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T H E

bulletin



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Season's Greetings



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In this issue of *The Bulletin*, you'll find updates, reminders, and information to help keep you connected with NLTA news, activities, and member initiatives. We hope it continues to help you in staying informed as we move through the months ahead.



Please continue to share the good work happening in your classrooms, schools and communities – we want to hear about it! And if you have someone in your school that you feel the entire membership should get to know, tell us and they could be featured in an upcoming An Interview With... feature.

Take care,
Jennifer

THE bulletin

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**20
26
EVENTS**

**EDUCATION
WEEK
FEBRUARY
8-14**

**TEACHER
APPRECIATION
WEEK
FEBRUARY
8-14**

**JANEWAY
DAY
FEBRUARY
13**

UP FRONT WITH THE NLTA PRESIDENT



In my first year of teaching, I read a novel entitled *Pay It Forward* by Catherine Ryan Hyde. The plot of the novel centred around a young boy named Trevor McKinney who launches a humanitarian movement based on one simple principle: instead of repaying a favor, you "pay it forward" by performing acts of kindness for three other people. The novel was later turned into a commercial film starring Haley Joel Osment in the role of young McKinney. Inspired by the concept and the success of the film, several of my own students approached me wanting to implement "pay it forward" initiatives for their community and other school members. Little did they realize that I was in the midst of my own "pay it forward" experience. I was not paying though; I was reaping the rewards of mentorship and guidance from very professional and morally sound teachers. If we are to look seriously at retaining young teachers in this profession, a formal mentorship program will serve as a powerful mechanism to sustain their interests and inspire their commitment to our vocation. This will require resources to support the mentor and the new professional.

My first year of teaching was a rude awakening. Teaching in Bay de Verde, I was tasked with teaching 13 courses. My first day of work was hearing school protocols, receiving class lists, and grabbing 13 curriculum guides, all in large binders, that were meant to determine my path to knowledge for these students. I worked a late night preparing all my lessons for the next day. Everything was neat and detailed. The arrival of the students changed all of my plans. While I had enjoyed my Bachelor of Education program, nothing could have prepared me for the realities of working with young people and the unexpected challenges that this would bring. Only experience could make me the teacher that I needed to become, and the fact that my principal and more senior staff members took the time to teach me and encourage me. Twenty-eight years later those initial days in the profession have become even more difficult for our beginning teachers. While I was working in a heterogenous

classroom, new teachers today face complexities and complications that require immediate responses. Educational and medical professionals in our province cite a population with growing needs. Media covers violent incidents in all areas of our province, often involving youths that are not old enough to be named. Our teachers work with these same challenges and needs every day. They know the names, and they are still expected to support. For a new teacher, this task is daunting. Add in the fact that successful recruitment efforts in some remote areas involve people who are new to our culture, and we face retention risks that can be alleviated with a formalized mentorship program from the employer. If these people have shown an interest in committing to the province of Newfoundland and Labrador, our government owes it to them to make them feel welcomed and cared for.

As I have progressed in my career, I have always aimed to "pay it forward" to young people in our profession as it was once paid to me. As a classroom teacher, I remembered those colleagues who took the time to listen and offer sage advice. I aimed to do the same thing for the younger teachers who eventually shared my workspace. Once I moved into school administration, I found different mentors who shared common visions and values, and I learned from them. Once again, I attempted to identify and support young potential leaders once I gained confidence and competence. All of this was due to an innate desire to contribute back to the system, and the fact that I enjoyed the themes from a novel I read. This process needs to be more deliberate and structured if we aim to keep young people attached to this field.

Yours in leadership,
Dale



Dale Lambe
President



Sean Weir
Vice-President



Trent Langdon
Past President



Angela Dawe
Table Officer



Ian Adey



Hollis Cull

Best Wishes for the Holiday Season

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Marie-Chantal
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Kelly
Loch



Patrick
Murphy



Tracey
Payne



Lynette
Snook



Russell
Stockley



Della
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PROVINCIAL/NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL

NEWS

NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

2024-2025 NLTA Scholarship Winners Announced

Six Newfoundland and Labrador students who completed high school last June have been awarded NLTA scholarships for 2024-25. They are **Chloe Browne** (Gander Collegiate), child of Tina Royle, Gander; **Jocelyn Coates** (Clarenville High School), child of Cynthia Coates, Clarenville; **Liam Cull** (Cloud River Academy), child of Sonya Randell Cull, Roddickton; **Peter Mandeville** (Mount Pearl Senior High), child of Nancy Mandeville, Paradise; **Sarah Ryan** (Holy Spirit High), child of Sheryl Ryan, Paradise; and **Allison Stinson** (O'Donel High School), child of David Stinson, St. John's. The scholarships are awarded annually to dependents of active, retired, disabled or deceased members of the NLTA and are valued at \$1,500 each. Awards are based on the criteria used by the Department of Education for the selection of provincial scholarship recipients.



Chloe Browne



Jocelyn Coates



Liam Cull



Peter Mandeville



Sarah Ryan



Allison Stinson

ST. JOHN'S

Kids Eat Smart Radiothon

The NLTA participated in the recent Kids Eat Smart Radiothon on November 5, 2025. President **Dale Lambe** was joined by Table Officer **Angela Dawe**, Executive Member **Marie-Chantal Hurley** and Past President **Trent Langdon**. The Association donated \$7,500 to Kids Eat Smart. A total of \$562,499 was raised during the radiothon, which will provide 562,499 breakfasts to school-age children in NL at no cost to families.



The NLTA donated \$7,500 to support 2025-26 Kids Eat Smart programming in schools throughout the province.

GOOSE BAY

Beginning Teachers Session



The NLTA and NLSchools hosted a Labrador Beginning Teachers session on November 28-29.

IN MEMORIAM

FLORENCE (BLUNDON) COWAN
JULY 17, 1933 - NOVEMBER 7, 2025

Florence (Blundon) Cowan passed peacefully away on November 7, 2025, at the age of 92 years.

Predeceased by her husband Alexander; daughter-in-law, Janice (Sturge); sisters: Norma Noel and Ena Emberley and brothers: Harry and Cal.

