
BGM 2009

April 14-17



**Report
to Convention**

April 2009

LEADING A COMMUNITY OF LEARNERS

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President's Update

Sean Noah

Since I took office as your President on August 1, 2007, time has indeed flown by but I have enjoyed the work immensely and am pleased with those areas with which we have experienced success. While the position has been extremely challenging and demanding, it is a role that I have fully embraced and I have always felt very honored to represent you as your Association President. In this report I will offer a summary of our activities since I took office and will follow-up with a complete review of my entire term later this summer which will be distributed to the membership this coming fall.

Since I assumed office, both the ISSP/Pathways and Teacher Allocation Commission Reports have been released and many of the recommendations contained therein have been adopted by government through the Department of Education.

Since the release of the Pathways Report in December 2007, much committee work specific to those accepted recommendations relative to special services is ongoing with further recommendations and action to be released and implemented this spring and this coming September. Much of the paperwork, unnecessary meetings and further documentation has been eliminated from classroom and special education teachers' workloads but more needs to be done and much of that will unfold over the course of the next few months and into the next school year. Such is the case as we have many facets of the special services model undergoing modification with a view to lessen the workload of our members and to help ensure greater success for the special needs students in our care. Areas such as department heads for special education in all schools, website development for teacher resources, working groups in educational psychology and guidance, and pilot schools involved in development of a new model for categorical support, are but some of the initiatives coming out of the Pathways Report that are ongoing with NLTA representation and input throughout.

The new Teacher Allocation model was implemented by government last spring and although our schools experienced a decline of more than 2400 students provincially, an additional 117 teaching units for the 2008-09 school year were deployed under this new model. We anticipate more units for the system for 2009-10, notwithstanding a comparable enrollment decline in our schools. The needs-based portion of the model is critical to the success of the new approach and involves the development of a needs-based profile at the school level requesting additional units to be deployed by the district. This can be completed by schools after a determination of the baseline allocation to be provided, or the actual teaching units that have been deployed to the school. This component of the model is integral to its successful implementation, as it provides a real opportunity for our schools to participate in a legitimate needs-based process for teacher allocation based entirely on local needs.

We have and will continue our campaign to actively lobby government through the Departments of Education and Finance to improve upon certain aspects of the model including improved

specialist, high school and Kindergarten class size maximums. There have been improvements in the allocation ratios for learning resources, specialists and administrators through the implementation of this model and this occurred in March 2008. For the 2009-10 school year we will see an improved specialist ratio for the junior high grades to 1:125 from 1:175. This was only 1:250 prior to the implementation of the new model last spring. We will see further class size maximums introduced this fall in grades 5 and 7 with caps at 25 and 27 respectively. Further class size maximums of 25 and 27 will be introduced in September 2010 in grades 6 and 9.

We surveyed the membership on the impact of the new teacher allocation model late last fall, and 70% of schools that responded indicated that the new allocation model has had a positive or somewhat positive impact upon their school environments. Implementation of the model will continue to be closely monitored by the NLTA working with the Department to provide further enhancements and refinements in the areas mentioned previously.

While I am pleased that we were able to conclude contact negotiations when we did, we all realize that we were unable to obtain gains in the areas of leaves and other workload issues which are so important to teachers. Unfortunately, the economy turned against us at an inopportune time during negotiations which prevented us from making additional gains.

Nonetheless, the new collective agreement has secured a salary increase for teachers of 21.5% compounded over the four-year life of the agreement. Teachers will realize the salary gains within 30 months or 2.5 years since the signing of the agreement. The last increase will be applied in September of 2011. During a time when the global and Canadian economies are in a deep recession, the effects of which are being felt in an increasing way in our own province, the salary increase will continue to be significantly higher than any current or anticipated increase in teacher salaries and other public sector salaries in the country. The growth in real income over inflation is unprecedented in the careers of most of our current teachers.

