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Happy New Year and welcome back after what we all hope was a restful holiday break. Your Association continues to advocate strongly on your behalf for proper resourcing in your schools and improvements to teacher recruitment and retention. As you will see in the pages of this issue of The Bulletin, you as individuals have opportunities to speak directly to decision makers and outline the reality you face each day. We encourage you to take advantage of these opportunities.



This month has some big NLTA events, including Education Week 2026, Janeway Day in the Schools and of course we are proud to highlight the amazing work of our members during Teacher Appreciation Week. Also, in this issue you will find information on accommodations, Canada Student Loan Forgiveness and some informative physical education resources.

Thank you to everyone who contributed and once again, I encourage anyone who has something they want to share with their colleagues, please send us a submission!

Take care,

Jennifer

THE bulletin

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• FRIDAY FEBRUARY 13 • FRIDAY FEBRUARY 13



NLTA
Janeway Day
in the Schools 2026



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UP FRONT WITH THE NLTA PRESIDENT



As a classroom teacher, I was always searching for the next task to challenge my students and force them to think creatively and critically. As a school Administrator and as the parent of two students in our system, I continue to be blown away by the hard work that our professionals put into developing meaningful learning opportunities for our young people. Therefore, when I was provided with my own unique mission for this edition's "Up Front" I very willingly embraced the task at hand. The endeavour put before me was to apply this year's Education Week theme to my first six months as NLTA President. In that vein, I offer below how I have learned, how I have aimed to teach and how we can collectively inspire meaningful change for our profession.

Learn!

As a professional I have always taken pride in going into every situation prepared to learn from others. To see things in a complete sense, you need to listen intently. In August 2025, for our first gathering as a newly elected Provincial Executive, we processed the feedback from roughly 1,200 submissions from NLTA members and established our top five priorities for the 2025-27 Term. The themes were loud and clear. Members wanted us to address workload concerns, services for members, retention, recruitment and resourcing, solidarity amongst our own members and advocacy on, and response to government initiatives. The framework has been laid, and our elected Executive and NLTA staff take these priorities seriously. With the upcoming expiry of our contract, and with a new government at the helm, learning these priorities can only strengthen our understanding about how we need to push for better working conditions and benefits for our province's teachers. As your President, I have made efforts to get into schools and worksites so I can better understand the diversity of our province's teaching and learning conditions. I have listened to all viewpoints with a deliberate goal of learning what you need to create a setting that allows you to reach your maximum potential as a professional.

Teach!

It became clear to us during our Provincial Election in the fall of 2025 that the public did not view education to be a priority for improving our current provincial landscape. For three weeks, our three party leaders who were run-

ning to become the premier of Newfoundland and Labrador were not placed in a situation where they could face questions about education that they could answer candidly and with depth and understanding. Only one of the three leaders made themselves available when we tried to initiate an NLTA Candidate's Forum on Education. I learned through this process that the public need to be taught about the importance of our province's teachers and the deficits that exist in our education system. In viewing the Alberta government's treatment of their teachers in using the Notwithstanding Clause to have them return to work with non-negotiated conditions, it was important to show solidarity with our colleagues out west. Through our "Red for Ed" display of support, the message was sent to our new government that we deserve a stated commitment to fair treatment and good faith bargaining for our membership. I am pleased to say that we have had initial conversations and meetings with our new Minister of Education, the Honourable Paul Dinn, and our Premier, the Honourable Tony Wakeham. They have stated a commitment to involving our members in determining where changes need to be made to improve our working conditions. Retention and recruitment received quality public attention when data was released showing how reliant we have become on retired teachers to keep our system afloat. This provided us with an opportunity to teach Newfoundland and Labrador what is meant by "coverage mode" and "teaching gaps." Not only do these very serious items impact the potential work output of our teachers, but students also miss out on learning outcomes that are aimed to serve them when they prepare to enter the workforce. Parents need to understand that concept. Resources that have been deemed by government as necessary for our schools, such as school counsellors, reading specialists and instructional resource teachers, are too often redeployed and as a result, students do not receive supports that they need. It is important to share your narratives about the impacts of current working conditions and teacher shortages with me so I can paint an accurate picture. My new teaching assignment, as given by the province's teachers and TLA's, is the people of our province. Your stories can help me convey the impacts, while providing the information necessary to adequately instruct and teach on why education should be first and foremost on

peoples' minds and the minds of our leaders. After all, it will be our members who will be relied upon to instruct and guide our youth in efforts to creating safer communities, while supporting individuals.

Inspire!

As members of the NLTA, I have so much respect for your ability to inspire. In assuming a more public role I have become even more privy to the stories that exist surrounding the positive influence of our members, past and present, as everyone wants to share their own experience with me. My own personal mission in honouring this role is to have our province's teachers and TLA's see the engagement, support and leadership opportunities that are present through our Association. Therefore, I leave you with strong encouragement to offer feedback when it is requested internally and externally. Our first external opportunity to do so is to offer your feedback in the government's call for pre-budget consultations for Budget 2026. Complete surveys, attend virtual sessions, and make our current government aware that educators will be critical to helping our communities become safer and rebuilding workforces that will support Newfoundland and Labrador well into our future. Offer the insight that we need to reassess how teaching units are allocated, and that looking at needs should take precedence over mathematical formulae. Let government officials and decision makers know that our school communities are simply microcosms of our home communities, and we demand the same level of safety in our workspaces that has been identified as a top priority by government in the pre-budget consultation process.

