahler, 2022)

But what about in a school setting when a neurodivergent student may not fully understand their own interoceptive awareness and may be struggling? **Co-regulation** can bolster internal awareness by helping individuals identify their biological and emotional needs, through validation of their experiences, and providing them with strategies, tools and regulation techniques.

Chris Bonello, an autistic self-advocate, author and former teacher, states that neurodiversity-affirming practice allows for a pride in autistic culture, “The goal isn't to change their neurology or destroy

who they are to build a more normal and boring person. It helps them to play to their strengths whilst addressing any weaknesses (or as we say in teaching, “areas of development”), whilst creating an environment that allows the student to see their identity in the most positive way possible” (Bonello 2021)

Neurodiversity-affirming culture is one that accepts all neurotypes. As caregivers, teachers and parents, when we master self-regulation, it allows us to be better equipped to support through co-regulation. Furthermore, when we reflect on the domains of regulation, we can begin to increase interoceptive awareness in neurodivergent children and/or students and provide them with lifelong tools to become strong self-advocates when faced with stressful environments and social situations. Neurodiversity-affirming spaces allow students to feel seen, heard and supported in an authentic way and will empower a sense of pride and acceptance within their community.

Leah Farrell is the Advocacy Manager for the Autism Society of Newfoundland & Labrador. Leah's focus is communication – listening to the needs of the Autistic community and sharing the mandate of the Autism Society within the province. Leah has a Masters of Arts degree in Social Anthropology from Memorial University and has worked in many different industries, including health and wellness and business. A mother of three, with one of her children diagnosed with Cri Du Chat Syndrome and Autism, advocacy is a large part of Leah's life. She is passionate about continuous learning and centering Autistic voices.

Citations

Mahler, K. (2022, May 10). What exactly is interoception? <https://www.kelly-mahler.com/resources/blog/what-exactly-is-interoception/>

Shanker, Dr. S. (2017) *Self-Reg: How to Help Your Child (And You) Break the Stress Cycle and Successfully Engage With Life*, Penguin Random House

Kennedy, E. (2023, January 5) What is neuro-diversity affirming practice? <https://allaboutcommunication.ca/neurodiversity-affirming/>

Bonello, C. (2021, January 25) So, you want to teach autistic students? Here at 12 tips from an autistic teacher. <https://autisticnotweird.com/teaching/?fbclid=IwAR1IUjQi0S1n7nJBComAXWf0YIN5iMS0oX30p60SDjZESZXRDRDVGWwNe9M>

Retired Teachers' Foundation
**Honouring Retired Teachers and
 Supporting Children's Charities**

by Bev Fisher

The Retired Teachers' Association of Newfoundland and Labrador (RTANL) has its own charity – the Retired Teachers' Foundation (RTF).

The RTF was founded in 1982 by the Central Division of the RTANL to honour the life and work of all retired teachers. It is a Canada Revenue Agency regulated children's charity with funds raised being given to institutions and groups that provide medical treatment and/or educational training for children who are incapacitated. The funds are generated by annual lump sum donations from our Provincial RTANL and its eight Divisions, individual donations from members and friends, and In Memoriam donations for deceased members. Some Divisions fundraise and donate the proceeds to the Foundation, others have elected to donate money from their share of member fees, and some do both.

Since 1987 the Foundation has donated approximately \$490,250 to children's charities in our province. Recipients are registered charities, and the

Foundation assists them in reaching their goals. To avail of these donations the charities must apply to the Foundation and meet the selection criteria that are in place. Some of the charities that have benefited from our donations in recent years are the War Amps CHAMPS program, Down Syndrome Society, Canadian Diabetes Camp Douwana, CNIB Youth Orientation Program, Mazol Shriners for the Patient Transportation Fund, Rainbow Riders, and the Candlelighters Camp Delight.