Since the conclusion of bargaining we have been actively pursuing improvements to teacher leaves through the various avenues including our appearance at the pre-budget consultation hearings and in meetings with both the Ministers of Education and Finance. In our recent submission we argued for the necessary fiscal resources to be put into place to provide for those additional teaching units to address the critical areas of the teacher allocation model that still require attention. Financial and human resources were also sought to ensure that the recommendations of the Pathways report continue to be implemented thoroughly and expeditiously. We strongly urged government to allocate additional funds for the substitute teacher budget and further, to allocate a number of leave days specifically for the purpose of family leave, totally separate from other discretionary leave. We also concentrated on securing additional monies for the substitute teacher budget, specifically for the purpose of teacher selected and directed professional development.

The Provincial Working Group on Supervision continues to meet and consists of representatives from the NLTA, the NLSBA (Newfoundland and Labrador School Boards Association) and the Department of Education. As part of their mandate, this group will fully explore the issue of student supervision including the collection of relevant information from jurisdictions where supervision is carried out by non-teachers with a view to recommending a possible course of action for teachers here in this province.

Our Professional Development Division, together with the Faculty of Education and School Districts, have continued with their series of conferences for beginning teachers. These meetings took place in Corner Brook and Gander and have allowed our new teachers to engage in meaningful exchanges, networking and professional development. They continue to be extremely valuable conferences as I can attest to from attending several of them as the critically important areas of student motivation, teacher personal and professional balance, among other areas are discussed.

During the regular occasions where I have written to you in my "Up Front" articles in *The Bulletin* and in all those instances where I have represented you at formal or informal functions and in the media, I have felt a special pride and honor each and every time. What a singular and distinct honor it has been for me to lay the NLTA wreath at the National War Memorial in St. John's, both on November 11th and July 1st, on behalf of every teacher in Newfoundland and Labrador. It is an event we have successfully lobbied for to have representation within, and is a tradition that the NLTA will now continue to be a part of every year.

Allow me to sincerely thank each one of you for the wonderful work you do with the students in your care. You have reason to be proud of what you do and what you accomplish; it is the greatest of professions and requires very special people to take on the role. And thank you all so much for the support you have shown during my term of office and for the lasting memories you have provided me.

My best wishes for an enjoyable and productive BGM.

Executive Director's Message

Edward Hancock

Every second year, at the end of each Provincial Executive's term of office, your Association produces a biennial report to summarize and review the activity and work of the Association over that period. This report is compiled in each year that a BGM is held, towards the end of the school year, and is distributed to schools early in September at the beginning of the subsequent school year. As of 2005, we have also begun producing, for BGM, this "Report to Convention," to report on activity since the last BGM.

These past two years have been busy ones for your Association. In the early Fall of 2007, your newly elected Provincial Executive, under the leadership of President Sean Noah and Vice-President Lily Cole, established five priority areas for 2007-09. These priority areas have continued to occupy our time and attention over the past two school years as we work to address those areas that are of most significant priority for our members. The release of the ISSP/Pathways Commission Report in December 2007 and the Teacher Allocation Commission Report in March 2008 led to detailed analysis of the recommendations from these reports and government's implementation plans. Your Association continues to closely monitor the implementation of these reports, providing input to the Department as issues arise. Provincial contract negotiations, which had been placed on hold pending the release of the Commissions' reports, began in earnest in September 2008. Due to pressures related to the global economic downturn and dead-

lines imposed by government related to a bargaining template for public sector employees, these negotiations proceeded at a much faster pace than usual and concluded prior to Christmas 2008. The resulting tentative agreement was accepted by a 93.2% vote of the membership on January 22, 2009.

Following the signing of the provincial agreement, the Labrador West Collective Agreement was completed and was ratified by teachers in early April.

Your Association's involvement in teacher professional development, including the continued restructuring of the Special Interest Councils, has been another key focus of attention. Another major initiative arising from BGM 2007, the ad hoc Committee on the Internal Review of Association Programs and Services has completed its work and has submitted its report and recommendations for the consideration of BGM 2009.

In the meantime, President-Elect Lily Cole and Vice-President-Elect James Dinn were elected by province-wide vote on February 3, 2009, and together with the ten remaining members of the 2009-11 Provincial Executive who will be elected by delegates at the 2009 BGM, will form your leadership team for the next two years.