In conclusion, I sincerely wish you all a meaningful Education Week. I also want to express my gratitude for you as we join the School Board Federation in showing our appreciation for school employees. Be sure to continue to learn, teach and inspire as you always do in your daily work. It is valued and recognized.

Yours in leadership,

Dale

PROVINCIAL/NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL

NEWS

BAY ROBERTS

Celebrating Pride at Ascension Collegiate



Visibility matters. Support matters. Pride matters. Members wearing NLTA Gender and Sexual Diversity Special Interest Council-funded Pride shirts at a recent event at Ascension Collegiate in Bay Roberts.

NATIONAL

Global Survey on Health and Well-Being

The CTF/FCE is once again joining forces with MGEN and Education International to launch the 3rd edition of the International Barometer on the Health and Well-being of Education Staff (I-BEST) in Canada. I-BEST is an international survey that focuses on the health and well-being of all education personnel. This is a unique opportunity for NLTA members to contribute to a global movement. The current survey covers a myriad of issues including teacher physical and mental health, professional experiences,

stress, job satisfaction, working conditions, working environment, relationships, and violence in the workplace. The deadline for members to complete the survey is Monday, March 16, 2026. For more info, visit <https://conta.cc/3ZvzHG0>

The cover of the International Barometer on the Health and Well-being of Education Staff (I-BEST) survey. It features the logos for MGEN, Education International, and Bildungsinternationale. The title "i-BEST" is prominently displayed in a green oval. Below the title, the subtitle "The International Barometer on the Health and Well-being of Education Staff" is written. An illustration of a diverse group of education staff is shown, with one person pointing upwards. Logos for Education Support, Global Health, and the NLTA are at the bottom.

NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR

NLTA Members Encouraged to Participate in Pre-Budget Engagement

The Provincial Government is seeking input from residents as it prepares Budget 2026. As citizens of this province, teachers have every right to engage in public policy discussions regarding the provincial budget, including pre-budget consultations. The Association is encouraging all members to take a few minutes to participate in government's pre-budget engagement process and share your perspective. Government needs to hear directly from educators about what is happening in schools across the province. Check your emails for some suggested pre-budget education-related messages from the NLTA. The deadline to participate is February 18, 2026. For more info, visit <https://www.engagenl.ca/program>.

JOSEPHINE ANN HAMMOND
MARCH 22, 1943 –
OCTOBER 24, 2025

It is with profound sadness that we announce the passing of the matriarch of our family, Josephine Ann Hammond who passed away after a lengthy illness on October 24, 2025, surrounded by her loving family.

Predeceased by her parents Daniel and Margaret Carroll of Conche, NL, brother Lawrence Carroll, sister Marie Flynn and special nieces and nephews.

She will be greatly missed by her loving and devoted husband of 52 years Herbert, Steny Francis, son Paul (Laurie), daughter Jessica (Cory), and four grand daughters Kaylea, Leah, Kaitlynn, and Ameira.

She is survived by her loving brothers and sisters: Steve (Judy), Gerald (Doris), Frank (Evelyn), Imelda (Don), Pat (Clara) Anne (Steve), Christine (Jerome), Clara (Randy), Dan (Sheila); as well as a large number of nieces, nephews, cousins and many friends.

Special thanks to Marg and Dave Dempsey who were not only family but life long close friends.

Josephine lived her life in the service of others, whether it be through her chosen profession of teaching, her profound faith in God, or her service in her community to any, and all who needed it. She will watch over us and live on in our hearts and memories forever.

MARGARET LYNNE WELLS
MARCH 24, 1964 – DECEMBER 3, 2025

Margaret Lynne Wells, born March 24, 1964, passed away peacefully at the Sir Thomas Roddick Hospital on December 3, 2025, surrounded by the love of her family and friends. A devoted mother, teacher, and pillar of her community, Margaret spent her life lifting others up with kindness, patience, and unwavering dedication.

Margaret discovered her passion for service early in life, following in the footsteps of her mother and father as a committed community volunteer. She gave generously of her time and heart through the Girl Guides, where she mentored countless young girls, and through the Lion's Club, where her compassion and leadership touched many lives. Her belief in helping others was something she valued and lived.

As a teacher, Margaret inspired her students with warmth, curiosity, and an unshakeable belief in their potential. Many remember her as an educator who



was capable of meeting the needs of each individual student. She will be most remembered for her animated voices in storytelling.

To her family, Margaret was a source of unconditional love, encouragement, and gentle wisdom. Her home was always a place of comfort, laughter, and open arms. Above all else, her dearest role was as a mother.

Margaret leaves behind a legacy of compassion, service, and love. She will be deeply missed by her family, friends, students, fellow volunteers, and all who were fortunate enough to know her. Her spirit will continue to shine brightly in the many lives she touched.

Margaret is predeceased by: her mother Shirley Wells (nee Abbott); and her mother-in-law, Theresa Hynes (nee Hanrahan).

She is survived by: her loving daughter Jaimie Wells-Decker; her father Harold Wells; sister Marlene Wells (Patrick Williams); brother Ralph Wells (Michelle); and nieces and nephews: Matthew, Kieran, Bailey and John.