If you wish to donate in memory of a retired teacher, or anyone for that matter, you will be given a tax receipt and, if you wish, the family of the deceased will be advised of your donation. If you wish to donate, donation cards should be available at funeral homes or from our RTANL Division Presidents who can be contacted by visiting our website at www.nlta.nl.ca/rtanl-executive/

The RTF has another important role, that of managing the *Books of Remembrance*. The Books of Remembrance were made to commemorate the

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.ca/rtanl.

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





"I'm just like everyone else when I am riding a horse (with Rainbow Riders and supported by the RTF) because it takes me to places that my wheelchair could never do." (quote from Foundation recipient)

lives of deceased retired teachers. A memorial page is dedicated to each teacher and contains biographical information and a photo provided to the Foundation by the family of the deceased teacher. At present there are six Books of Remembrance, which are arranged chronologically by year of death. Book One: 1986-1998, Book Two: 1992-2000, Book Three: 2001-2006, Book Four: 2000-2010, Book Five: 2005-2010 and Book Six: 2018-2021. The Books are housed at The Rooms in St. John's, in the Provincial Archives Division. If ever you are visiting The Rooms, please have a look. Since 2018, all submissions have been recorded for online viewing as well. For more information on the Books of Remembrance, to submit a biography of a deceased teacher, or to view the online Books of Remembrance, go to www.nlta.nl.ca/rtfrooms or www.nlta.nl.ca/rtf-remembrancebook/

Bev Fisher is a member-at-large with the RTANL and President of the RTANL's Bonavista Division.



Atlantic Jewish Council's 20th Annual Holocaust Education Week

STUDENT PROGRAM:

Junior High and High School

Holocaust Survivor, speaker TBA

Thursday, November 2 | 10:30AM NT

Livestreamed in Newfoundland and Labrador |

- Each student to receive a copy of the survivor's memoirs.
- Educators to receive educator resources.

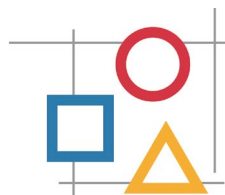
Mailed directly to each school compliments of the Azrieli Foundation.

REGISTRATION REQUIRED:

Edna LeVine, Director of Community Engagement, Atlantic Jewish Council:
engagement@theajc.ca

Best practices in Holocaust education: a workshop for educators – is your school/ association interested in participating or hosting a workshop?

For additional information please contact:
Edna LeVine, Director of Community Engagement, Atlantic Jewish Council:
engagement@theajc.ca



Biennial General Meeting 2023

The 2023 Biennial General Meeting of the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association took place at the Sheraton Hotel in St. John's from April 11-13. The following pages contain highlights of BGM as well as resolutions put forth by branches and special interest councils.

PRESIDENT'S BGM ADDRESS

The following are excerpts from President Trent Langdon's address delivered at BGM 2023:

I am honored and so grateful for this opportunity once again to address the BGM assembly as President of the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association.

Take a second to soak this in...we cannot take this forum or any other opportunity for assembly and collective action for granted. As mentioned last evening, there are many worldwide who are not afforded the same privileges. It is ours to take advantage of.

There is much work to be done my friends.

First off, we must protect the work of our union brothers and sisters that have gone before us as they established a solid foundation, comprised of our collective agreement and protections within well-managed group insurance and pension plans.

A system of governance and operations was also built which ensures that teacher welfare and labour rights are continually at the forefront with our staff leading the charge behind-the-scenes to address individual and group challenges as they arise.

All of this should serve to bring peace of mind, as we traverse a current landscape that is unprecedented within Newfoundland and Labrador, throughout the country, and the world.

I have sought the input of our members, all of whom utilize a lens that is based upon their own personal and professional experience.

I have heard and seen:

- Hopefulness/Cynicism
- Stability/Hopelessness
- Steadfastness/Despair
- Trust/Worry
- Contentment/Total Fatigue

Though individual perspectives vary, there is full agreement that the public education system of 2023 is the heaviest, and most uncertain, of all time. Triaging and 'making do' have become the norm as

part of this 'Hidden Reality' in our schools. If you look at the past 3+ years of your Association's efforts, we have been forced to address major 'curveballs' sent our way, either by the forces of nature or by a Government that is lacking any clear vision for public education and its employees.