This Report to Convention contains detailed information on these and other matters that have been the focus of your Association's activity over the past two years. I trust you will find it a useful update and I wish you every success for a productive Biennial General Meeting.

Organizational Governance and Administration

Provincial Executive Council

The Provincial Executive Council usually meets four to five times during the school year to transact the business of the Association, although other special meetings are scheduled as required. The Constitution and Bylaws place full and complete authority for the direction of the Association between Conventions with the Provincial Executive Council.

The 2007-09 members of the Provincial Executive Council are: Sean Noah, President; Lily Cole Vice-President, Creston South; Callista Burridge, Deer Lake; Jim Dinn, St. John's; Derek Drover, Gaultois; Dean Ingram, Clarendville; Jackie Maloney, Marystown; Tina Matthews, Woody Point; Jean Murphy, Cow Head; Paul Pinsent, Stephenville; Gabriel Ryan, Holyrood; and Jeanne Williams, Bonavista.

The decisions and recommendations from Executive and ad hoc committees and other business of Provincial Executive are reflected throughout this report.

Table Officers

Table Officers consist of the President, Vice-President, and two other Executive members elected by the Provincial Executive. Members of Table Officers for 2007-09 are President Sean Noah, Vice-President Lily Cole, and Executive Members Dean Ingram and Paul Pinsent. The Executive Director serves as staff consultant to the committee.

The mandate of Table Officers includes making recommendations to Executive on issues such as: appointment of NLTA representatives to various committees and groups; establishment and composition of committees; and revisions to policy and programs. The committee also approves agendas for Provincial Executive, Joint Council and Biennial General Meetings, and handles routine business between Executive meetings. Table Officers is also the committee responsible for interviewing candidates and making recommendations to Executive on staffing matters.

Some of the items handled by Table Officers since BGM 2007 are as follows:

- Appointed the Electoral Committee for 2008-09.
- Considered applications, conducted interviews and brought recommendations to Executive regarding the filling of the permanent positions of Assistant Executive Director and Administrative Officer in Benefits and Economic Services, the term contract positions of Teacher Health and Wellness Coordinator and Coordinator of the Virtual Teacher Centre, and the replacement position of EAP Coordinator.
- Made recommendations to Executive regarding: the granting of Honorary Membership at BGM 2009; the theme for BGM 2009; and resolutions to BGM 2009 falling within Table Officers' mandate.
- Monitored progress regarding the reports of the two Commissions and government's implementation of the same.

- Monitored and made decisions on staff recommendations re cases concerning professional relations inquiries and membership discipline.
- Monitored progress and activity concerning the Association priorities for 2007-09.
- Received and responded to correspondence from CTF relative to CTF policies and activities.
- Examined resolutions from BGM 2007 falling within Table Officers' mandate and pursued action on same.
- Reviewed proposals for amendments to the NLTA Act and Bylaws and made recommendations to Executive.
- Established the Executive Meeting Schedules for 2008-09 and 2009-10.
- Received and responded to requests from groups and organizations for NLTA involvement and/or assistance.
- Reviewed all Association policies falling within the mandate of Table Officers and made recommendations to Executive.

Joint Council

The Joint Council is the composite body of Branch Presidents and Provincial Executive, empowered by NLTA policy to carry out certain responsibilities between Biennial General Meetings. The Joint Council held two regular meetings during 2007-08, the first in November 2007 and the second in April 2008. Two meetings were held for the 2008-09 school year; the first in November 2008, and the second in February 2009. There were also special meetings regarding negotiations in the Fall of 2008 and again in January 2009. At these meetings, members made decisions and brought recommendations to provide advice to the Provincial Executive on many issues of importance to teachers. Issues discussed included Association priorities, contract negotiations, branch structure, NLTA budgets, professional development for teachers, internal review of the NLTA, CTF programs and services, group insurance, teacher wellness and changes to NLTA policies. In addition, the Joint Council meetings provided a forum for discussions of many issues of direct concern to teachers in carrying out their day-to-day responsibilities.