Leaving to mourn her children: Peter (Judy) in Alberta, Stephenie (Bill Crane) Lower Island Cove and Craig in Quebec. Also mourning are her beloved grandchildren: Michael, Jenn, Andrew, Haley, Alanna, Josh, Megan, Steven and numerous great grandchildren along with her brother, Randy and wife Lillian; sisters: Carmie Roy, Ellie Sutton, Anna Bursey, Yvonne Lambert, Patsy Coulombe and sister-in-law, Alma Blundon.

Being born the first of 11 children, Florence left home at an early age to pursue a career in teaching. She taught at the old St. Mary's School, Southside Road, until she met and married the love of her life, Alex. She was a wonderful, loving, stay at home mom until her youngest, Craig, started school, then she returned to school herself and earned her Bachelor of Arts (Education) in 1969 and Master of Education in 1973.

When Florence retired from the Conception Bay South School Board, she dedicated her time to her family history and travelled all over the island with Alex in tow, visiting many graveyards and discovering new relations. She also loved her garden and grew many different varieties of flowers and shrubs.

Florence was a very generous person and helped wherever she saw the need. Her love for animals was well known to all who knew her. She adapted well to technology and was still FaceTiming family up until her passing.



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A Promise is a Promise

by Ian Crewe

Before, during, and since the 2025 provincial election, NLTA members know better than anyone that the future of our schools hinges on real, tangible change, not just political slogans. The NLTA Election Bulletin (October 2025) outlined each party's responses to our questions, and among them, the Progressive Conservative (PC) Party offered commitments that speak directly to the realities teachers face every day.

While the NLTA is non-partisan, our responsibility is to highlight how the parties' proposals align with the profession's needs. The PC Party's responses certainly show a willingness to address root problems in our system: unmanageable workloads, class size and composition pressures, inadequate specialist supports, and rising violence in schools.

1. Tackling Teacher Recruitment and Retention by Fixing Working Conditions

The PC Party's position as presented in The Election Bulletin began where teachers have been asking government to begin for years: with classroom realities. Instead of treating the teacher shortage as a simple numbers issue, they acknowledged the structural problems, including oversized classes, insufficient supports, and unstable assignments, all of which drive teachers from the profession.

Their commitments to reduce class sizes, prevent the splitting of teaching units beyond half-time, and collaborate directly with the NLTA reflected a recognition that retention won't improve unless the job itself becomes sustainable.

For teachers, this promise would appear to be a shift away from temporary incentives and toward improving the actual conditions under which we work.

2. Addressing Workload with More Staff versus More Initiatives

For years, teachers have carried the weight of systemic understaffing. The PC Party directly acknowl-

edged this, committing to hire more teachers, expand classroom supports, and stop the pattern of laying off student assistants and teaching assistants during key points of the year.

Just as importantly, they committed to ending the routine practice of pulling specialist teachers to cover classroom shortages, a disruption that has become normalized despite the harm it causes to students with complex needs.

These changes, if implemented as promised, won't solve everything overnight, but they do represent an apparent understanding that workload cannot be "managed" without more people in the system.

3. Confronting Violence and Restoring Safety in Classrooms

School violence has become a defining issue in many classrooms across the province. The PC Party's response as presented appears to take a multi-layered approach: improving access to school psychologists and social workers, supporting early intervention, and addressing the community factors that spill into our schools through improved mental health and addictions supports.

Crucially, they committed to listening to teachers and acting on what they hear. This statement has been absent from many previous government approaches.

4. Protecting Teachers from Online Harassment

Teachers are increasingly dealing with online aggression from students, parents, and community members. In its response to questions from the NLTA, the PC Party proposed developing a province-wide action plan with input from the NLTA that would include clear protocols for reporting, stronger investigative processes, and training for teachers and administrators.

5. Ensuring Reform is Credible and Evidence-Based

The PC Party's response to the NLTA question regarding the recently released Education Accord NL was direct: errors must be corrected, the full unedited report should be released, and recommendations should be analyzed with teachers at the table. Their commitment to reviewing the Education Accord line by line, including consultation with the NLTA, indicates an approach grounded in transparency rather than political presentation.

A Promising Direction IF Followed Through

Every election brings promises. But the PC Party's (and now government) responses offer something teachers have been calling for: respect for professional expertise, a willingness to collaborate, and a focus on workable, classroom-based solutions instead of superficial fixes.

The NLTA will continue to push for safe workplaces, smaller classes, adequate staffing, and genuine voice for educators. It was encouraging to see commitments that recognize what teachers have always known, improving education starts with listening to those who understand classrooms best. Only time will tell if those commitments become a reality for teachers and students in Newfoundland and Labrador.

.....
Ian Crewe is the Executive Director of the NLTA.

APPLYING FOR EDUCATIONAL LEAVE?

Applications for Educational Leave for the 2026–27 School Year are available on the NLTA website at www.nlta.nl.ca

Application is made to the District. **DISTRICT DEADLINES** are as follows:

NLSchools: January 16, 2026

CSFP: January 16, 2026

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Estimating Pension Take Home Pay

by Deana Hatcher

I once read a quote on Facebook that said, “Appreciate your blunt friend, they are often the realist.” While recently helping one of my dearest friends with her pension estimate, this quote came immediately to mind. After I explained the amount, she was quick to tell me “What most people want to know is what the bi-monthly pension pay will be – take home.” Emphasis on take home. Fair point.

The challenge is that neither the Teachers’ Pension Plan Corporation nor the NLTA are tax advisors who can provide that kind of individualized advice. However, when trying to estimate your pension take home pay, the following may be helpful as a starting point for discussion with your financial or tax advisor.

It is important to remember that your pension is paid twice monthly, so there will be 24 payments per year. By comparison, your regular salary is paid every 2 weeks, for a total of 26 payments per year. When you retire, you will no longer have certain deductions taken from your pension, including CPP, EI, TPP pension premiums, NLTA dues as well as some group insurance coverages. Basic Critical Illness and LTD will automatically end, for example, if you have those coverages (Voluntary Critical Illness coverage is still available).

Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) has an online tool which you can use to estimate the amount of taxes that will be deducted from your semi-monthly pension payment using current year tax rates. Yes, unfortunately, you will still pay taxes, but they will be based on your pension income amount rather than your salary amount, so not necessarily the amount that you pay while working. Google “CRA TOD” or visit <https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/e-services/digital-services-businesses/payroll-deductions-online-calculator.html> to access the calculator.