- COVID-19 management and recovery
- Outright mismanagement of Teacher Payroll
- SmartFind implementation
- Sick Leave challenges
- Hiring protocols
- School Board dissolution
- Teacher Allocation Review

These are just a few of the areas that we have battled daily, consuming substantial time and effort, none of which focus on the attainment of gains or major improvements for educators. They have been required to simply maintain some semblance of stability...ultimately this is valuable time spent fixing the wrongs of the employer.

Our largest challenge as a collective is ensuring that school-based shortages are not normalized.

We must continue to apply pressure, holding Government to account.

What are they accountable for?

They are accountable for an education system that finds itself strapped for human resources, in line with healthcare and other public sectors that are in similar situations. A system that has the highest rate among all provinces, of children and youth with medically complex needs (The Report of the Health Accord). They are accountable to the children and citizens of NL.

There must be a separate and constructive conversation re: Education. There seems to be few 'true champions' of education within the governing party's ranks nor within the bureaucratic backrooms.

We are pressuring the powers-that-be to give us their plan. Commitments have been made to do so in the coming weeks; we will adjust our strategy accordingly.

Our plan would include a longitudinal investment in teacher training of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians ourselves, early recruitment and promotion for high school students to seek careers in education, incentivizing the role of professional educator, and reestablishing the value of schools within this province as community hubs and social development, and distinct efforts to retain our educators who have committed themselves, just to name a few. This to be supplemented with retention and recruitment of external resources.

THE ANSWER IS RIGHT HERE!

Having had the opportunity to experience the work of our Provincial Executive, our staff at 3 Kenmount Road, our Committees, our Negotiating Teams, our members on the frontlines, I have a deep-rooted belief that our efforts are having an impact. Your Association is recognized by Government as an ever-present voice for teachers and the public education system. Your staff are in contact daily with Government and School Board officials. You are keeping families and communities moving on a daily basis, this being clearly identified during the height of the pandemic when schools were the 'last to close, and the first to open'.

I believe that Government is well aware of how dangerously close we are to schools closing daily due to shortages. It is essential that we continue to push their hand toward change and future commitments.

Acknowledging our internal strength, ensuring that we are well-informed with accurate information is essential...we have a right and a responsibility to do so.

Some of us have fallen down the rabbit hole of buying into misinformation or surrounding ourselves with negative commentary that serves little other than to



stoke the fire of uncertainty and doubt.

We often blame our Association (ultimately our own) for the sins of the employer as the Association is not “doing enough” to rectify the employer’s wrongs or Government’s inaction. My question is, why do these wrongs happen in the first place? And why do we direct our blame towards the Association? I will say that a lack of visible gains does not mean inaction, as our daily battles are often to maintain our current protections. With that being said, if this Association ‘drops the ball’ on any issue, I will be the first to take full responsibility and make efforts to rectify or improve the situation.

We rely on your continued leadership, not only at the Joint Council table, but in the halls and staffrooms of your schools, and certainly within your Branches. I do believe it is incumbent on all of us to effectively learn about and share the efforts being made by the Association, providing the true context of situations as they arise. This does assist in sparking some hope and helps to redirect us down a solution-focused path. We all need something to ‘hang our hats on’ moving forward.

The NLTA is the legislated voice of the teaching profession in NL and has the right and responsibility to speak on issues impacted teachers and public education.

OUR CHALLENGE IS THIS...

- To remain relevant in a local area that is in a major state of flux.
- To keep issues on the forefront of public debate.
- Continually raise the profile of public education.
- Trust the process and your ability to be a part of a larger movement.
- We have a collective duty to impact MORALE, build TRUST, secure OPTIMISM, and promote the VALUE of our Association.

I wish all our members could see and experience this...This is Collective Strength!

Thank You.

PROVINCIAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL FOR 2023-25

- 2 Trent Langdon**, NLTA President, Waterford Valley Branch, School Counsellor, St. Peter’s Junior High, Mount Pearl
- 6 Dale Lambe**, NLTA Vice-President, Conception Bay South Branch, Principal, Villanova Junior High, Conception Bay South
- 9 Hollis Cull**, Bremco Branch, Teaching Principal, Cloud River Academy, Roddickton
- 3 Angela Dawe**, St. John’s Centre Branch, Music/Art/Home Economics/Social Studies Teacher, Brother Rice Junior High, St. John’s
- 4 Darryl George**, Upper Trinity South Branch, Assistant Principal, Crescent Collegiate, South Dildo
- 1 Kelly Loch**, Carbonear Branch, Instructional Resource Teacher/Reading Specialist/Assistant Principal, Persalvic School, Victoria
- 8 Tracey Payne**, Humber Branch, Chemistry/Science Teacher, Corner Brook Regional High School, Corner Brook
- 11 Colin Short**, Port aux Basques Branch, Elementary Teacher, St. James Elementary, Channel-Port aux Basques
- 10 Sheldon Slaney**, Placentia Branch, Grade 4 Teacher, St. Anne’s Academy, Dunville
- 5 Russell Stockley**, Ganova Branch, Grade 2 Teacher, William Mercer Academy, Dover
- 7 Della Way**, Belle Mer Branch, Science eTeacher, Centre for Distance Learning and Innovation (CDLI), Flower’s Cove
- 12 Sean Weir**, Coastal Labrador South Branch, Assistant Principal/Teacher-Librarian/Multi-Grade Teacher, Bayside Academy, Port Hope Simpson



NLTA AWARD WINNERS

At each BGM, the NLTA recognizes individuals who have made a significant contribution to education, the NLTA and its Branches and Special Interest Councils. Below are those honoured at BGM 2023:

Barnes Award

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

Émile Sopkowe of the Gender and Sexual Diversity Special Interest Council (GSDSIC) is the recipient of the 2022 Barnes Award.

Patrick Wells of the Math/Science Special Interest Council (MSSIC) is the recipient of the 2023 Barnes Award.



Barnes Award Winners Patrick Wells and Émile Sopkowe

Bancroft Award

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

Tracey Payne of the Humber Branch, and **Joe Santos** of the Waterford Valley Branch, are the recipients of the 2022 Bancroft Award.

Sandy Crowley of the Labrador West Branch, **Maureen Doyle-Gillingham** of the Carbonear Branch, and **Trevor Lodge** of the Deer Lake Branch, are the recipients of the 2023 Bancroft Award.



Bancroft Award Winners: Joe Santos, Tracey Payne, Maureen Doyle-Gillingham, Sandy Crowley, and Trevor Lodge

Special Recognition Award

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

Anne Whelan of the Carbonear Branch, is a recipient of the 2022 Special Recognition Award.

Wendy Jo Parsons-Clements of the Labrador West Branch, is a recipient of the 2023 Special Recognition Award.



Special Recognition Award Winners Wendy Jo Parsons-Clements and Anne Whelan

Patricia Cowan Award for Support and Promotion of Education

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

Dr. Lloydetta Quaicoe is the recipient of the Patricia Cowan Award for 2023. Lloydetta is the founder and Chief Executive Officer of Sharing Our Cultures and since coming to the province 40 years ago, has made a positive impact on the lives of many children and youth in Newfoundland and Labrador.



Patricia Cowan Award Winner Dr. Lloydetta Quaicoe

NLTA AWARD WINNERS

Honorary Membership – BGM 2023

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

Wayne Noseworthy is the 2023 honorary member of the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association, joining a group of 47 distinguished Newfoundlanders and Labradorians who have received this honor.



2023 Honorary Member Wayne Noseworthy

President's Award

The President's Award is presented to one person whom the President feels is a strong supporter of the Association during the President's term of office.