Dates to Remember

March 2026

- March 5** **Provincial Executive Meeting**
- March 6-7** **NLTA Joint Council Meeting**
- March 19** **Deadline: PD Fund Applications**
- March 31** **Deadline: Centennial Study Award Application**
- March 31** **Board Deadline: Notice for Retirement at the End of the School Year**

April 2026

- April 15** **Deadline: Notice of Postponement of DSL or Withdrawal from DS LP**
- April 16** **Deadline: PD Fund Applications**
- April 24-25** **Provincial Executive Meeting**
- April 30** **Deadline: Deferred Salary Leave Applications**
- April 30** **Deadline: Year-End Resignation from Contract**



Accommodation: The Basics

by Miriam Sheppard

Do you have a disability or family requirements that interfere with your ability to work? The *Human Rights Act* and the Collective Agreement require employers to accommodate human rights related needs of employees to the point of undue hardship. But what does this mean? What is involved in seeking accommodation?

The duty to accommodate requires employers to make modifications or provide the accommodation (supports, equipment, etc.) necessary (short of undue hardship) in order to allow an employee to fully and equally participate in the workplace. Accommodation requires “an individualized investigation of accommodation measures and an assessment of an employee’s needs.” [Central Okanagan School District No. 23 v. Renaud, 1992 *CanLII* 81 (SCC)] Every accommodation may look a little different, as accommodations should be tailored to the specific needs of the person seeking the accommodation. Some examples of accommodations in the teaching context might include:

- Jane has a knee injury and needs an adjustment to her supervision schedule so that she does not have to do outdoor supervision until she has recovered;
- Due to a medical condition, Marissa can no longer project her voice, and requires an amplification system to teach;
- Joe’s child has a serious illness requiring medical care in a different area of the province, and he needs to take a period of unpaid leave, or be transferred to a school closer to medical services, in order to access the necessary care for his child;
- Michael’s wife works offshore for weeks at a time and adequate child care services are not available in the area of the province where he lives and works; he therefore needs to reduce his hours to part time for a year, until his child is a bit older, in order to meet his legal parental duties; or

- Chris has a chronic medical condition and can no longer live or work in an isolated area because necessary medical care is not accessible in that area; they need a transfer to a different position in a location within a certain commuting distance of the medical services they need.

However, employers do not have to grant every request for accommodation. Sometimes employees cannot be accommodated, as to do so would cause the employer “undue hardship”. Undue hardship is a very high threshold as it requires the employer to prove excessive disruption of or interference with its business or operations, or undue expense. What circumstances would amount to undue hardship will vary depending on the details of each situation. Each case must be assessed and decided on its own facts, but meeting the “undue hardship” test may include a consideration of several factors, including:

- Financial cost;
- Safety;
- Size of the organization;
- Collective Agreement provisions;
- Interchangeability of work force and facilities;
- Morale of other employees.

The onus is on the employer to demonstrate that it has made reasonable attempts to accommodate an employee to the point of undue hardship. Employees also have a duty to cooperate in the accommodation process, which includes considering and implementing reasonable proposals advanced by the employer.

Teachers seeking accommodation MUST provide appropriate documentation to support the request. With respect to medical accommodation, for example, teachers would need to provide medical documentation to establish:

- that they have a medical condition that impacts on their ability to do their job (details of the diagnosis are not required);
- what functional limitations or restrictions on their abilities they have because of their medical

condition and the likely duration of same (i.e. are the condition and/or limitations temporary or are they likely to be permanent); and

- that, in their physician's opinion, working without the recommended accommodations would most likely lead to a worsening of their condition and a probable need to access sick leave.

Sometimes physicians may also comment on what adjustments/accommodations are medically required to enable the teacher to meet the demands of their job without exacerbating their condition or causing their symptoms to worsen. Depending on the case, other types of medical documentation may be required.

Documentation will also be required to establish necessity of accommodation in other types of cases. For example, a teacher seeking family status accommodation based on a family member's medical conditions must provide documentation relating to that individual's condition to support the claim for accommodation. Other reasonable documentation may be required in requests for family status accommodation in other types of situations. In general, the question to consider in a request for accommodation based on family status is: will the employee be unable to meet their legal obligations to care for a family member if an accommodation is not made?

The employer is only obligated to accommodate properly documented employee needs, not preferences or conveniences. Supporting documentation must establish what is necessary or required, not what is preferable or most convenient.

Requests for accommodation can be complex and are very fact specific to individual cases. Teachers are also reminded that, while requests for accommodation can be made at any time, requests for accommodation that involve transfer for the 2026-27 school year should be made to the Employer as soon as possible, and well in advance of the redundancy/reassignment season, if possible. Teachers who are considering making any request for accommodation are encouraged to contact an Administrative Officer in the Association's Programs and Services Division for advice and assistance.

Further information on human rights and the accommodation process can be found at the Newfoundland and Labrador Human Rights Commission website at Duty To Accommodate - Human Rights Commission (thinkhumanrights.ca)

Miriam Sheppard is an Administrative Officer in Programs and Services at the NLTA.

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Financing a Year of Deferred Salary Leave

The Deferred Salary Leave Plan (DSLP) is available to any tenured teacher in a permanent position covered by the NLTA Collective Agreement. The terms of reference and other details of the DSLP are set out in Article 51 of the Provincial Collective Agreement. Members must note that federal taxation legislation requires employees to return to work after the period of leave for a time equal to the leave duration. Therefore, members are prohibited from taking the year of leave immediately prior to retirement. Many members find the DSLP an excellent means of financing a year of leave to pursue travel, enjoy family time, secure other employment, complete further studies or explore other interest(s) one might have.