Let’s take an example of someone whose pension is \$56,000 annually. When you divide that by 24 you get a semi-monthly gross amount of \$2,333 ($56,000/24$). When you access the CRA calculator, you will need

to select “pension” when prompted for the type of calculation and click “next.” Then fill in the information on the next page and remember for Pay period frequency you would select “semi-monthly” and click “next.” When asked to provide your gross income per pay period, be sure to take your annual pension and divide it by 24 (\$2,333 in the example above). Online access to your pension information can be found at www.tppcnl.ca under myPENSION. First time users will need your employee ID, which is listed on your pay stub, and your SIN to register. Once you have entered your information and completed all the necessary steps, it will estimate your taxes (based on the tax rates in the year selected) and give you an estimated net (take home) pay amount.

Your group insurance deductions still must come off that estimated net pay amount. While premiums may change slightly, you can use a current pay stub to estimate your group insurance deductions by adding up most of your group insurance employee deductions (not all your deductions, just the insurance ones). As a reminder, Basic Critical Illness and LTD cease once you retire so they should not be included in this total. You can then subtract your total group insurance deduction estimate from the net amount provided by the CRA tool.

The approach above is intended as general advice only and should not be relied upon when making a final determination of your readiness to retire. Your financial advisor is best suited to provide you with such advice as they can make an individualized assessment considering any other sources of income or investments you may have, which may be important considerations for your retirement planning.

Deana Hatcher is an Administrative Officer in Programs and Services with the NLTA.



THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

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We continue to be humbled by the continued support of the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association for your ongoing commitment to our program.

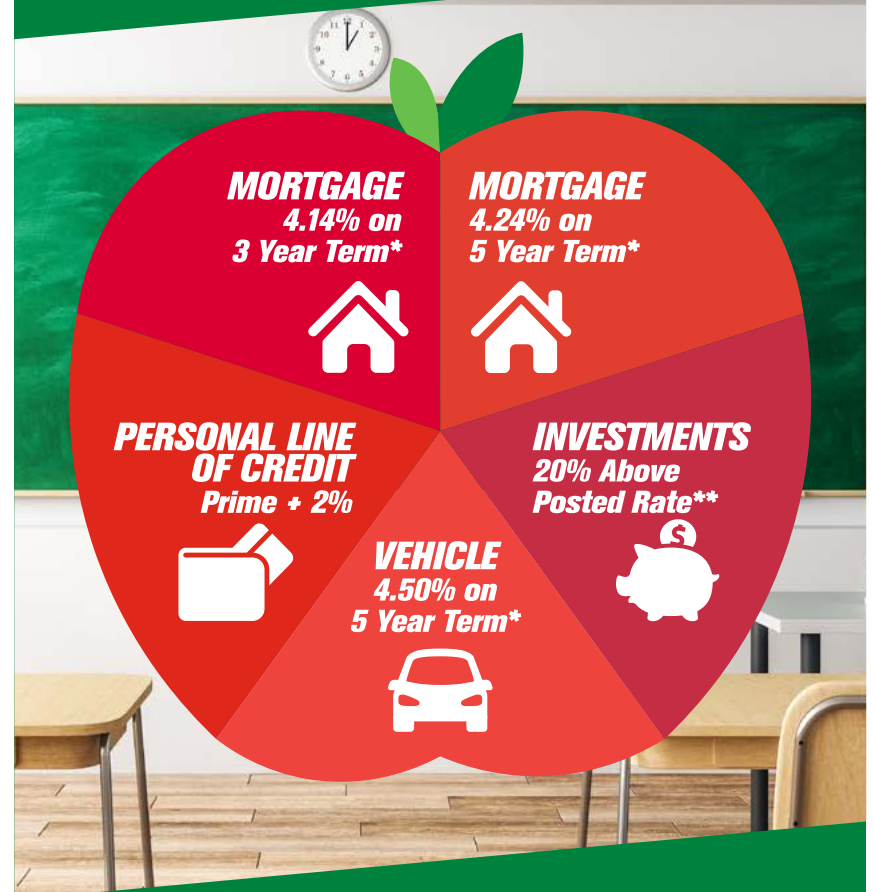
Together, with your support, we ensure every school age child and youth in Newfoundland and Labrador has access to food at school, at no cost to families, ensuring our children start their school days well-nourished and ready to learn - creating opportunities for a stronger, brighter future.

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Sincerely,

Celina Stoyles
Executive Director

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A Century of Collaboration: Reflections on a Shared Vision for Teacher Education in Newfoundland and Labrador

By Dr. Pamela Osmond-Johnson

Every September, new cohorts of Bachelor of Education students walk through the doors of our Faculty full of excitement and curiosity. Their journey to becoming a teacher is one of transformation — an intentional blending of theory and practice, of personal growth and professional identity building.

While that journey may begin with the first class in our Faculty, teaching, as we know, is a profession that demands more than just the completion of an education degree. It requires a commitment to lifelong learning; a commitment that is sustained through the advocacy and support of the NLTA as the professional association for educators in Newfoundland and Labrador.

As Memorial University celebrates its 100th anniversary, and as the Faculty of Education reflects on more than a century of teacher preparation, it is fitting to also celebrate our enduring partnership with the NLTA — its history, its current manifestations, and its significance for the future of education in Newfoundland and Labrador.

A Shared History of Commitment to Teacher Development

The Faculty of Education and the NLTA share a remarkably intertwined history, with the roots of our partnership reaching back to the earliest days of teacher preparation in Newfoundland and Labrador. When Memorial University was founded in 1925 — then as Memorial University College — teacher education was already at its core, with the Normal School having been established a few years prior in 1921. As one of the founding academic units when Memorial University was created in 1949, the Faculty of Education has always carried a mandate not only to prepare new teachers but to elevate teaching as a profession central to the province's social and cultural sustainability.

The NLTA, established in 1890, predates Memorial itself by several decades. From its inception, the Association served as both a collective voice for teach-

ers and a hub of professional exchange. Even in its earliest days, the NLTA viewed professional learning as inseparable from professional advocacy — recognizing that a strong teaching profession depended not only on fair working conditions but also the establishment and continued strengthening of formal opportunities for teacher training and development.