Derek Drover is the 2023 recipient of the President's Award. Derek was recognized for his commitment and dedication to the NLTA, his meticulous nature, professionalism, and character. After a 33-year teaching career, having served on Provincial Executive for 16 years, 11 years as a Table Officer, chairperson of many key NLTA committees and eight years as the President of the Seagaulher Branch, Derek is retiring in June.



2023 President's Award Winner Derek Drover



RESOLUTIONS FROM BGM 2023

Category A: Association

NLTA Staffing Levels

1. That when the NLTA requires additional staff to support the current permanent staffing levels at 3 Kenmount Road, that filling positions on a term contract basis be considered. **(CARRIED AS AMENDED)**

Committee Meetings

2. That the NLTA amend its policy I. Operations of the NLTA to provide that all Committees may meet virtually. **(CARRIED AS AMENDED)**

Timing of BGM

6. That the NLTA do a feasibility study to determine the costs and logistics of holding the BGM during the regular school day, before or after Easter, and conduct a survey of members to determine if they would be more likely to seek to become involved in the BGM if it did not take place during their Easter holidays. **(CARRIED AS AMENDED)**

BGM Dates

7. That the Provincial Executive investigate moving BGM to an alternate time of the year; preferably during the school year. However, the week following the closure of school for summer vacation or the week prior to commencing school may also be good alternatives. **(CARRIED)**

Public Awareness Campaign Funding

8. That the cost of the Association's public awareness campaign spending be split equally between the General Fund and the Emergency Fund. **(CARRIED)**

Funding for Special Interest Councils

10. That the NLTA increase the total programs budget for Special Interest Councils by \$15,000. **(CARRIED AS AMENDED)**

Category B: Programs and Services

Assistance for Substitute Teachers

12. That the NLTA lobby for assistance for those substitute teachers who remained committed throughout the COVID-19 shutdowns. **(CARRIED)**

Additional Resources for Student Mental Health Needs

13. That the NLTA lobby the Department of Education for additional resources, such as guidance or school counselors, to specifically assist with the increasing mental health needs of students. **(CARRIED)**

Qualifications for Positions

15. That the NLTA lobby the NLESD, CSFP, and the Department of Education to consider "relevant experience" and past teaching when teachers are applying for positions. **(REFERRED TO EXECUTIVE)**

B.Ed. Program Entry Requirements and Qualifications for Teaching Positions

16. That the NLTA lobby the NLESD, CSFP, and the Department of Education to allow job applicants to be considered qualified for a permanent job in those subject areas where they have met the entry requirements for any accredited Bachelor of Education program, most notably Memorial University. **(CARRIED AS AMENDED)**

Qualifications for Teaching Positions

17. That the NLTA lobby the NLESD, CSFP, and the Department of Education, that in order to be considered qualified for a permanent job or a transfer to an intermediate/secondary position, an applicant must be required to have either a major or a minor or the methodology course in the required subject area. **(REFERRED TO EXECUTIVE)**

Advocacy for Program Specialists

18. That the NLTA continue advocacy for program specialists to keep their present work schedule and calendar. **(CARRIED)**

Workplace Expectations for Administrators

19. That the NLTA advocate for reasonable and respectful workplace expectations for administrators. **(CARRIED)**

Title Change for Psychologists

20. That the NLTA lobby the Department of Education and School Boards for a title change from Educational Psychologist (which refers to a field of education) to School Psychologist or Psychologist (practitioners of psychology in schools). **(CARRIED AS AMENDED)**

Certification Levels for Psychologists

21. That the NLTA lobby the Department of Education/Teacher Certification and School Boards for a review of Certification Levels and options for Psychologists. **(CARRIED AS AMENDED)**

Master's and Doctoral Programs for School Psychology in NL

22. That the NLTA lobby the Department of Education, school boards, the NL Board of Psychology and Memorial University to develop or adapt a master's program and a doctoral program for School Psychology. **(CARRIED)**