Leave under the DSLP is fully credited for purposes of pension, seniority, salary increments and sick leave. **The deadline to apply for enrolment in the DSLP is April 30 of the previous school year.** So, a member wanting to start paying in to a DSLP in September 2026 would have to submit their application to the school district by the end of April 2026. The Deferred Salary Leave application and other information can be accessed on the provincial government website at www.gov.nl.ca/exec/tbs/policies/leave/deferred-salary/

While the DSLP provides an excellent opportunity for personal and professional rejuvenation, it is important to understand the economic realities of taking a deferred leave. NLTA Administrative Officers in Programs and Services are often asked what the “difference” is in take-home pay while participating in the DSLP. We cannot provide specific financial details or advice to members because each individual’s situation is different and all financial matters, such as salary levels, income tax rates, CPP and EI contribution rates, etc. are subject to change. Accordingly, the information provided herein contains rough estimates only.

The following comparisons of net salary for a member on full salary versus the various DSLP options are rough calculations for illustrative purposes only. Each individual member’s situation will be different. The estimates are based on the salaries presented in Schedule C: Annual Salary Scale (September 1, 2025 – August 31, 2026) of the new Collective Agreement. Taxes deducted vary for each member, and these are approximations only. EI and CPP deductions are based on 2026 formulae. All estimated figures are rounded to the nearest dollar. **Members participating in the DSLP continue to pay pension premiums based on the full, unreduced salary. EI premiums are paid on the full salary but are not paid during the year of leave.** Therefore, members may not be eligible for EI benefits in the year following the year of deferred salary leave which may have implications for those wishing to take parental leave right after a deferred salary leave.

Infosheet #9 provides further information on the DSLP; this can be found in the Member Services section of the NLTA website. Any further questions on the Deferred Salary Leave Plan should be directed to an NLTA Administrative Officer in Programs and Services at 726-3223 or 1-800-563-3599. Emailed inquiries sent to mail@nlta.ca will be directed to appropriate Programs and Services staff for a response.

Schedule C: Annual Salary Scale

September 1, 2025– August 31, 2026

FULL SALARY

	Top of V Salary Scale	Top of VI Salary Scale	Top of VII Salary Scale
Salary	81,261	94,122	106,478
Estimated Tax	17,233	21,736	26,180
Estimated EI	1,123	1,123	1,123
Estimated CPP	4,497	4,646	4,646
NLTA Fees	1,016	1,177	1,331
Pension Deductions	9,223	10,683	12,085
Estimated Net	48,169	54,757	61,112

2/3 DEFERRED SALARY

	Top of V Salary Scale	Top of VI Salary Scale	Top of VII Salary Scale
Salary	54,174	62,748	70,985
Estimated Tax	8,448	10,974	13,713
Estimated EI	1,123	1,123	1,123
Estimated CPP	3,015	3,525	4,015
NLTA Fees	677	784	887
Pension Deductions	9,223	10,683	12,085
Estimated Net	31,688	35,658	39,161

3/4 DEFERRED SALARY

	Top of V Salary Scale	Top of VI Salary Scale	Top of VII Salary Scale
Salary	60,946	70,592	79,859
Estimated Tax	10,377	13,581	16,748
Estimated EI	1,123	1,123	1,123
Estimated CPP	3,418	3,992	4,441
NLTA Fees	762	882	998
Pension Deductions	9,223	10,683	12,085
Estimated Net	36,042	40,331	44,464

4/5 DEFERRED SALARY

	Top of V Salary Scale	Top of VI Salary Scale	Top of VII Salary Scale
Salary	65,009	75,298	85,182
Estimated Tax	11,722	15,167	18,597
Estimated EI	1,123	1,123	1,123
Estimated CPP	3,660	4,258	4,646
NLTA Fees	813	941	1,065
Pension Deductions	9,223	10,683	12,085
Estimated Net	38,469	43,125	47,666

5/6 DEFERRED SALARY

	Top of V Salary Scale	Top of VI Salary Scale	Top of VII Salary Scale
Salary	67,718	78,435	88,732
Estimated Tax	12,623	16,254	19,849
Estimated EI	1,123	1,123	1,123
Estimated CPP	3,821	4,319	4,430
NLTA Fees	846	980	1,109
Pension Deductions	9,223	10,683	12,085
Estimated Net	40,081	45,076	50,136



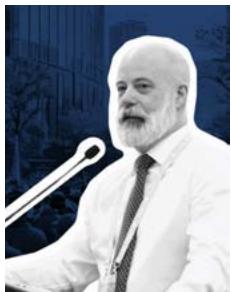
Education Week 2026

It's Education Week in Newfoundland and Labrador! This year's theme, Learn! Teach! Inspire!/Apprendre! Enseigner! Inspire!, reflects the heart of what happens in our schools every day. For more than 80 years, the NLTA has proudly recognized Education Week as a time to celebrate the value of K-12 public education and the incredible work happening in classrooms and schools across the province. This year, to launch the week, President Dale Lambe visited St. Edward's School in CBS and signed a proclamation with Principal Chris Bartlett and some students. A special thank you to School Rep Joanne Taylor and all the staff and students at St. Edward's School for the visit. President Lambe also visited an Agriculture in the Classroom event this week at Bishop Abraham Elementary in St. John's. Thank you to Principal Jenn White and all the staff and students for a fun event. Happy Education Week!



EDUCATION WEEK





Statement from the President of the CTF/FCE

Upholding the Rights of Workers at Home and Abroad

Ottawa, January 27, 2026 – The Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF/FCE) remains alarmed by the rise in attacks on the rights of workers and their livelihoods in North America.