As both institutions evolved, so too did their collaboration. From early work around establishing the province's first four-year preparation program for teachers, to later partnerships in upskilling and pay scale advances with the development of master's degrees, the Faculty and the NLTA have worked together to support teachers through every stage of their professional lives. Our respective mandates — one focused on initial preparation, the other on continuing development and professional representation — complement one another in a way that few other professional fields can claim. In this manner, the enduring relationship between the Faculty of Education and the NLTA — one that has evolved, adapted, and strengthened over the course of decades — stands as one of the most vital partnerships in supporting teacher development in the province.

In recent years, our collaborations have focused on shared initiatives that mark and support the early stages of teachers' professional lives. One such initiative is the Teacher Induction Ceremony, held twice annually, which welcomes new graduates from the Faculty of Education into the teaching profession. This event, jointly hosted by the NLTA and the Faculty, is more than a formality — it is a symbolic moment of passage. Graduates, many of whom are about to begin substitute teaching or have just taken on their first contractual positions, are formally recognized as part of the province's teaching community. They receive a clear message: you are now part of a collective. You are joining a profession that values learning, community, and care — and you will never walk this path alone.

Similarly, the NLTA Mini-Conference for Education Students, now entering its third year, pro-

vides teacher candidates with an early glimpse into the professional networks, supports, and learning opportunities that await them beyond graduation. Through workshops, panel discussions, and networking sessions, students engage with practicing teachers and NLTA representatives who share their experiences of classroom life, association engagement, and professional growth. For many students, this is their first experience of the NLTA as not just an advocacy body, but as a vibrant professional learning community.

The Importance of Partnership in a Changing Educational Context

The initiatives above are tangible expressions of our ongoing partnership — moments when the Faculty and the NLTA have come together to nurture, guide, and celebrate the next generation of educators. The challenges educators face today, however, are complex and multifaceted. The teaching profession is being asked to do more and to do it under increasingly demanding conditions. Issues of teacher retention, workload, and well-being are pressing not only here in Newfoundland and Labrador but across the country.

Addressing these challenges requires collective effort. Neither universities nor teacher associations can do it alone. By working in partnership, however, the Faculty of Education and the NLTA bring complementary strengths to the table: the Faculty offers research, pedagogy, and programming; the NLTA brings lived experience, advocacy, and professional community. And so, our partnership has extended beyond induction and student engagement to include joint conversations about teacher well-being, the recruitment and retention pipeline, and new career pathways for teacher preparation. These collaborations are not just pragmatic; they represent a shared vision for the profession — one in which teachers are empowered, respected, and continually learning.

Looking Ahead: Deepening a Proud Tradition

As Dean of the Faculty of Education, I am deeply proud of this partnership, and I am profoundly grateful to the NLTA for its ongoing collaboration, leadership, and commitment to the professional growth of teachers in this province.

This relationship — built on mutual respect, shared purpose, and a deep commitment to the teaching profession — has stood the test of time. But like all partnerships, it must continue to evolve. The challenges of the next century will require new forms of collaboration, new spaces for dialogue, and new commitments to shared learning.

In the coming years, I envision even closer ties between the Faculty and the NLTA — through co-designed professional learning initiatives, joint research projects on teacher education and retention, and expanded opportunities for our students to learn alongside practicing teachers.

Together, we are shaping not only the future of teacher learning but the future of education in Newfoundland and Labrador. And that, I believe, is something worth celebrating.

.....
Dr. Pamela Osmond-Johnson is the Dean of Education at Memorial University, Faculty of Education.



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Relationships Need to be Nurtured to Grow

by Kathy Taylor Rogers

Whether it is with your friends, family, or significant other, relationships need to be nurtured to grow in a positive direction. We need to have positive relationships to thrive in this sometimes chaotic world. Healthy relationships help buffer the impact of stress, and we can feed from the positive energy our friends, family, and partners provide us with. Unfortunately, we often forget it takes consistent work and effort to maintain these relationships. This may mean meeting with friends for a coffee when we don't always have the energy or inviting family over despite not feeling like you have the time.

In this article, I would like to focus on relationships with our significant other, although similar principles apply to all relationships we care about. Couples need time together, which is imperative to feeling connected, engaged and bonded. Prioritizing time for a date night away from work, the kids, or other distractions is so important. Other possible bonding activities include a weekend getaway, enjoying an extended vacation with just the two of you, going on a hike or a picnic, or enjoying other outdoor activities. All too often, when couples start a family, the business of juggling a career and raising children can impact couple time. It can be easy to lose sight of spending time as a couple, just the two of you. Keeping up with day-to-day responsibilities can be exhausting, and we can sometimes forget to nurture the relationship. If couples have different parenting styles, animosity and resentment can develop.

One of the most harmful mistakes couples can make is not communicating their feelings and not working through their issues. Many of us do not like conflict and bringing up how upset and underappreciated you feel because your spouse does not help around the house can be daunting and difficult. Unfortunately, when we don't talk about things that bother us, they can fester, and as the negative feelings build, they can become toxic to the relationship. There is a rule that some relationship therapists

suggest couples use. It is called the 5-5-5 rule for disagreements. The rule suggests that when there is a disagreement between a couple, each partner takes five minutes to express their concerns while the other person just listens, the final five minutes are used for both to talk through the conflict.

Some of the key elements of a healthy relationship are:

- 1. Trust:** it is essential we have trust in our relationship, and we build trust through being honest, reliable and true to our word.
- 2. Emotional Connection:** we need to carve out quality time for one another and engage in shared activities. I have heard couples in a relationship claim they don't have much in common with their partner, but I would argue that something attracted you in the beginning and kept your interest, so work at rediscovering this connection.
- 3. Respect:** it is important that we respect each others' opinions, boundaries, interests, and individual pursuits.
- 4. Communication:** communication is key to a positive and healthy relationship. This means showing a genuine interest in your partner's life and interests, and offering an open, honest space where they can feel safe expressing needs and feelings. When communicating, we need to be present and actively interested — ask questions about your partner's experiences, feelings and opinions.
- 5. Compromise:** we need to be willing and able to compromise and explore solutions that will work for both partners.
- 6. Conflict Resolution:** one of the hardest parts of relationships is learning respectful and constructive ways to resolve conflict that avoid personal attacks or defensiveness. It is because this is so hard that we often avoid conflict and do not discuss the concerns. This can lead to resentment which can grow until it becomes toxic. This is, of course, unhealthy for a relationship. Before

discussing something that is bothering you, it is important to cool down and have the discussion when emotions are not so high. Sharing feelings without assigning blame and using “I Statements” is important. For example, “When you don’t offer to help, I start to feel like I am taken for granted,” versus “You never help me around the house because you think I’m your maid.”

