

PROVINCIAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MINUTES

**Fifth Regular Executive Meeting
February 29, 2024**

**Boardroom
NLTA Building**

PRELIMINARIES

The Fifth regular meeting of the 2023-25 Provincial Executive Council was held in the NLTA Boardroom on Thursday, February 29, 2024. The meeting convened at 9:00 a.m. and adjourned at 4:45 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, Deana Hatcher, Bob Johnston, Miriam Sheppard, Gabriel Ryan, and Samantha Lee.

REGRETS: Tracey Payne and John Veitch

The President acknowledged the recent passing of a retired teacher from Amalgamated Academy and offered condolences to the family. He welcomed all attendees and read the NLTA Mission Statement and Land Acknowledgement.

I. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Way/Slaney: That the Agenda be adopted as presented.

CARRIED

II. MINUTES OF JANUARY 26, 2024

Stockley/Dawe: That the minutes of January 26, 2024, be accepted as presented.

CARRIED

III. FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The Association's financial statement for the period ending January 31, 2024, 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

1. Teachers Think Tank

The Executive Director provided several updates on the status of the Teachers Think Tank. Executive members then had a roundtable discussion to describe their individual experiences of and reflections on the Think Tank event. Further discussion ensued.

Lambe/Weir: That the meeting be moved to an in-camera session.

CARRIED

Executive held an in-camera session to discuss the cancellation of a special Executive meeting that had been planned for February 26.

Snook/Slaney: That the meeting be moved out of an in-camera session.

CARRIED

Mr. Short joined the meeting; his presence was recorded at 9:55 a.m.

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. Further discussion on the Priorities will occur during the Joint Council meeting on March 1. *(A copy of the document is attached to the Official Minutes).*

VI. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORTS – IN BLOCK

Weir/Dawe: That the following committee reports and subsequent recommendations be approved in block.

CARRIED

1. Finance and Property Committee, February 28, 2024

There were no recommendations from the committee at this time.

2. Group Insurance Committee, February 10, 2024

There were no recommendations from the committee at this time.

3. Membership Benefits and Services Committee, February 22, 2024

- a) That Craig Hicks, Krista Houlihan, and Gord King be awarded the 2023-2024 Bancroft Award.
- b) That Petra Snook be awarded the 2023-2024 Special Recognition Award.
- c) That five Pre-Retirement Seminars be held, in accordance with Association Policy, during the Fall of 2024 in the following locations: Deer Lake, Gander and three in St. John's. The dates and sites will be determined by Programs and Services, subject to hotel and presenter availability.

Mr. Lambe requested that the Group Insurance Managers report for February 10, 2024, be removed from the block:

Mr. Lambe took the Chair.

4. Group Insurance Managers Report, February 10, 2024

Short/Dawe: That the meeting be moved to an in-camera session.

CARRIED

Executive members held an in-camera session to discuss certain information provided in the Group Insurance Managers Report of February 10, 2024.

Way/George: That the meeting be moved out of an in-camera session.

CARRIED

The following motion was brought forward from the in-camera session:

Dawe/Snook: That Group Insurance Managers reconvene to consider the use of the rate stabilization fund for one year to offset increases in Health premiums.

CARRIED

Slaney/Short: That the report from the Group Insurance Managers of February 10, 2024, be accepted as presented.

CARRIED

VII. TABLE OFFICERS

Langdon/Short: That the donation request from the Royal Canadian Legion NL Command – 24th Veterans Service Recognition Book be approved for a contribution amount of \$775.

CARRIED

Langdon/Dawe: That the donation request from the Memorial University Primary/Elementary Graduation Gala Class of 2024 be approved for a contribution amount of \$2,500.

CARRIED

Langdon/Short: That the meeting be moved to an in-camera session.

CARRIED

George/Snook: That the meeting be moved out of an in-camera session.

CARRIED

The following motions were brought forward from the in-camera session:

Langdon/Dawe: That the new policy to create NLTA Membership Benevolent Grants, commencing for the 2024-25 school year, be approved as presented.

CARRIED

Langdon/Short: That the NLTA hire a new Administrative Officer, Programs & Services, on a 2-year term contract, subject to the approval of the related budget adjustment by Joint Council.

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. NEW BUSINESS

a) Notice of Motions

There were no Motions submitted from Provincial Executive.

b) Agenda Items

1. Group Insurance Service Changes for Plan Members (Sean Weir)

Mr. Weir expressed concern about Manulife's recent attempt to restrict the purchase of certain drugs to particular pharmacies and asked if there would be any changes to the service delivery model due to the switch to belairdirect. The Executive Director advised that belairdirect (formerly Johnsons Inc.) is the plan administrator and does not control decisions of underwriters, such as Manulife, for particular areas of coverage. She advised that the regular market study process carried out by Group Insurance Managers every 5 years includes an assessment of the underwriters' commitment to serving the membership in the context of the realities of our province. Further discussion ensued.