Executive Committees

The Provincial Executive operates through a series of standing and ad hoc committees. Teachers from across the province serve as members of these committees, with each committee usually centralized in one particular area of the province. These committees are responsible to the Provincial Executive Council unless there is specific direction to the contrary from the Biennial Convention. The work of the committees is reported upon throughout this report. The Executive committees are: Communications/Political Action; Curriculum; Equity Issues in Education; Finance and Property; Group Insurance; Membership Benefits and Services; and Professional Issues. Other ad hoc committees are set up as needed to deal with specific issues.

Communications/Political Action Committee

For 2007-09 the Communications/Political Action Committee is located in St. John's and chaired by Gabriel Ryan. The committee oversees the review of the NLTA website, the review of all the NLTA brochures, pamphlets and publications, *The Bulletin* and any other communications issues as required such as media campaigns or strategies. The Committee oversaw the coordination of Education Week and the Education Week Opening Ceremonies for 2008 and 2009. The Committee reviewed and made recommendations for changes to NLTA's Environmental Policy and made recommendations on a proposed Privacy Policy which were accepted by Provincial Executive. The Committee was also tasked with investigating the most appropriate means to do a comprehensive survey of members covering all aspects of the programs and services provided to teachers by the NLTA that can include other relevant educational issues and activities.

The NLTA Communications Officer serves as staff consultant to the Communications/Political Action Committee.

Curriculum Committee

The Curriculum Committee for 2007-09 is located in the Bonavista area of the province. The Committee is chaired by Provincial Executive member Jeanne Williams and the NLTA staff liaison is George Tucker. During its tenure, the Committee has been actively engaged with a number of important curriculum issues. These include:

- The K-12 Mathematics Curriculum Review
- The Intermediate Curriculum Review
- Primary Reading Assessments
- The ISSP/Pathways Commission
- The Teacher Allocation Commission
- Textbook Issues at the Senior High Level
- Variances in Teacher Preparation Time
- Resolutions for BGM 2009

Equity Issues in Education Committee

The Equity Issues in Education Committee is chaired by Executive member Jackie Maloney for 2007-09. Teachers from Rushoon to Burin serve as Committee members and made the decision early on to focus on the issue of combating homophobia in schools. Much of the first year was spent collecting information and becoming educated on the topic. This involved having presentations by teachers in the area who were knowledgeable on the subject and getting advice from researchers and professors at Memorial. Eventually, an awareness campaign was developed which will be rolled out in the spring of 2009 and beyond. In addition to this major initiative, the Committee conducted a policy review and also continued to monitor other issues of equity, including the representation of women in leadership. Upon a recommendation of the Committee, five women observers were again part of our BGM. After much consideration, the Committee recommended the discontinuation of grants for student equity projects.

Beverly Park is staff consultant to the Equity Issues in Education Committee.

Finance and Property Committee

The Finance and Property Committee meets four times a year or as required by the Provincial Executive Council. The committee is comprised of four members from the Provincial Executive Council and controls and monitors all spending and maintains all property of the Association.

Activities include monitoring the investments of the Association, making recommendations on financial issues and preparing budgets. A major activity for the committee was the preparation of the Association's budgets for 2009-10 and 2010-11. The committee is based in St. John's and is chaired by Jim Dinn. Jim Fox is staff consultant.

Group Insurance Committee

The major areas of work of the Group Insurance Committee can be found in the Group Insurance section under Benefits and Economic Services, later in this report. The committee, chaired by Callista Burrige from Deer Lake, consists of: a seven-person board of Trustees from around the province who had been appointed by Provincial Executive; representatives from Johnson Inc. as Plan Administrator and consultant; a staff member of the NLTA who performs the administrative duties assigned by Trustees and acts in an advisory capacity to the committee; and the NLTA Treasurer who performs the financial duties assigned by Trustees.