7. Show Appreciation: express gratitude and appreciation for your partner and their efforts. If you are at a point where you are so angry at your partner for what they don’t do, you might be blind to what they actually do. Sometimes you must take a step back and notice. Often, when we do, we realize that they do more than we thought.

8. Seek Outside Counselling: if you are at a point in your relationship where you are not happy, it might be time to seek outside help. A counsellor can help you learn to communicate better with each other and learn how to reconnect.

In today’s world, relationships have come up against new challenges, such as social media and increasingly complex technology. I have seen the destruction of many relationships as a direct result of social media and dating apps. Some people are spending more time in “virtual reality” than in their true reality, which is having a profoundly negative impact on relationships. Spending hours on social media or checking emails and texts is negatively impacting the amount of quality time we spend together; this can hinder our emotional connection to each other.

Some of the negative impacts that scrolling is having on our relationships include: fueling jealousy and insecurity; decreasing the amount of quality time we spend together, which hinders emotional connection; and misinterpreting online interactions, such as comments or likes, which can lead to distrust, jealousy and conflict. Many couples have noticed that social media platforms have led to an increase in infidelity related behaviors. This sometimes translates to learning about “emotional” or physical affairs via texts, messenger messages, or emails. It is important that we take a critical look at our technology behavior and determine whether it might be having a negative impact on our relationships. Don’t wait until it does irreparable damage.

Self-Reflection Questions:

1. How often do I actively make time to nurture my relationship with my partner, and what changes could I make to prioritize this more consistently?
2. In what ways do I currently communicate with my partner during conflict, and how might I improve to ensure we both feel heard and respected?
3. Have I considered how my technology and social media habits may be affecting the quality of my relationship? What boundaries might be helpful to implement?
4. What is one small but meaningful action I can take this week to show appreciation or support for my partner?

To summarize, healthy relationships need open communication, active participation, mutual trust and respect, a shared commitment, and time for laughter and fun. If you spend time

nurturing your relationship, the return on your investment will be immeasurable. If you think you might benefit from outside intervention to help improve your relationship, then please reach out to your Employee Assistance Program.

For confidential assistance contact Lori Hewitt (733-3242), lhewitt@eapnlteachers.ca, Kenda Riggs (733-3265), kriggs@eapnlteachers.ca or Leslie Brown (733-3269), lbrown@eapnlteachers.ca

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- Medicalnewstoday.com/articles/social-media-and-relationships



NLTA CHRISTMAS HOURS

Please be advised that the NLTA building will be **CLOSED** from:

**December 24th to
January 2nd
(inclusive)**

to allow staff to enjoy the
holiday season

**The office will reopen
on January 5th, 2026.**



Teaching Using Multiple Pedagogical Models and Approaches

By Kellie Baker

My Models-Based Practice Story: Five Keys to Sustainable Teaching Change

Four years ago, I wrote two articles published in the NLTA Bulletin: *Physical Education into the Future* and *Learning to Approach Physical Education Differently*. The first outlined the theory behind why we need to teach physical education differently as well as one suggestion for the how: Models-Based Practice (MBP). The second article provided a real-life example of how a colleague and I engaged in teaching physical education differently — a worthwhile endeavour, but not without its challenges.

In this article I share lessons learned about how to teach through a MBP approach (i.e., teaching through a diversity of pedagogical models and approaches to meet the diverse strengths, assets, and needs of learners).

Lesson 1: Patience over Perfection

Changing the way we teach takes time. Phrases that come to mind are: slow and steady wins the race; *qui va lentement, va sûrement, et qui va sûrement va loin*; start slowly and build gradually; take baby steps; change doesn't happen overnight. This lesson cannot be overstated.

My first experience using a new approach — Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility (Hellison, 2011; Hellison et al., 2025) — was a disaster. I had more students sitting out than participating — the exact opposite result I was trying to achieve by doing things differently. I was devastated.

Faced with the reality that things still needed to change — as my reason for changing the way I was teaching was based on students being outwardly aggressive, mean, and showing little caring for each other — I decided to learn what I could from my first attempt, make small adjustments, and keep trying. Slowly, over time, there was a change not only in the level of responsibility and caring during physical education, but the difference was also noted by

colleagues in other areas of the schools such as the classroom, lunchroom, and inside and outside play. Some families shared that more responsibility was being exhibited at home by offering to take care of siblings and help with household chores. I was on top of the world and glad that I had been patient and didn't expect perfection.

Lesson 2: Small Wins Can Snowball into Bigger Wins

Celebrate and hold on tight to the small wins, they may just snowball into bigger wins. I have no doubt that adding variety to the ways that I taught, through the use of multiple pedagogical models, contributed to a safer and more welcoming environment for students. Focusing on the physical, but also the cognitive and social domains of learning, provided a space for more students to feel confident, competent, comfortable, and able to shine.

I vividly remember a grade three student who would not come into physical education class. Coinciding with my change in practice this student came closer to the gym door. Eventually they entered the space, first to walk around the outside, and later joining in for brief periods. Two years later (remember Lesson 1: patience), they were fully immersed in physical education and had also joined intramurals and extra-curricular sport teams. While this change was supported by many caring adults at school and at home, I can confidently say that changing the way I taught created a more welcoming environment for this student and was a small contribution to a big change.