Role of School Psychologists

23. That the NLTA lobby the Department of Education and School Boards to review the Role of School Psychologists to allow them to operate within their full scope of practice and to allow for interprofessional and intraprofessional collaboration." **(CARRIED AS AMENDED)**

Music Specialist Positions

24. That the NLTA lobby the NLESD so that partial music specialist positions in a school be supplemented with other appropriate teaching duties in the same school or the music teacher be assigned another school that is in close proximity (As recommended by “Learning in a Time of Change” Report of Teacher Allocation Review). **(CARRIED)**

Allowances for Speech-Language Pathologists

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

Allocation Formula for Speech-Language Pathologists

26. That NLTA enter into discussions with the Department of Education to create a fair, responsible and ethically sound allocation formula for Speech-Language Pathologists taking into consideration workload and geographical responsibility. **(CARRIED)**

Additional Allocations for Speech-Language Pathologists

27. That the NLTA lobby the Department of Education for additional allocations for and the creation of, an associated itinerant Speech-Language Pathologist (S-LP) position in each of the school families and the CSFP, specializing in Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC). **(CARRIED)**

Student Assistant Allocations

28. That the NLTA lobby the school district to have an adequate allocation of Student Assistants in place before September so that the limited resources of IRTs are not being diverted to Kindergarten classrooms and the needs of other students identified in June are not being met. This increases the classroom teacher workload and student programming is not being met. **(CARRIED)**

Hiring Practices for Music Teachers

29. That the NLTA conduct an audit of hiring practices in collaboration with stakeholders from the NLESD, CSFP, Department of Education, the Office of Teacher Certification, and Memorial University for educators with a Bachelor of Music Education degree. These efforts should aim to reveal any inconsistencies and ensure that these educators have fair and reasonable opportunities for employment within Newfoundland and Labrador. **(CARRIED AS AMENDED)**

Sick Leave Information

30. That the NLTA lobby Government/NLESD/CSFP to communicate the amount of leave time available to all NLTA members in real time throughout the school year. **(CARRIED AS AMENDED)**

Resources to Address School Attendance Issues

31. That the NLTA lobby the Department of Education for additional resources in all schools focused on those students with severe attendance issues. **(CARRIED)**

Labrador West Collective Bargaining Committee Composition

33. That a member of the Provincial Executive be put on both the collective bargaining and negotiating committees/teams during future negotiations pertaining to Labrador West and for the duration of the Labrador West Agreement being separate. **(CARRIED)**

Leave in Lieu for Administrators

34. That the Collective Bargaining Committee consider for inclusion in the opening proposals for the next round of negotiations, a provision that school principals and assistant principals be given five days of leave in lieu time to compensate for the extra days that are worked in addition to the 195 scheduled contract days. **(CARRIED AS AMENDED)**

Travel Leave for Medical Purposes

35. That the Collective Bargaining Committee consider for inclusion in the opening proposals for the next round of negotiations, a provision that NLTA members who must travel more than 400 kilometres for medical purposes be entitled to TWO days of paid leave outside of regular sick leave and family leave. **(CARRIED AS AMENDED)**

Hiring Formula for School Custodians

36. That the NLTA lobby the Department of Education to improve the formula used for hiring custodians and other maintenance personnel with the goal of incorporating additional criteria other than square footage. **(CARRIED AS AMENDED)**

Unfilled Partial Positions

37. That the NLTA lobby the Department of Education to address the long-term unfilled partial positions in schools. **(CARRIED)**

Supervision Duties

39. That the Collective Bargaining Committee consider for inclusion in the opening proposals for the next round of negotiations, a provision to establish a committee between the NLTA, NLESD, CSFP, and Department of Education to explore ways to decrease supervision duties. **(CARRIED AS AMENDED)**

Preparation Periods

40. That the Collective Bargaining Committee consider for inclusion in the opening proposals for the next round of negotiations, a provision for guaranteed daily preparation periods. **(CARRIED AS AMENDED)**

