

PROVINCIAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MINUTES

**Fourth Regular Executive Meeting
January 26, 2024**

**Boardroom
NLTA Building**

PRELIMINARIES

The Fourth regular meeting of the 2023-25 Provincial Executive Council was held in the NLTA Boardroom on Friday, January 26, 2024. The meeting convened at 9:00 a.m. and adjourned at 4:15 p.m. Participating in the meeting from Provincial Executive were: Trent Langdon (Chair), Dale Lambe, Angela Dawe, Lynette Snook, Sheldon Slaney, Della Way, Colin Short, Sean Weir, Hollis Cull, Russell Stockley, and Darryl George. Participating from Staff were Stefanie Tuff, Ian Crewe, Wade Rogers, Jennifer Tulk, Darlene Johnson, Jody Saunders, John Veitch, Deana Hatcher, Bob Johnston, Miriam Sheppard, Gabriel Ryan, and Samantha Lee.

REGRETS: Tracey Payne

The President acknowledged the recent passing of a teacher at Goulds Elementary as well as the passing of the Honorable Derrick Bragg and offered condolences to both families. He then welcomed all attendees and read the NLTA Mission Statement and Land Acknowledgement.

I. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

The following item was removed under X. New Business Agenda Items:

- “Teaching Today” Video

Short/Way: That the Agenda be adopted with the removal of item #2 under New Business.

CARRIED

II. MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 30 AND DECEMBER 1, 2023

Stockley/George: That the minutes of November 30 and December 1, 2023, be accepted as presented.

CARRIED

III. FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The Association’s financial statement for the period ending December 31, 2023, was reviewed by Mr. Sheldon Slaney, Chair of the Finance and Property Committee, for the information of members. Questions were entertained on the report. *(A copy is attached to the Official Minutes)*

IV. BUSINESS ARISING

There were no items under business arising at this time.

V. ASSOCIATION PRIORITIES FOR 2023-25

Updates on the NLTA Priorities for 2023-25 were provided to Provincial Executive for review, questions, and comment. The five Association Priorities for 2023-25 are: Workload Concerns; Membership Well-being and Protection; Collective Bargaining and Services for Members; Retention, Recruitment, and Resourcing; and, Advocacy on and Response to Government Initiatives. *(A copy of the document is attached to the Official Minutes).*

VI. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORTS – IN BLOCK

George/Snook: That the following committee reports and subsequent recommendations be approved in block.

CARRIED

1. Communications Committee, January 9, 2024

There were no recommendations from the committee at this time.

2. Curriculum Committee, January 8, 2024

There were no recommendations from the committee at this time.

3. Equity Issues in Education Committee, December 19, 2023

There were no recommendations from the committee at this time.

4. Membership Benefits and Services Committee, January 9, 2024

a) That Advisory Motion #2 from the December 2023 Joint Council meeting be amended and carried as follows:

- That the NLTA **Collective Bargaining Committee** consider ~~adding to~~ **for inclusion in** the opening proposals for the next round of negotiations ~~proposals a~~ **proposal a to top-up salaries and benefits** for teachers on maternity/~~adoption~~/paternity leave.

b) That Advisory Motion #4 from the December 2023 Joint Council meeting be amended and carried as follows:

- That the NLTA **Collective Bargaining Committee** consider **for inclusion in the opening proposals for the next round of negotiations a proposal for** ~~lobby~~ the employer to ~~top-up partial positions~~ **to make every effort to staff schools with full-time teaching units, but where necessary, to ensure that no part-time positions are less than fifty percent (50%).**

c) That Advisory Motion #5 from the December 2023 Joint Council meeting be amended and carried as follows:

- That the NLTA lobby the employer to remove the requirement for a sick note when teachers are out due to illness **Collective Bargaining Committee consider for inclusion in the opening proposals for the next round of negotiations a proposal that medical certificates should not be required at any time when teachers are using sick leave benefits.**

5. Professional Issues Committee, December 13, 2023

There were no recommendations from the committee at this time.