Lesson 3: Students Also Need Time to Learn to Do Things Differently

Both stories I have shared highlight that students also need time to become familiar with learning through unfamiliar teaching approaches. Dr. Ash Casey, in a blog series about diversifying the ways we

teach, writes about a Lesson Zero — that very first class when you introduce students to ways you will be teaching differently (e.g., Cooperative Learning; Teaching Dance for Understanding; Socially-Just Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility) and why. This Sport Education video (www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xs9qiYpo6KE) provides a useful example of how to introduce students to new ways of approaching teaching and learning. In addition to these resources, the NL K-12 Physical Education Foundation document and the K-3 physical education curricula provide information on pedagogical models (e.g., Game Based Approaches; Inquiry Learning; Meaningful Physical Education; Movement Education; and others) that can be used to develop your own Lesson Zero to support students in understanding how you teaching differently relates to them learning differently.

Lesson 4: Create a Support System

Students need support, but so do you! We live in a digital world. Use that to connect with colleagues. The teachers_physical_ed_health_athletics@nlesd.ca group is a way to connect with colleagues in NL. Share Google Docs of lesson plans and ideas that can be built upon and modified to your context and your students. Blogs, podcasts, and books by MBP proponents such as Dr. Ash Casey offer more support for sustaining a MBP approach to teaching and learning (see links in the references). Many teachers I have worked with say that being involved in curriculum development is one of the best opportunities for professional learning they have experienced.

Lesson 5: Be Kind!

This lesson is just as important as the first, perhaps even more so. It is a message I had the opportunity to share with several hundred colleagues at a recent PHE Canada conference: “If you are thinking about doing things differently, and this isn’t to suggest that you are doing anything wrong, be kind to yourself!” Acknowledge that change is hard and setbacks are a natural part of the process.

Cole’s Notes

Give yourself (and your students) permission to not be perfect. The students in your class on any given day may not be fully engaged, and that’s okay. You tried a new approach, and that’s a huge victory that can snowball into more milestones, especially with support from your colleagues. The important thing is that you learned something from it and are willing to try again tomorrow.

And above all else: You can do this! Believe in

yourself! What you do is important! You are important to the lives of the students in your care!

*NOTE: While TPSR was the pedagogical approach highlighted in this article, I also teach through other models and approaches such as Cooperative Learning (see video series by Ash Casey), Socially-Just TPSR; Teaching Games for Understanding (see Baker and Murphy, 2021), Peer Teaching, and others (see Metzler & Colquitt, 2021). In other words, my **Practice** is **Based** in teaching through a variety of pedagogical **Models** and approaches (i.e., **Models-Based Practice**).*

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Kellie Baker is a retired NL teacher and NL Department of Education and Early Childhood Development curriculum developer. She is currently the president of Physical and Health Education Canada.

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Ceremony of Induction into the Teaching Profession: Thoughts from a Faculty of Education Graduate

By Laura Kieley

The following speech was delivered by Laura Kieley at the MUN Induction Ceremony into the Teaching Profession on October 16, 2025.

Bonjour à tous les membres du personnel enseignant, à vos familles, à vos amis et, bien sûr, à mes camarades nouveaux enseignants. Good afternoon faculty members, family, friends, and of course, my fellow new educators. It is a great honour to stand before you today representing such passionate, dedicated, and inspiring educators. As teachers, we are as diverse as our classes. Some of us are technology experts, physical education specialists, science, math, or French as a second language teachers, and yet, we are united by a common goal: to make a difference.

Over the past year, we've learned, adapted and grown together, not only as students, but as educators. We've collaborated in the TLC, practiced presentations, shared resources, stories, and sometimes just a bit of moral support when things became difficult. We've built friendships, shared countless laughs, and leaned on one another during late-night study sessions and early morning classes. Through it all, our energy never faded. There was always a sense of encouragement and a mutual understanding that only aspiring teachers could truly share.

When I first told my parents that I wanted to be a high school teacher, they paused for a moment. At five feet tall, I've definitely heard my fair share of jokes about "blending in" with the students. In September, on my first day in my new job as a teacher, as I was entering the school, one of the staff members stopped me and said, "Sorry, no students allowed!" This helped me realize part of teaching is appreciating the small moments, being able to laugh at ourselves, and growing alongside our students... even when they're taller than us.

Nelson Mandela once said, "*Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.*" As teachers, we have that power every single day, not through big gestures, but through the subtle, everyday moments that truly count: offering

a word of encouragement, teaching a lesson that finally clicks, or simply believing in a student who doesn't believe in themselves.

In my first month as a teacher, I've already witnessed how this takes part in the everyday moments of teaching. One of the reasons I feel so strongly about the impact we can have as teachers is because of someone who shaped my own journey: my music teacher, who guided me for years. On days when I doubted myself, she encouraged me, offered advice, and reminded me of my potential, sometimes in the simplest words, sometimes with a knowing look that said, "You've got this." Having someone like that in my corner showed me that teaching is not just about conveying knowledge or following a curriculum but about noticing when someone needs lifting up and helping them recognize their potential. That's exactly the kind of teacher I aspire to be.

I now invite all of you to take a moment and think about a teacher who made a difference in your life. What qualities did they have? What did they do that made them stand out from the rest? These qualities that inspired you can be a guide as you discover who you are and who you want to become as teachers. When I asked my students these same questions, they shared stories about teachers going the extra mile and mentioned qualities like inclusivity, kindness, and patience.

These responses reminded me exactly why we're here. Teaching is no ordinary profession, it's a calling. It's about sparking curiosity, building confidence, and helping students decide the kind of person they want to become. Every lesson, conversation, and even small acts of kindness have the power to change a student's day or even stay with them for a lifetime.

One of the most valuable things that we leave with today is not just our pins or our diplomas; it's each other. We are now a part of a community of teachers who understand what it means to inspire, to adapt, and to never stop learning. Each and every one of us brings something unique to the table.

Whether it's different teachable areas, experiences, or perspectives, we all share the same goal of having a positive impact on the lives of students. That shared purpose is what unites us, and what will continue to connect us long after today.

As we begin this journey, it's also important to remember that we are learners too. Just as we hope our students will treat themselves with patience and grace, we must do the same for ourselves. We will make mistakes and have challenging days, but each of those moments is an opportunity to grow, to reflect, and to become stronger educators and empathetic human beings. Ensemble, en tant qu'apprenants et enseignants, nous devenons la meilleure version de nous-mêmes.

Whether we are stepping into our first classroom, filling in as a substitute, or diving deeper into our studies, we're all contributing to the same mission of helping students learn and grow. There's so much to look forward to: new faces, new obstacles, and countless opportunities to make an impact.