Canada's educators emphasize their solidarity with workers north and south of the border whose jobs have been lost or are at risk due to reckless and unjustified tariffs or aimless austerity measures.

Instead of reenacting nationalist tools from the last century that ultimately plunged the world into two devastating world wars and several global economic crises, the CTF/FCE strongly believes in international cooperation and mutually beneficial trade amongst allies and friends.

We call on the Canadian government to increase support for colleagues in the automotive, steel, manufacturing, and resource sectors, which have come under pressure through no fault of their own and now face the threat of a new imperialist approach to trade on this continent.

Canada needs to stand up to these destructive developments and be a champion and protector of workers and insist that their rights are protected and respected in any international trade agreement that includes Canada. A failure to do so would jeopardize the stability of the entire economy. If the private economy suffers, public services are at risk of falling victim to misguided austerity.

Workers are the backbone of every economy. In the face of unprecedented external pressures on our economy, the federal, provincial and territorial governments need to play their part to build an economy that delivers for everyone by:

- Supporting communities through job protections and public service investments.
- Investing in education, public healthcare, and housing affordability.
- Fighting tax evasion and price gouging.
- Insisting on the protection and respect of workers' rights in any international trade agreement.

At a time when global economic uncertainty demands principled leadership and renewed collaboration, Canada faces an important choice. Rather than contributing to the stability and shared prosperity that working people depend on, recent policy approaches have too often fallen short of the coordinated, forward-looking action this moment demands. The CTF/FCE calls on the Government of Canada to demonstrate clear leadership by reaffirming its commitment to cooperation, fair trade, and economic policies that protect and strengthen the rights of workers at home and abroad.

In Quebec, the Coalition Avenir Québec (CAQ) is trying to break unions by making it more difficult for workers to join and by restricting how union dues can be collected or paid. The same strategy has already been applied in Alberta, where the United Conservative Party (UCP) government ended a legal teachers' strike by invoking the notwithstanding clause, thereby denying our colleagues their Charter rights to free and collective bargaining.

These actions do not unite Canadians; instead, they divide citizens seemingly for the sake of shoring up power in the hands of increasingly unpopular governments. In times of existential threats to Canada's well-being, this is not the type of behaviour any worker should have to tolerate.

The Canadian government cannot afford to repeat the same mistakes.

In solidarity,

Clint Johnston

President, The Canadian Teachers' Federation

*A Note from the Canadian
Teachers' Federation*

Canada Student Loan Forgiveness

The CTF/FCE is pleased to announce that effective December 31, 2025, eligible teachers and educators are now able to apply for the Canada Student Loan Forgiveness program.

CTF/FCE advises that teachers may not be eligible to apply until June 2026 (due to a requirement for 10 months prior consecutive work). CTF/FCE are actively seeking meetings to address this regulatory issue.

CTF/FCE are taking the necessary steps to inform as many teachers and educators as possible while also learning as much about the application process as possible to be able to provide support.

In the meantime, please see the updated Government of Canada's information page here: Canada Student Loan Forgiveness.

Presently, eligible applicants must apply by mail using the following form: Application for Canada Student Loan Forgiveness.

It is expected that by mid-March 2026 educators will be able to apply online.

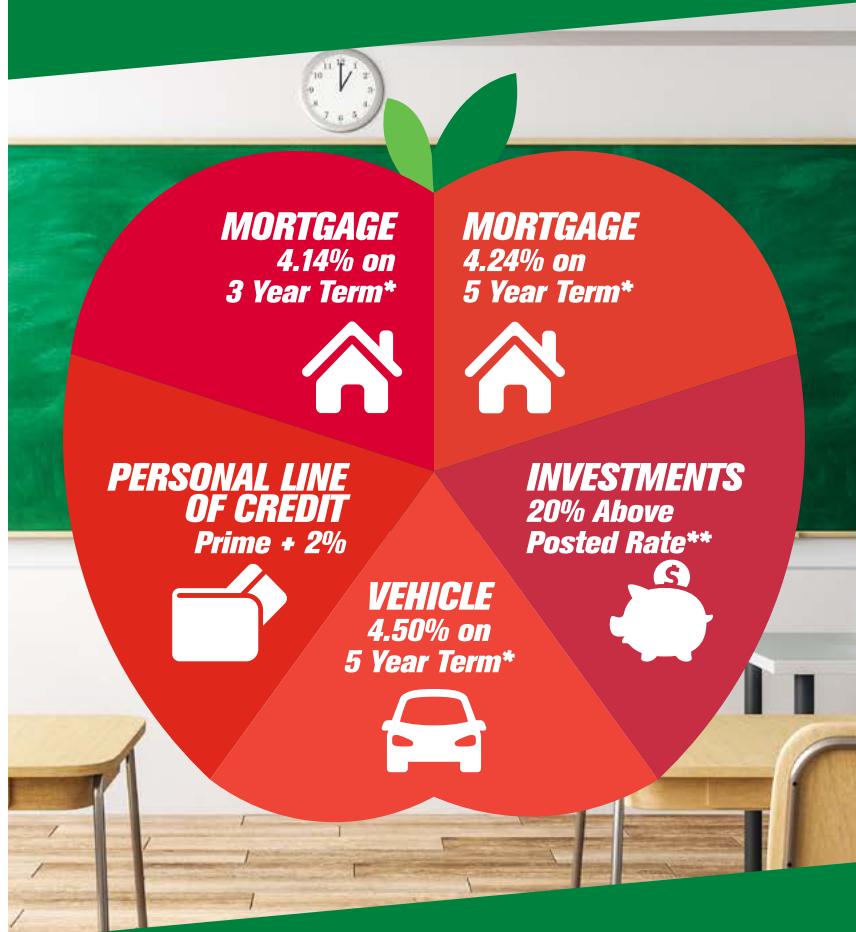
Despite the regulatory challenge noted above, it is recommended that members apply for loan forgiveness at their earliest convenience.