2. Leave for SIC Presidents (Russell Stockley)

Mr. Stockley asked if there were any leave options available for SICs when they are providing PL for members. The Assistant Executive Director advised that leave for SIC members to plan/deliver and/or participate in PL is discretionary. Substitute teacher shortages continue to impact discretionary leave approvals. When approved, some discretionary leave for SIC leaders to provide PL to others may fall under payroll code 93.

3. Incidence of Drugs in our Communities (Russell Stockley)

Mr. Stockley expressed concern regarding increased drug use in communities, the impact on students, families, and school staff, and the need for a plan/strategy to address this, while recognizing that it is a very challenging and broader societal issue. The Executive Director advised that the NLTA has collaborated with NLSchools to provide naloxone kits in schools as well as access to training in their use for school staff who receive first aid training as well as others who may be interested.

4. Substitute Teacher Cancellations (Russell Stockley)

Mr. Stockley asked for clarification on the process for cancelling a substitute. The Assistant Executive Director explained that whether a previously booked substitute teacher can legitimately be cancelled depends on several factors and the specific facts of each situation. The administrator or SmartFind will inform the substitute that they are no longer needed as soon as possible. Further discussion ensued.

5. Pre-K Workload for Administrators (Sean Weir)

Mr. Weir expressed concern regarding additional workload for school administrators related to the introduction of Pre-Kindergarten programs in school buildings. He discussed an email that he received from the Pre-K Operations Manager with NLSchools which provides further detail on the matter. The Assistant Executive Director advised that the Association has reached out to the Assistant Deputy Minister of Education for the Early Learning and Child Development Division, who has committed to look into this matter. The Association continues to advocate for no additional workload for administrators associated with Pre-K sites.

Mr. Short took the Chair.

6. Technology Plan for Students (Dale Lambe)

Mr. Lambe spoke about the Chromebook Loan Programs for Grades 7- Level III and asked if there was a plan to continue the program. The Assistant Executive Director advised that the Association has reached out to the Superintendent of Schools who has indicated that there is no plan to discontinue this program. He further shared that there is a tech team in place who are in the process of repairing damaged devices and there have been 3900 new devices ordered to replace those that cannot be repaired. Further discussion ensued.

7. RTL Database Information Input (Dale Lambe)

This agenda item was withdrawn by Mr. Lambe.

8. COSS Concerns (Russell Stockley)

Mr. Stockley brought forward several concerns/questions from the COSS SIC:

- a) Mr. Stockley asked if the new Databases through PowerSchool will affect allocations for the upcoming school year. Ms. Darlene Johnson, Administrative Officer, stated that the Association is not aware of any impact on allocations, but there have been some concerns about entering data and report cards. A memo sent out to schools/teachers today indicates that IRTs can use Google Docs as they did previously, and that schools may use the RTL database or report card inserts as in previous years if they wish.
- b) Mr. Stockley asked for clarification on how the allocation of IRT units is determined. The Assistant Executive Director advised that the formula for IRT units has two components – 7/1000, along with a set number of “needs based” units. There has been no change to this allocation model for the upcoming school year.
- c) Mr. Stockley expressed concern about significant student absenteeism impacting IRT and other support services. Discussion ensued.
- d) Mr. Stockley expressed concern regarding current requirements for a comprehensive assessment in order for a student to receive recommended accommodations. This process is very time-consuming and undermines the integrity of the professional (physicians, etc.) who made the recommendations. Ms. Johnson advised that this requirement is not new, and the Department of Education’s Teaching to Diversity document explains that medical professionals do not dictate what happens in the school setting. Further discussion ensued.

9. Student Personal Electronic Directives from NLSchools and CSFP (Dale Lambe)

This agenda item was withdrawn by Mr. Lambe.

10. CTF Advisory Committees

The Executive Director reviewed the yearly memo from CTF regarding nominations for membership on CTF advisory committees. A communication outlining the process for Executive members to submit suggestions for nominations will be sent out in the coming weeks, with responses and information required in advance of the next Table Officers and Executive meetings as the deadline to submit any NLTA nominations to CTF is June 1, 2024.

X. GOOD NEWS ITEMS

The Assistant Executive Director shared an encounter he had with a man who approached him in a store when he was wearing a coat with the NLTA logo on it. The man expressed his thanks to all teachers and the hard work that they do.

Ms. Way stated that when she was in Quebec recently as a chaperone with students several people approached her to offer a compliment on how polite and well-behaved the students were.

XI. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next regular meeting of Provincial Executive is scheduled for Friday, April 26, and Saturday, April 27, 2024.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

CONFIRMED:

PRESIDENT

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

DATE

DATE

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