Membership Benefits and Services Committee

The Membership Benefits and Services Committee is based in scenic Woody Point for 2007-09, with Executive member Tina Matthews as chairperson. This committee is responsible for overseeing and making recommendations on issues related to Branch Operations and Benefits and Economic Services. The Committee made recommendations to Executive regarding candidates for the 2008 and 2009 Allan Bishop, Bancroft and Special Recognition Awards. Over the course of its two-year mandate, the Committee reviewed and made recommendations for revisions to a number of areas of NLTA Policy and dealt with the actioning of many resolutions that came from the 2007 BGM. The February 2009 meeting presented a particularly busy agenda, which included the consideration of resolutions from branches to BGM 2009. Issues on the Committee agenda this year have included consideration of survey results regarding the "three-week pay gap," review of the activities of School Board-Teacher Liaison Committees, and efforts to increase awareness of Association awards, including a presentation by the chairperson on the preparation of nominations at the November 2008 Joint Council meeting.

Staff in the Benefits and Economic Services Division support this committee in its work.

Professional Issues Committee

For the 2007-09 school year, the Professional Issues Committee is located in the Deer Lake region chaired by NLTA Executive member Jean Murphy. Under Ms. Murphy's leadership, Committee members did an extensive review of all policies related to professional issues. As per its mandate, it also made decisions on a number of Association awards. The discussions

and decisions of this Committee form the basis for future program development, and it gives direction to Executive on professional matters brought forward by teachers through resolutions. Staff in the Professional Development Division support this Committee in its work.

Teacher Health and Wellness Promotion Committee

A Teacher Health and Wellness Promotion Committee was established in September 2007, as a result of a recommendation from an ad-hoc committee on teacher health and wellness promotion that was accepted by Provincial Executive. The mandate of the Committee is: 1. To promote and sustain a focus on teacher wellness and active living; 2. To advise and provide guidance to the Provincial Executive and NLTA staff on priorities, development, implementation, and evaluation of strategic health and wellness programming for teachers. The Committee is chaired by Table Officer Dean Ingram and is based in Blaketown.

A pilot teacher health and wellness promotion initiative was undertaken with participation of 35 pilot schools, coordinated by a health and wellness promotion coordinator hired to oversee the pilot initiative. Funding for the coordinator's position and the pilot initiative was provided by the NLTA group insurance trustees from the NLTA Group Insurance Trust Fund. Needs assessments were conducted in each school, various initiatives and activities were undertaken by each school, and an assessment of the pilot will be conducted, with recommendations to Executive regarding the program to occur by year's end.

Ad Hoc Committee on Internal Review of NLTA's Programs and Services

The Ad Hoc Committee on Internal Review of NLTA's Programs and Services was established as a result of a motion carried at the NLTA's 2007 BGM. The committee was established under Chairperson Paul Pinsent in the Stephenville/Corner Brook region. The Committee met on five occasions during the 2007-08 school year and on two more occasions in the fall of 2008 and presented its final report to Provincial Executive and Joint Council in November 2008. The major topics in the final report included governance, professional development, communications, representative leadership, and staffing. There are 17 recommendations in the final report and the full report will be presented at BGM 2009. There is also a section on the Internal Review under the Priorities section in this document.

Administration

The Administration Division has responsibility for coordinating the work of all divisions within the NLTA and ensures that the organization is responsive to the needs of its members. The President and the Executive Director represent the Association on various boards and liaison groups – regionally with the Council of Atlantic Provinces Teacher Organizations (CAPTO), nationally, with the Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF) and internationally, through Education International (EI). Provincially, the President and Executive Director represent the NLTA in liaison with the Department of Education and other government departments and agencies, the Newfoundland and Labrador School Boards Association (NLSBA), the

Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Directors of Education (NLADE), the Faculty of Education at Memorial University, the Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of School Councils and the other public sector unions.

This division is also responsible for the overall functioning of the Biennial General Meeting (Convention), the Provincial Executive Council and Joint Council. It also oversees all operations of the NLTA office and administers staff collective agreements on behalf of Executive.