EAL Supports

41. That the NLTA lobby the Department of Education to increase EAL supports in all regions of Newfoundland and Labrador. **(CARRIED AS AMENDED)**

School Psychologist Allocations

42. That the NLTA lobby the Department of Education and school boards for a fixed allocation of School Psychologists of 1 Psychologist per 500 students. **(CARRIED AS AMENDED)**

Psychology as a Teachable Area

43. That the NLTA lobby the Department of Education and Teacher Certification to explore the creation of a specialized Bachelor of Education program for School Psychologists. **(CARRIED AS AMENDED)**

Kindergarten Assistant

44. That the NLTA advocate for a permanent Kindergarten Assistant TLA position for each Kindergarten class to aid in the transition from home to school and to address SEL. **(CARRIED AS AMENDED)**

Resolutions from the Floor

FL1 That the NLTA develop a public awareness campaign highlighting the shortage of teachers in the province. **(CARRIED)**

FL2 That the NLTA lobby the Employers, Department of Education, and MUN to establish a committee to increase the number of teachers working in the province. **(REFERRED TO EXECUTIVE)**

FL3 That NLTA lobby Employers and the Department of Education to offer recruitment incentives for hard to fill positions and to offer incentives to retain teachers who already hold positions at schools where those hard to fill positions exist. **(REFERRED TO EXECUTIVE)**

FL4 That the NLTA lobby the Employers and the Department of Education to offer incentives to new teachers to work in Newfoundland and Labrador. **(REFERRED TO EXECUTIVE)**

FL5 That the NLTA lobby the Employers to demonstrate their commitment to a working environment free of student and parent abuse towards members, including but not limited to consistent, strong, and appropriate consequences for students who exhibit this behavior, and consistent, strong, and appropriate responses towards parents behaving in such a manner. **(CARRIED)**

FL6 That the Collective Bargaining Committee consider for inclusion in the opening proposals for the next round of negotiations, a proposal for payment of allowances to Deaf and Hard of Hearing Itinerants and Blind and Visually Impaired Itinerants, at the same rate as allowances for School Psychologists. **(CARRIED)**

FL7 That the NLTA pilot including, for the next year, an option to attend Joint Council and Provincial Executive meetings virtually on the registration forms/in correspondence related to such meetings. **(CARRIED)**

FL8 That the NLTA lobby the Employers and the Department of Education for the clear delineation of teacher librarians' roles and responsibilities (i.e., teaching with technology, integrating technology, or providing leadership in technology, but NOT primarily repairing devices). **(CARRIED)**

FL9 That the NLTA lobby the Employers and the Department of Education for additional allocations for, and the creation of, a program specialist position for teacher librarianship. **(CARRIED)**

FL10 That NLTA lobby the Employers to adopt and use the moniker Teacher Librarian, rather than Learning Resource Teacher, in all aspects of Human Resources. **(CARRIED)**

FL11 That the NLTA lobby the Employers to provide timely and accurate public reporting of all unfilled positions (teacher, TLA, SA) – permanent, term, replacement, and substitute – regardless of duration. **(REFERRED TO EXECUTIVE)**

FL12 That the NLTA email minutes from Provincial Executive meetings, once adopted, to all NLTA members who have provided an email address to the NLTA, as well as to NLTA school representatives. **(CARRIED)**

FL13 That the NLTA further explore a further increase to the lifetime limit through the EAP program for counselling per member, as well as the total amount per counselling session. **(CARRIED)**

FL14 That NLTA lobby the Employers to separate school safety training from general professional learning offerings. **(CARRIED)**

FL15 That the NLTA lobby the Department of Education and Employers to provide all NLTA members with the opportunity to receive basic training on mental health (i.e., mental health first aid) to help them in responding appropriately to and supporting students who are experiencing such issues. **(CARRIED)**

New Business Resolutions

NB1 That an updated set of guidelines be developed and disseminated for SICs and branches for more efficient and transparent access to banking processes and services on behalf of membership business. **(CARRIED)**

ARTICLE 22: THE THREE-WEEK PAY PERIOD GAP

Teachers who have come into the profession in the past six years may be surprised to learn that this coming August 2023, they will experience a three-week gap between pay periods. Teachers who have been in the system prior to 2017 (the last time the three-week gap occurred) know the importance of financially preparing for that extra week. The last pay period for the current 2022-23 school year will occur on Thursday, August 17, 2023. The first pay period of the 2023-24 school year will be Thursday, September 7, 2023.