Ms. Dawe requested that the Professional Issues Committee report for January 11, 2024, be removed from the block:

6. Professional Issues Committee, January 11, 2024

Cull/Way: That Advisory Motion #3 from the December 2023 Joint Council meeting be amended and carried as follows:

That the NLTA lobby the government for the following:

1. Develop and implement a ~~proactive approach system~~ to address ~~ensure~~ complex needs within the classroom, ensuring that resources are **strategically** allocated strategically to prevent issues before they escalate **to address complex needs which arise in schools.**
2. Allocate additional resources to meet current needs, with a focus on a comprehensive and proactive support system.
3. Collaborate with relevant stakeholders to establish a framework that integrates educational and healthcare systems, to ensure a holistic approach to addressing complex needs.
4. Prioritize the placement of Speech-Language Pathologists in schools lacking such support, to ensure that children with communication challenges receive the necessary assistance.

CARRIED

Way/Cull: That Advisory Motion #6 from the December 2023 Joint Council meeting be amended and carried as follows:

That the NLTA request that the Department of Education stop expecting school staff to be accessible any time that is not during working hours (summer holidays, Christmas holidays, Easter holidays, other holidays during the school year, weekends, and after

~~hours~~); **set respectful boundaries for requesting necessary tasks for school operations.**

CARRIED

Cull/Way: That Advisory Motion #7 from the December 2023 Joint Council meeting be defeated as follows:

That the NLTA investigate the retention of teachers in hard-to-fill positions and lobby for greater flexibility in hiring protocols to improve recruitment and retention of teachers in these areas.

CARRIED

Cull/Slaney: That the report from the Professional Issues Committee of January 11, 2024, be accepted as presented.

CARRIED

Ms. Dawe requested that the Substitute Teacher Committee report for January 16, 2024, be removed from the block:

7. Substitute Teacher Committee, January 16, 2024

Stockley/Short: That the NLTA lobby the employer to consider substitute and replacement teaching time as seniority when applying for replacement and permanent positions.

Discussion ensued and the *Stockley/Short* motion was amended as follows:

Dawe/Lambe: That the motion be amended to read, “That the NLTA **Collective Bargaining Committee** lobby the employer to consider for **inclusion in the opening package for the next round of negotiations a proposal to have** substitute and replacement teaching time as seniority when ~~applying~~ **considering non-permanent teachers** for replacement and permanent positions.”

CARRIED

Following further discussion, the vote was called on the amended motion, which was **CARRIED**.

Stockley/Short: That the report from the Substitute Teacher Committee of January 16, 2024, be accepted as presented.

CARRIED

Mr. Lambe took the Chair.

VII. TABLE OFFICERS

Langdon/Short: That the NLTA Policy BES A.8(h) on Collective Bargaining – Membership Voting Requirements and Procedures be amended as follows:

After a province-wide vote is taken and ballots ~~received from individual branches~~ **cast through the electronic voting system** have been reconciled ~~with any telephone vote that has been received,~~ NLTA staff, by Executive motion, will be authorized to destroy the ballots in question once an accurate tabulation and record **of the vote** has been compiled ~~of said voting incident~~, but not less than ~~60~~ **30** days after the date of the ballot.

CARRIED

Langdon/Dawe: That the Electoral Committee for 2024-25 be appointed as follows: Paul Sheppard (Chairperson); Stephanie Lawlor-Menchions; and Jessica Rose.

CARRIED

Langdon/Short: That the donation request from CTF-FCE/Education International Support for Teachers and Students in Palestine be approved for a contribution amount of \$500.

CARRIED

VIII. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

In a written report, the President outlined for Executive members activities undertaken since the last Executive meeting including meetings, school visits, and media interviews. *(A copy of the report is on file with the Official Minutes.)*

President Langdon took the Chair.

IX. BRANCH OUTREACH REPORT

The report of Provincial Executive members on their contacts with NLTA branches and special interest councils was reviewed. Discussion ensued. *(A copy of the report is on file with the Official Minutes).*

X. NEW BUSINESS

a) Notice of Motions

Lambe/Short: That the ballots from the December 5-7, 2024, ratification vote be destroyed.

CARRIED

b) Agenda Items**1. Guidance Counsellor/Assessor (Hollis Cull)**

Mr. Cull expressed concern that there are some Guidance Counsellors in NL who cannot obtain full-time/permanent employment due to not having the required qualifications to conduct certain assessments. The necessary course is not easily accessible through Memorial University for individuals who have completed their guidance degree out of province. The Assistant Executive Director advised that the Association has lobbied the MUN Faculty of Education to offer the assessment course on a stand-alone basis, but this is not the current practice. The Executive Director added that this requirement for Guidance Counsellors as part of their professional role is unique to NL and, therefore, not a standard part of degree programs offered elsewhere. The Association will continue to advocate for change in this area.