Highlights for the President's and Executive Director's Offices since BGM 2007 are as follows:

- Continued a series of visitations to schools and branches throughout the province by the President.
- Continued ongoing liaisons with other educational agencies, including the Department of Education, NLSBA, the Faculty of Education, NLADE, the Federation of School Councils, and the Retired Teachers' Association.
- Coordinated and participated in the three School Representative Seminars held in the fall of 2007 in St. John's, Gander and Goose Bay; and in 2008 in Plum Point, Deer Lake and Clarenville. Three more seminars are planned for the fall of 2009.
- Attended meetings of the Executive of the Council of Atlantic Provinces Teacher Organizations (CAPTO) in 2007-08 and 2008-09, and the CAPTO AGMs in May 2007 and May 2008.
- The President and Executive Director attended meetings of the CTF Board of Directors and the CTF AGM in their roles as CTF Directors.
- The President served as one of the four CTF vice-presidents on the CTF Executive for 2008-09. His position as a Director on the CTF Board was then filled by NLTA vice-president Lily Cole.
- The Executive Director represented the NLTA on the provincial Pensions Investment Committee.
- The Executive Director, Assistant to the President and Assistant to the Executive Director served as staff consultants to the Electoral Committee and coordinated the carrying out of the province-wide vote for NLTA President and Vice-President. (See more detailed section on the election on page 12.)
- Had responsibility to oversee all arrangements and planning for BGM 2009.
- Prepared agendas and oversaw all details for the functioning of the Provincial Executive Council and Joint Council meetings.
- The President was involved in numerous media interviews and public appearances as the Association's public spokesperson.
- The President and Executive Director served on the Negotiations Strategy Committee, along with the Vice-President, Assistant Executive Director and Communications Officer.
- The Executive Director served as one of the three staff officers with the ad hoc Committee on Internal Review of Association Programs and Services. (See more detailed report on the ad hoc committee on page 6 and in the section on Priorities.)

- The President and Executive Director both participated in regional conferences for new teachers organized cooperatively by the NLTA Professional Development Division, School Districts, and the Faculty of Education.
- In conjunction with the NLTA Professional Development Division and the MUN Faculty of Education, organized and participated in the Induction Ceremony for New Teacher Graduates during the Spring and Fall convocations at MUN.
- Prepared and presented NLTA's submission to government's Pre-Budget Consultations for the 2008 and 2009 provincial budgets.
- The Executive Director served on the Board of Directors of the Canadian Association for the Practical Study of Law in Education (CAPSLE) for 2007-08 as past-president of that organization.
- The President and Executive Director were both directly involved with the Association's monitoring of the implementation of the ISSP/Pathways Report and the Teacher Allocation Report, including a number of meetings with senior Department of Education officials and the Minister.

Branch Operations

The branch operations program is responsible for providing services to teachers through the Association's local branch structure. This involves all aspects of branch organization, including official registration of the 50 local branches and allocation of funds as per Association policy, review of yearly branch audits, registration of substitute teachers, processing requests regarding the Association's membership categories, preparation of scrolls and pins for retiring teachers and the operations of school board-teacher liaison committees. Responsibility for branch operations is assigned to the Executive Assistant, Administration.

Highlights for 2007-09:

- Processed nominations for the Allan Bishop, Bancroft, Barnes and Special Recognition Awards presented annually by the Association. The recipients of the Allan Bishop Award for 2008 and 2009, respectively, were Bill Chaisson, nominated by the Humber Branch, and Dana Burrige, nominated by the Deer Lake Branch. The recipients of the Bancroft Award for 2008 and 2009, respectively, were Leo Freeborn, nominated by the Rameaux Branch and Clarence Mercer, nominated by the Bay Roberts Branch. The recipients of the Barnes Award for 2008 and 2009, respectively, were Keith Adey, nominated by the Council of Special Services and Cynthia Wheeler, nominated by the Hamilton Sound Branch. The recipients of the Special Recognition Award for 2008 and 2009, respectively, were Elizabeth Murphy, nominated by the Rushoon-Terrenceville Branch and Kathleen and John Hicks, nominated by the Lake Melville Branch. All recipients will be honoured at an awards luncheon during the 2009 BGM.
- The School Board-Teacher Liaison Committees continued to operate during the 2007-09 school years with four committees operating within the Eastern School District (one for each region within the district) and one for each of the Labrador, Western and Nova Central Districts, in addition to one com-

mittee operating provincially within the Conseil Scolaire Francophone and a separate committee operating under the Labrador West Collective Agreement. The committees consist of representatives of teachers, school district trustees, and school district staff members. Committees meet up to three times per year and deal with matters designed to improve the teaching and learning situation along with other matters of mutual interest and concern at the school level.