Receiving these pins today is more than a recognition of our achievements; it's a welcome into one of the most meaningful and rewarding professions there is.

For me, it's an incredible honour to be part of this community. I cannot wait to see what the future holds.

Félicitations à nous tous, l'avenir est entre de très bonnes mains. Congratulations to us all, the future is in very good hands.



HAT'S OFF

2025 Prime Minister's Award Winner for Teaching Excellence

The Prime Minister's Awards for Teaching Excellence, and Teaching Excellence in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) have recognized exceptional elementary and secondary school teachers in all disciplines since 1994.

Teaching Excellence Award recipients are honoured for their remarkable achievements in education and for their commitment to preparing youth for a digital and innovation-based economy. The Teaching Excellence in STEM Awards celebrate outstanding Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics teachers who help develop the culture of innovation Canada needs today, and in the future.

Sherry Crowley, a music teacher from Amalgamated Academy in Bay Roberts, is the recipient of the 2025 Prime Minister's Award in Teaching Excellence and received a Certificate of Excellence.

Sherry understands that music education is about more than just learning to hit the right notes. In her class creativity is celebrated and students are encouraged to explore their unique voice. Through engaging lessons that blend music and technology, Sherry inspires her students to grow both academically and artistically.

Teaching Approach

Sherry's classroom is a vibrant and welcoming space that inspires curiosity, and a strong sense of community. She encourages students to express themselves through music, composition, and other subjects, making learning about music both meaningful and fun. Her use of digital technology helps build practical skills and prepare students for the evolving music industry. Sherry is supportive, bringing out the best in every learner.

In the classroom

- Uses music to connect with other subjects from social studies to art



- Organizes a number of fun concerts where students can shine both on stage and behind the scenes with technology, prop and set design, stage management and more, giving every student opportunities to be involved
- Promotes digital literacy by teaching real-life skills around copyright, permissions, and ethical practices
- Integrates technology into the curriculum through Scratch coding and Audacity, building relevant skills in audio editing, production, and engineering
- Organizes fun concerts like "Baccalieu Collegiate Idol," where students combine live performance with technical production
- Helps organize community-wide performances at seniors' homes, music festivals, and Ronald McDonald House, modelling civic responsibility
- Helps preserve local culture and history by teaching traditional Newfoundland and Labrador music

Outstanding achievements

- Honoured with the 2024 Jamie Wilkinson Memorial Award for her commitment to music education
- Developed the "Pervasive Needs Music Class" to address curriculum gaps and empower diverse learners through inclusive musical education
- Created the innovative "Virtual World Music Series," connecting students with international choirs from Spain to Ghana, and involving them in all aspects of producing including broadcasting and recording

The nomination period for the 2026 Prime Minister's Awards is now open. The deadline to nominate an outstanding educator is January 14, 2026. For more information, including the nomination form, visit <https://ised-isde.canada.ca/site/ised/en/programs-and-initiatives/prime-ministers-awards/how-nominate/teacher>

Information for this article was obtained from the Prime Minister's Awards program website.

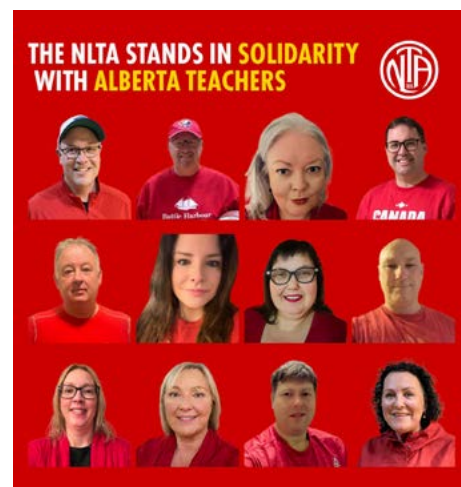
THE NLTA SUPPORTING ALBERTA TEACHERS

Teachers across Newfoundland and Labrador joined colleagues from coast to coast in wearing red to show their support for Alberta's teachers. The NLTA stands in solidarity with teachers in Alberta as they fight for improved learning and teaching conditions, similar to the pressures our own members

experience every day. Back-to-work legislation undermines fair collective bargaining, and supporting teachers means supporting the students and communities they serve. Thank you to all NLTA members who showed their support and helped send a strong message that investing in teaching is investing in our future.



Brother Rice Junior High



CTF Board of Directors Meeting



Belanger Memorial High School



Exploits Valley High



Indian River Academy

The Cure to Broken Promises

by Clint Johnston



We're asking ourselves far too many "How did we get here?" questions as a society. But there's one, in particular, that sits at the heart of the CTF/FCE's work — and it demands our attention.

Education budgets have fallen so far that we're now at risk of breaking our promise to Canada's children. How did we let it get to this point?

This is not an opinion. You can look at the public education landscape in Canada and find as many examples of this issue as you'd like. The rates of teachers leaving the system are on a steady rise — and they are leaving earlier. The number of new teachers joining is falling, and those who stay often do so at the risk of their own physical and mental health. The effect of these three factors has hit a critical point that can't be ignored. But it is also just the visible symptom of a system that has been neglected for far too long. Educating, certifying, and hiring more teachers is absolutely necessary — but it is not the cure.

The "cure" is properly funding education systems so that they have the resources and staffing to support every child to fulfill their potential as healthy, happy, and productive members of our communities.

That's it. It's not complicated. There will absolutely be discussion and debate amongst those in the public education system about the best way to achieve that — professional discourse is healthy and should be part of improving things for our students. But the crucial step is to properly fund. Without that, the discourse — the one happening now in virtually every region of the country — is about how to serve too many children with not enough. In those conversations, there are inevitable winners and losers, and that is simply not acceptable.

So how, indeed, did we get here? Well, I have had the privilege of listening to, and being the voice of, teachers for a dozen years now, from the local level up to the national. I have listened to, advocated for, and lobbied on behalf of teachers for all those years — to politicians of all stripes, and I have a theory: one of the major reasons why this funding gap has been allowed to grow into the crisis it now is, and shocker, it's political.