In the 1988-90 collective agreement teachers agreed through collective bargaining to change the method by which they receive their pay. Prior to the 1980s teachers were paid semi-monthly with payment made on the 15th and last day of each month. The new method of calculating payment allowed teachers to be paid biweekly, with the exception being those years in which there would be 27 pay periods.

Clauses 22.01 and 22.02 of the Provincial Collective Agreement (and previously the Labrador West Collective Agreement) read as follows:

22.01: Annual salary and allowances shall be paid in twenty-six (26) equal installments. In a school year in which payment in accordance with Clause 22.02 would yield twenty-seven (27) pay periods, the final pay period in August will be eliminated and each pay period in the subsequent year will occur one week earlier.

22.02: Teachers shall receive their pay cheques every second Thursday. If a holiday falls on Thursday, teachers will be paid on the last teaching day prior to that Thursday. If a holiday falls on Thursday during the months of July and August, teachers will be paid on the last banking day prior to that Thursday.

The two questions most often asked by teachers when the three-week gap occurs is **why does it occur** and **how often will it occur?**

Why?

Teachers have agreed through collective bargaining to have their salaries paid in twenty-six (26) equal instalments, as per the clauses referenced above. These 26 intervals of 14 days only account for 364 days, resulting in a missing day each year and two days in a leap year. These missing days eventually accumulate on the calendar creating a year in which there would be 27 pay periods. Rather than having a teacher's salary divided into 27 equal pay periods in those years, resulting in a net loss in bi-weekly pay of approximately 3.7 percent, it was considered better to negotiate an alternative. The alternative was that the final pay period in August would be eliminated and that each pay period for the subsequent school year would be advanced one week earlier. This has resulted in the situation where teachers actually begin receiving payment prior to the first day of classes in some school years.

How Often?

In a regular 365 day year the first pay period in September occurs one day earlier each year. This means that it would normally take seven years for the 27 pay period situation to repeat itself. However, when we consider the impact of a leap year every four years it means that the cycle repeats itself every five or six years depending on when the leap year occurs. The next time the cycle will repeat itself will be August 2028.

Over the years teachers have repeatedly expressed concerns about the inconvenience and hardship the three-week gap creates. Through the years attempts have been made to make changes to Article 22 through the collective bargaining process. To date these efforts have not resulted in changes to the current provisions.

If you have any questions regarding the three-week pay period gap, please contact an Administrative Officer in Programs and Services with the NLTA at 1-800-563-3599 or mail@nlta.ca.



NEWS & EVENTS

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

Dates to Remember

June 2023

June 9-10 NLTA Provincial Executive Meeting

June 15 **Deadline:** PD Fund applications

July 2023

July 31 **Deadline:** NLTA Scholarship Applications

PRE-RETIREMENT SEMINARS 2022-23

Members eligible to retire by **June 2026** can register for an NLTA Pre-Retirement Seminar scheduled to be held this fall in Deer Lake, Gander and St. John's.

Information and registration form can be found on the NLTA website at www.nlta.ca/preretirement2023.

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.ca and click "Forms" or contact the NLTA at mail@nlta.ca.

Application Deadline: July 31, 2023



IMPORTANT NOTICE NLESD SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS

For approval to the Newfoundland and Labrador English School District (NLESD) substitute lists for the upcoming 2023-24 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 2022-23 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 2022-23, or anyone who has terminated employment with the District and are planning to substitute in 2023-24, 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.

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

June 27 - September 1

Monday to Thursday

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

Friday

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