- Prepared more than 230 retirement scrolls and pins for teachers retiring during the 2007-08 school year and more than 60 to date for 2008-09.
- Implemented the new branch viability guidelines, a process which involves each branch reporting biennially on its performance in a number of areas which describe the range of services that a branch should provide for its members, i.e., completion of branch registration and audit, holding branch meetings, etc.
- Oversaw the amalgamation of the Bell Island Branch with the Marconi Branch following a request from teachers in the Bell Island Branch.

Association Priorities for 2007-09

At its first meeting in September 2007, the Provincial Executive established five priorities for 2007-09. Contained within each of these priorities were goals, as follows:

Priority #1: Quality of Teacher Work Life/Teacher Workload

Goal A: Liaise with government agencies and other educational stakeholders to ensure that teachers have the necessary resources and supports for teaching and learning.

Goal B: Expand the proactive teacher wellness program.

Goal C: Obtain adequate staffing of schools and programs.

Priority #2: Contract Negotiations

Goal A: Negotiate improvements to the collective agreement to enhance teacher benefits and quality of teacher work life.

Priority #3: Teacher Professional Development

Goal A: Document current models of PD and articulate and promote a model which respects teacher choice.

Goal B: The newly structured SICs (particularly Levels Councils) become a vehicle for PD which respects teacher choice.

Goal C: Respond to differing needs of teachers at different career stages.

Priority #4: Membership Involvement/Awareness

Goal A: Continue to improve and monitor internal awareness among the membership of NLTA programs and services.

Goal B: Continue and enhance existing programs for specific audiences and promote new programs as necessary.

Goal C: Review the information from the 2005-06 internal review re Association programs and services that enhance member involvement/awareness and provide recommendations, as necessary.

Priority #5: Teacher Allocation and ISSP/ Pathways Commission Reports

Goal A: The release of the two Commission reports.

Goal B: NLTA analysis of the reports and their recommendations, and government's implementation plan.

Goal C: Implementation of Commission recommendations that are supportive of NLTA's proposals to the Commissions.

The following summarizes the work performed on each of these priorities and goals from September 2007 to February 2009.

PRIORITY #1: QUALITY OF TEACHER WORK LIFE/ TEACHER WORKLOAD

A. Liaise with government agencies and other educational stakeholders to ensure that teachers have the necessary resources and supports for teaching and learning.

- From September 2007 to February 2009, the NLTA President and Administrative Staff have met with the Minister of Education and/or senior officials with the Department of Education on no less than four occasions to highlight NLTA's concerns and to seek commitment on a variety of issues which involve the necessary resources and supports for teaching and learning. Included in these discussions were input on implementation of the Teacher Allocation Commission recommendations and the ISSP/ Pathways Commission recommendations. (*See Priority 5.*)
- Liaison meetings have been held with the NLSBA and the NLFSC to address items of concern.
- The NLTA President has attended the annual meetings and conferences of both the NLSBA and the Association of Directors of Education.
- In 2008, a working group consisting of a representative from the NLTA, NLSBA, and the Department of Education was formed to attempt to address concerns regarding student supervision by teachers. The mandate of the working group is: 1) to collect relevant information from school districts and other jurisdictions; 2) to examine legal and regulatory obligations; and 3) to analyze the pros and cons of arrangements for student supervision.
- The Safe and Caring Schools Committee is working to promote respectful classrooms and schools. A Provincial Safe and Caring Schools Coordinator has been hired for the province. Funding has been established for school projects and scholarships for children. An emphasis has been placed on school security and safety.
- The NLTA has provided submissions to the Minister of Finance/President of Treasury Board during budgetary consultations emphasizing the need for additional substitute time, specifically allocations for family leave and professional development.
- Regular liaison occurs among NLTA staff, Department of Education and school district personnel in seeking resources and supports for teachers.