Please note that applications may be rejected given the current work period regulations. Members who receive rejections are encouraged to email: cslf-erpec@ctf-fce.ca so that CTF/FCE can track this issue.

Members are encouraged to contact the National Student Loan Service Centre with any questions regarding eligibility, the application process, and expected dates for loan forgiveness to be reflected in an individual's outstanding loan balance. The CTF/FCE will also be preparing a FAQ document as they gather information.

For more info, visit <https://conta.cc/3Li543D>

TEACHERS CARE PACKAGE



As a teacher, you care for your students. We at **NLCU** applaud all that you do, so consider this bundle of special offers a **“Care Package”** of sorts. You can benefit from any **one or all** of these special rates.



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The Power of Curiosity: Coach Approach to the Classroom

by Leslie Brown

As teachers, you manage so many moving parts throughout the day. You are the master of curriculum while also navigating the ever-complicated system and classroom dynamics. In a helping profession, you may feel the pressure to have all the answers. When you spend your day developing and delivering curriculum, managing behaviours, supporting well-being, and responding to individual and system needs, how do you not feel exhausted?

A coach approach to the classroom is a tool that can offer you something powerful, not as a new program or trend, but as a mindset shift. It is a tool that can help free up your capacity while also building awareness and confidence in students.

What is a Coach Approach?

Unlike many forms of coaching that we have become familiar with (imparting wisdom on the basketball court, teaching chess, supporting the drama club), a coach approach may be a little different than how you traditionally view coaching. It is not about your expertise or directing others' behaviour. It's about pausing, approaching situations with genuine curiosity, and allowing students to be experts in their own reflection and next steps. You are not the fixer, but a facilitator to awaken the potential in others.

Moving from Fixer to Facilitator

“Helping is the sunny side of control”- Anne Lamott. The first time I heard this quote, it stopped me in my tracks. Like many of you, I am a helper, a fixer. Isn't that wonderful? But have you ever considered what the negative implications of fixing everything for everyone else are?

Many teachers are natural fixers, and for good reason. When a student is struggling, the instinct is to intervene quickly, offer solutions, and restore order. Over time, however, this can unintentionally create two outcomes: (1) teacher burnout and (2) student dependency. This approach can flip the script on these issues:

1) Benefits for Teachers

One of the most significant benefits of a coach approach is what it gives to you, as the support person. While you are still a classroom leader, it relieves you from the responsibility of having the solution to every problem. This approach allows you to respond more intentionally and shifts the solution to the problem/concern to its rightful owner. This will undoubtedly reduce your own emotional fatigue.

2) Benefits for students

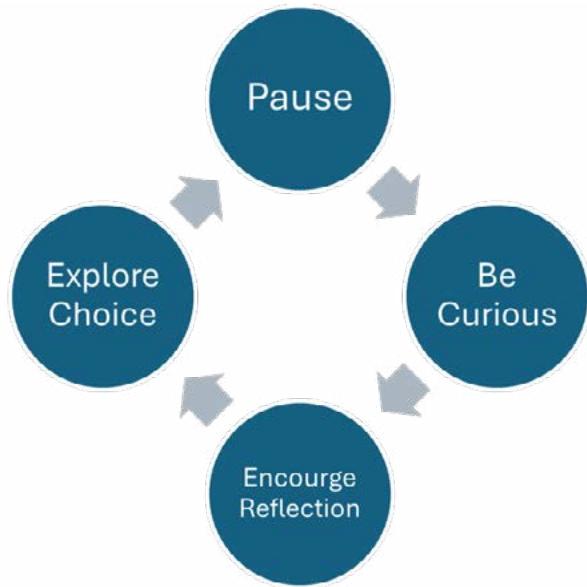
All of us, students or teachers, thrive when we feel seen, heard and understood. A coach approach supports this in several ways.

- a) Builds agency: Agency is the capability of individuals to make choices and act on those choices in ways that make a difference in their lives (Martin, 2004). By using this approach, you reduce the need for others to wait on your direction while enhancing the students' ability to articulate their emotions and needs.
- b) Supports emotional regulation: Emotions are not something to be shied away from; in fact, they are a powerful tool for learning about ourselves. Asking different questions can support others to avoid shutting down feelings and instead acknowledge them with thoughtful redirection.
- c) Develops metacognition: Metacognition is our awareness of our own thinking (Flavell, 1979). A coach approach supports people in reflection and increased awareness of their patterns and thought processes. Metacognition has been shown to help children with learning issues, support self-regulation, and quiet negative self-talk (Child Mind Institute, 2026). When students are asked to reflect not only on what they learn, but also how they learn, it develops self-awareness, resilience and confidence over time.

A Coach Approach Model for Application

A simple framework for a coach approach can be broken down into four (4) steps. These steps allow for your own reflection, but equally important, for the curiosity and reflection of others.