Unarguably, education is the building block of each individual in a society and of the society itself. Each of us spends some 13 years of our lives making our way through the public K-12 education system. That's a lot of time. But educating a child, supporting their growth — mental, social, personal, physical, etc. — takes at least

that long, and the results aren't immediately apparent: it is a cumulative effect from a collective effort sustained over time. And here's the crux of the problem: when it comes to the funding of education, the decision-makers have a three or four-year term, dependent on context.

Most often, they are looking for the immediate return on their decision; it is the nature of the political system we have created. There is unequivocal and significant literature on the positive financial return that investment in education is for a government/society, but that return only comes after a decade or more in most cases.

This butts up directly against the fact that individuals in power, and their party, want results that will get them votes within a year or two. And so, when budget decisions are being made, too often education is left wanting — it is too easy to reduce and not have the consequences land on you, hard to do the right thing, and keep investment from falling behind. This, I believe, is a significant part of the answer to how we got here.

So how do we get out of here, back to where we should be? The answer is political will. We need to push every provincial and territorial decision-maker to look beyond their own horizon of an election. We need them to understand that the future of every child — those in classrooms today and those yet to come — is shaped by the 13 years we, as a nation, have promised will lead to a fair chance at a good life. We need them to see that every dollar withheld today is a child shortchanged, a child undervalued. This belief is what drives me, and everyone at the CTF/FCE, in our work each day. I know that your daily impact on students is what drives you as well — and you deserve to be fully supported in that endeavour.

Because, in the words of Gabriela Mistral, "Many things can wait. Children cannot. Today their bones are being formed, their blood is being made, their senses are being developed. To them we cannot say 'tomorrow.' Their name is today."

In solidarity,
Clint Johnston

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Clint Johnston is the President of the Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF/FCE), the national alliance of provincial and territorial teachers' organizations representing over 370,000 educators from coast to coast to coast, including the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association and their members. Follow Clint and the CTF/FCE on social media to learn more and to connect with your national teachers' organization.

Are You Thinking About Retiring?

INFORMATION YOU NEED TO KNOW

Under the Teachers' Pensions Act, a teacher is eligible for pension benefit:

- (a) At age 60, with at least five years of pensionable service. **Note:** teachers who retire **prior to age 60** with between 5 and 24 years of pensionable service will not be eligible for a pension until the month following their 62nd birthday.
- (b) At age 55 or after, with at least 25 years of pensionable service (or 24.5-24.9 years in the month of June only).
- (c) After completing 30 years of worked service* (or 29.5-29.9 years in the month of June only), regardless of age.
- (d) After completing 29 years of worked service (or 28.5-28.9 years in the month of June only) and at least 30 years of pensionable service (or 29.5-29.9 in the month of June only). Pension will be reduced based on the number of months a teacher will be retired prior to reaching age 55. Reduction ceases after age 55.
- (e) At age 55, with between 5 and 24.4 years of pension service, an actuarially reduced pension can be payable.

(*worked service refers to all pensionable service, except university study buy-back that was purchased prior to 1991.)

Regardless of which retirement eligibility trigger applies, **pension is only payable in the month following resignation and application for a pension.** For example, a teacher who retires effective June 30 and a teacher who retires effective June 5 will both be eligible to start receiving a pension in July. This holds true no matter when or in which month a teacher chooses to retire.

Access to Pension Estimator

Teachers have access to a pension estimator by logging into myPENSION available on the Teachers' Pension Plan Corporation website at www.tppcnl.ca.

Checklist for Retiring Teachers

The following checklist is designed to assist teachers as they participate and plan for this upcoming life phase change.

- ☐ Apply to the NLTA to attend a pre-retirement seminar up to two years prior to your year of retirement;
- ☐ Confirm the eligible date of your retirement with the TPPC at the pre-retirement seminar or by contacting the TPPC directly at memberservices@tppcnl.ca.
- ☐ Submit your resignation to your employer (**do not** resign until eligibility has been confirmed): one month notice is required if retirement is to occur anytime prior to Christmas; three months notice (March 31 if retiring June 30) is required if retirement is to occur after Christmas. If you are retiring at the end of the school year, it's imperative that you submit your resignation and paperwork before the end of June.

Otherwise, you will not be eligible for your pension until at least **August 1**. Applications can no longer be backdated. This is a Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) regulation.

- ☐ Apply with the TPPC for pension by completing and submitting the appropriate "Teachers' Pension" application and "Direct Deposit" form prior to the effective date of your resignation.
- ☐ If you still have funds in the substitute pension plan, call Canada Life at 1-800-724-3402 to access these funds.
- ☐ Apply for severance pay (if applicable) by completing the "Severance Payment Request" form.
- ☐ Most of your current Group Insurance benefits will automatically continue through deductions on your pension cheques. Long Term Disability and the \$10,000 Basic Critical Illness benefit, however, will terminate at retirement. Your current Basic Group Life and Accident Insurance coverage of two times annual earnings will reduce to two times annual pension. If you would like to convert your Group Life Insurance coverage that is being lost (reduced) to an individual Life Insurance program, make certain to contact [belairdirect](http://belairdirect.com) to arrange to do so within 31 days of retirement/reduction of coverage to avoid the necessity of a medical application/underwriting. For further details please consult the Group Insurance website at groupinsurance.nlta.ca or contact [belairdirect](http://belairdirect.com) at 1-800-563-1528.
- ☐ Consider joining the Retired Teachers' Association by completing the application form at www.nlta.ca/rtanl-membership-application/.
- ☐ Consider seeking personal financial advice regarding financial decisions related to retirement.
- ☐ Keep your mind active and your body healthy. Enjoy life!

Changes Effective Upon Retirement

- NLTA Membership status changes from Active Membership to Life or Associate Membership.
- Access to the services and benefits of the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) terminates.
- Basic Life Insurance coverage reduces to twice annual pension from twice annual salary (provided coverage is maintained and premiums paid); coverage terminates at age 65 and is replaced by a members only \$15,000 benefit after age 65.
- Basic Critical Illness Insurance terminates.
- Eligibility for EI ceases (unless a person becomes a "re-established worker" or is on a forced medical retirement).

Any questions or comments can be directed to Deana Hatcher, Administrative Officer in Programs and Services at the NLTA at dhatcher@nlta.ca, Tel: 709-726-3223 or 1-800-563-3599, ext. 270.