2. “Teaching Today” Video (Hollis Cull)

This agenda item was withdrawn by Mr. Cull.

3. Retired Substitute Concerns (Hollis Cull)

Mr. Cull brought forward payroll concerns from retired substitute teachers in his area who are facing significant income tax bills each year and are frustrated in efforts to have Teacher Payroll increase their income tax deductions on a percentage basis. The Executive Director advised that employee income tax deductions must be done in compliance with CRA regulations, and the employer would not be aware of any substitute teacher’s other sources of income. There is a standard CRA form applicable to all employees, through which income deductions can be increased, but this can only be done by a specific dollar amount, not a percentage. Ms. Hatcher, Administrative Officer, added that retired substitutes do have the option to set up an increase in tax deductions from their pension through the TPPC, which would still be a set dollar amount but would be easier given that pension income is more consistent than substitute pay.

4. Employer Discretion Regarding the Role of the TLA (Russell Stockley)

Mr. Stockley presented some concerns regarding the role of a TLA, specifically with respect to a position that was posted as requiring proficiency/experience with ASL. He asked if this sort of requirement could negatively impact a TLA in the redundancy/reassignment process. The Assistant Executive Director advised that the legitimacy of such a qualification requirement would depend on the particular context and student needs in a specific school situation. If there is a student support/programming requirement for particular staff (TLAs, or DHH teachers) to be able to communicate via ASL, this could impact redundancy, reassignment, and hiring decisions, but the appropriateness of the employer requiring this qualification would have to be assessed based on the facts of a particular situation.

5. PL for Substitute Teachers (Russell Stockley)

Mr. Stockley raised the issue of substitute teachers having access to RTL training on a go-forward basis, and asked if there is any PL currently being offered by the employer that would be considered mandatory for substitute teachers. Some substitutes would like to be able to avail of more PL opportunities. The Executive Director advised that, in general, the Association is not aware of any mandatory PL for substitute teachers. Substitute teachers may be required to participate in PL if it takes place during a contract. The Association would like to see more PL opportunities for substitutes; however, making this mandatory would present a potential conflict with the casual/call-in nature of substitute teachers' work, particularly given that they have the right to turn down offers of employment.

6. AI (Hollis Cull)

Mr. Cull expressed concern regarding student use of AI and asked how teachers can monitor/control this. The Assistant Executive Director advised that he has been in contact with the Assistant Deputy Minister at the DOE regarding the need for policy on AI. The DOE has indicated that they are looking at the development of policy on this matter. Further discussion ensued.

7. School Closure Protocols/Policy (Tracey Payne)

This agenda item was withdrawn due to Ms. Payne's absence and a discussion related to this issue during the Priorities update.

8. Advisory Motions from Joint Council

Short/Way: That Advisory Motion #1 from the December Joint Council meeting be carried as follows:

That the NLTA lobby NLSchools to recruit more substitutes for TLAs across Newfoundland and Labrador.

CARRIED

9. 2024-25 Meeting Dates

The Executive Director reviewed and discussed the need to change the date for the Fall 2024 Joint Council meeting due to a conflict with the November long weekend.

A vote was called, and the following motion was accepted:

Lambe/Short: The second regular meeting of Table Officers and Provincial Executive and the first meeting of Joint Council for the 2024-25 school be moved to October 30, 31, and November 1, 2, respectively.

CARRIED

10. Teachers Think Tank

The Executive Director provided an update on the status of the Teachers Think Tank. She reviewed the draft agenda and explained the process as well as the role of the Executive members for the event. There was a roundtable discussion on the potential discussion cycle topics and recommendations from Executive members on members to be considered for the lived experience panel. Further discussion ensued.

11. Staffing Updates

The Executive Director informed Executive members of several recent updates/changes impacting NLTA support staff, mainly due to retirements and leaves.

12. Programs and Services Case Files Report

The Assistant Executive Director provided an overview of the Programs and Services Case File Report passed out at the beginning of the meeting. This annual summary includes updated, anonymized information on all open case files (grievances, accommodations, discipline matters, etc.) during the 2022-23 school year as well as EAP statistics. Further discussion ensued.

XI. GOOD NEWS ITEMS

The President expressed well wishes to Ms. Dawe for her continued recovery.

XII. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next regular meeting of Provincial Executive is scheduled for Thursday, February 29, 2024.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 4:15 p.m.

CONFIRMED:

PRESIDENT

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

DATE

DATE

SL