Below, I will break down each section and give you potential reflection questions to consider using in practice.



a) Pause

Question(s) to ask yourself:

- What am I noticing in my body right now?
- What emotions are present for me?
- What assumptions or judgments are showing up?

b) Be Curious

Question(s) to ask yourself:

- What don't I know yet?
- What story am I telling myself?
- How might this make sense from their perspective?

Question(s) to ask the person you are supporting:

- Help me understand what's most important to you here.
- What's your perspective on what's happening?
- What feels challenging about this situation?

c) Encourage Reflection

Question(s) to ask the person you are supporting:

- How has this been affecting you?
- What matters most to you in this situation?
- When this happens, how does it make you feel?

d) Explore Choice

Question(s) to ask the person you are supporting:

- What options do you see from here?
- What do you have control over in this situation?
- What support would make this easier?

Common Concerns with Adopting a Coach Approach

1) Who has time for this?

This approach isn't about long conversations or intensive interactions. It's a mindset shift. It is a way of responding that often saves time by reducing repeated issues.

2) This won't work with challenging behaviour

You may be right, and sometimes a more direct approach may be warranted. However, once you start practicing this approach, you will find it can work very well with challenging behaviour and supports relationship building with students. It addresses the thinking and emotions that are underneath the behaviour, not just the surface response.

3) It's too much to remember

Like most things, this isn't about perfection; it's a practiced skill that will evolve to feel more natural over time. This approach is not about becoming a different teacher; it's about becoming more intentional. You don't need to hit every step or ask the perfect question every time.

The next time you feel the urge to fix something for someone else, start with a pause and a curious question. When you do this, notice what happens. When we support people in this way, we are building confidence, one conversation at a time.

EAP Outreach and Education

Interested in learning more about this topic, or in other learning opportunities that support teacher well-being? We'd love to hear from you. Contact us at workshops@eapnltteachers.ca.

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

References:

Child Mind Institute, January 12, 2026:
<https://childmind.org/article/how-metacognition-can-help-kids/>

Flavell, J. H. (1979). Metacognition and cognitive monitoring: A new area of cognitive-developmental inquiry. *American Psychologist*, 34, 906–911.

Teaching and Learning Lab, MIT, January 12, 2026:
<https://tll.mit.edu/teaching-resources/how-people-learn/metacognition/>



Congratulations to Peggy Hann, the Recipient of the Canadian School/Educational Psychologist of the Year 2025 Award!

The award will be presented to Peggy in person at the 2026 CPA Convention in Montreal.

Peggy Hann is a Registered Psychologist with the Newfoundland and Labrador Psychology Board and currently works as a School Psychologist with NLSchools in St. John's, NL. Her professional practice has focused on supporting school-aged children and youth, as well as assisting teachers and families in meeting students' needs. Her responsibilities include consultation with school counsellors, administrators, district staff, teachers, parents, and community agencies; conducting and interpreting assessments; developing and monitoring educational and behavioural programs; and delivering professional development within the education system. Peggy has also been actively involved in training future psychologists as a sessional instructor in the Memorial University Counselling Psychology Program since 2011, and as a supervisor for graduate students. She also promotes school psychology as a career through the Psychologists in Education (PIE) Special Interest Council.

A strong advocate for equity, social justice, and access to psychological services, Peggy has supported marginalized students including Indigenous populations. As President of the NL Counsellors' and Psychologists' Association, she led policy changes related to school facilities and ethics for counsellors and was later awarded a Lifetime Achievement Award. Additionally, as a member of a provincial committee, she contributed to the Social and Emotional Learning Curriculum Framework and the 2021 Foundation Document for SEL.

As a founding member and current Co-President of PIE, Peggy has advanced key resolutions at NLTA Biennial General Meetings addressing professional title change, graduate training programs, staffing ratios, recruitment and retention, compensation for interns, and role clarification. She is completing her second term as Co-President, with current priorities including advocacy, professional learning, and workforce solution.



A Big Land Christmas

by Amanda Downey

Over the past couple of years, when Labrador West needed teachers, international hires stepped up in a big way, moving far from home and settling in the wild Canadian North. In the 1960s and 1970s it was not unusual to see many teachers from across Canada, and even around the world, in Labrador West. In the beginning, the schools were privatized, and the Iron Ore Company of Canada was the employer for all the schools, recruiting from all over the world to fill their positions. As Labrador West grew, the mining companies gifted the province the schools that it had constructed. In the late 1990s, the mining companies stopped subsidizing salaries and schools, leaving the system completely in the hands of the Provincial Government; thus, most, if not all, hires were Newfoundlanders, Labradorians, and Canadians. That is until very recently!

Ms. Adrianna Adu-Adjei and her family moved to Labrador West in late April 2025, after winter had mostly gone. She first was living in St. John's since August 2022 where she studied at MUN for her M.Ed. This year marked their first Big Land winter and holiday season. The Labrador West Branch has been hosting a Christmas family skate for many years, and this year Adrianna and her family wanted to join in! Their smiles tell you all how that went. Seeing them enjoy themselves brought so much joy to the entire branch! Adrianna shared how the fruit was very different in Canada from Ghana, and the extremes in weather took some getting used to. She was also surprised that at universities most professors asked you to call them by their first names. As educators, we never lose our love of learning, and it was a pleasure to learn about Adrianna's traditions, culture, and experiences.

Meanwhile, little Nora joined

in for her second Christmas skate! She and her family moved here from Iran, with both her parents working at local schools. Nora bravely asked if Santa would be attending the skating this year. When she was informed that his schedule was too busy being so close to Christmas, she exclaimed, "Oh, you don't have to tell me, I know all about it!" Prior to coming to Canada, Nora and her family didn't celebrate Christmas in their culture and traditions. Now, she likes to celebrate both their traditions and some new Canadian favourites, like Santa and decorative trees for the holidays!

Having international hires has been wonderful for our school communities. An extra special Big Land welcome to all those brave enough to join us for winter in Labrador. We hope you love living in Labrador like we do.

Amanda Downey is an IRT at AP Low Primary in Labrador City. She holds a B.Ed. (Primary/Elementary), B.Sp.Ed. and M.Ed. (Special Education and Inclusion). Amanda is an active volunteer within the NLTA and has been the Branch President for Labrador West since 2020. She lives with her husband, Andrew, and miniature schnauzer, Gus, who is the real boss of their home.

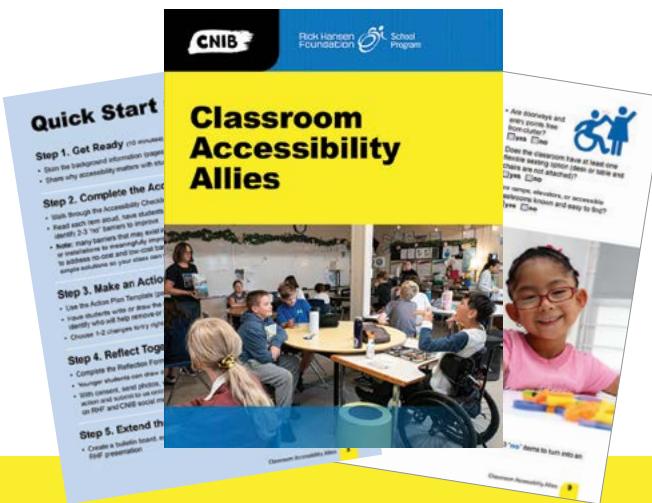




Classroom Accessibility Allies

Empower your classroom to champion accessibility!

The Rick Hansen Foundation School Program, in partnership with The Canadian National Institute of the Blind (CNIB), developed Classroom Accessibility Allies, a free resource for educators of Kindergarten to grade 9 students. Packed with hands-on activities, it helps students identify and remove barriers, making disability inclusion part of everyday learning.



Learn More:
[www.RickHansen.com/
Accessibility-Allies](http://www.RickHansen.com/Accessibility-Allies)

Every Breakfast. Every Child. Every School Day.

Creating opportunities for a stronger, brighter future.



It is with gratitude that we thank you for the direct impact you make on the lives of our children in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Kids Eat Smart Foundation serves over 47,000 meals in our 275 Kids Eat Smart clubs in Newfoundland and Labrador, every school day. We accomplish this with the generosity of our partners and donors, and with the dedication of you, our principals, our teachers, along with staff and volunteers, who help our children learn, grow and be their very best.

We know in Newfoundland and Labrador, 1 in 3 children under the age of 18 live in a food insecure home, and this is why our Kids Eat Smart Clubs are so important; breakfast sometimes is the only meal of the day for some children and youth.

Research shows there is a direct correlation between having access to healthy food at school and better educational outcomes.

Together, we ensure every school age child in our province has access to food at school, at no cost to families.

Every Breakfast Counts. Every Child Counts. You Count. Thank you for all you do. For more information visit our website at www.kidseatsmart.ca, or you can contact Celina Stoyles, Executive Director directly at 1-877-722-1996 or e-mail cstoyles@kidseatsmart.ca.

Interested in some free physical and health education professional reading but don't really know where to look? *Below will help get you started:*

JOURNALS

More journals than ever before offer free articles. Some of the ones below include publications on both Physical Education and Health Education. Here's how to find the "open access" (i.e., free) articles:

- **Revue phénEPS / PHEnexus Journal**
 - All are open access
- **Curriculum Studies in Health and Physical Education; or Journal of Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance; or Physical Education and Sport Pedagogy**
 - Click on one of the three journals above and follow the path below (tabs):
 - "Browse all articles and issues"
 - "Open Access Articles"
- **Journal of Teaching in Physical Education**
 - Tabs such as "Featured Content", "Latest Issue", and "All Content" will display what is "Free access" and "Restricted access"
- **Health Education Journal**
 - Scroll down to what's unlocked (i.e., open access/free)
- **Helpful Hint**
 - You don't need to read all the methods and data collection (unless that interests you). You might get the information you need by simply reading sections such as the Introduction, Discussion, Conclusion (and perhaps Findings).

BLOGS, PODCASTS, VIDEOS, AND WEBSITES

For your professional learning do you prefer blogs, podcasts, videos and/or websites? Try these:

- **Physical and Health Education (PHE) Canada / Éducation Physique et Santé (ÉPS) Canada**
 - Professional Learning / Perfectionnement professionnel
 - Training and Certification / Formation et certification
 - Podcasts / Les Balado
 - Teaching Tools / Outils pédagogiques
 - Cooperative Learning in Physical Education videos
 - Meaningful Physical Education Podcasts
 - Pedagogical Models and Approaches (from: Drowning in the Shallows)

CLOSER TO HOME

Looking for some professional learning a little closer to home?

- Join NL's Physical Education Special Interest Council – PESIC
- NLTA Code of Ethics

Happy reading, listening, and watching!

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

Please visit www.nlta.nl.ca/pe-resources/ to access these resources!