B. Expand the proactive teacher wellness program.

- A Teacher Health and Wellness Promotion Standing Committee was established by Provincial Executive.
- Group Insurance Trustees provided up to \$500,000 for a pilot Teacher Health and Wellness Promotion Program, including hiring a person to develop, coordinate and implement the pilot program. Thirty-five pilot schools were selected from approximately 90 applications; needs assessments were conducted at each school and analyzed; funding guidelines for school initiatives were provided; individual schools developed and submitted proposals; evaluation forms are being completed by each school, and progress of the pilot is being monitored. Provincial Executive, with input from the Teacher Health and Wellness Promotion Committee and Group Insurance Trustees, will be evaluating the effectiveness of the pilot and making recommendations toward year-end.
- The Employee Assistance Program Coordinators have organized numerous workshops on topics related to teacher health and wellness, and provided these workshops directly to schools, collaborating with school districts and/or NLTA initiatives as appropriate. The EAP Coordinators have written articles promoting teacher health and wellness regularly for *The Bulletin*.

C. Obtain adequate staffing of schools and programs.

- The Association has provided regular input to the Department of Education and school districts on the provision of adequate staffing of schools and programs. Such efforts have included submissions to the Teacher Allocation Commission, a response to the Commission's recommendations and government's implementation plan, and ongoing liaison with the Department. (*See Priority 5.*)
- Lobbying continues at all levels of government to ensure adequate staffing is provided. Issues that have arisen concerning such matters as allocation of itinerants, class size caps, special services and needs of small schools have been brought to the Department's attention.
- Submissions have been made by the NLTA during government's budgetary consultation process, requesting additional substitute days and funds to ensure implementation of recommendations for the two Commissions.

PRIORITY #2: CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS

A. Negotiate improvements to the collective agreement to enhance teacher benefits and quality of teacher work life.

- A Provincial Collective Agreement, effective September 1, 2008 to August 31, 2012, was negotiated and ratified by teachers with 93% acceptance by the membership.
- The contract included increases to salaries and allowances as follows:

- September 1, 2008 – 8%
- September 1, 2009 – 4%
- September 1, 2010 – 4%
- September 1, 2011 – 4%

The salary portion of the Agreement provided a 21.5% cumulative increase in teacher salaries over the four-year agreement.

- Educational Psychologists are now included in the allowance structure, resulting in a significant increase in compensation for educational psychologists.
- Teachers who, as a condition of employment, are required to have a vehicle and who drive more than 2,400 per year on business for the school board receive an \$85 per month car allowance, in addition to a per kilometre rate. If a person is in receipt of a monthly car allowance then both the car allowance and the per kilometre reimbursement are considered taxable income. This was problematic for teachers. Effective January 1, 2009 the monthly car allowance has been eliminated and replaced with a higher per kilometre rate for the first 9,000 kilometres travelled. The normal government base rate is applied for travel beyond 9,000 kilometres per year. The impact is that the travel reimbursement is now tax-free.
- A change has been made to the redundancy/reassignment/transfer process which provides senior teachers with greater opportunity to transfer before all redundancies are placed. Redundant teachers are protected in that they must be offered one reassignment in accordance with Clause 9.03. Should the reassignment be refused, the redundant teacher does not have further priority until after the end of the school year in June.
- Labrador West Collective Agreement discussions are ongoing on the basis that the language of the 2008-12 changes to the Provincial Agreement will be rolled into the language of the Labrador West Agreement.
- The Labrador Benefits Agreement, effective August 1, 2005 to March 31, 2009, was negotiated and ratified in the spring of 2008. Significant increases were obtained in the Labrador allowance and travel benefit, along with improvement for communities which were previously not covered by three days leaves when an interruption of transportation occurred on travel to their communities.

The NLTA has joined the other four participating unions in providing notice to government of intent to open on the Labrador Benefits Agreement which expired on March 31, 2009.

PRIORITY #3: TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

A. Document current models of PD and articulate and promote a model which respects teacher choice.

- In the Fall of 2007, the Professional Development Division, through the Virtual Teacher Centre, sought and received funding from the Canada Council on Learning

to conduct research into the current models of PD available to teachers in our province. Dr. Bruce Sheppard of Memorial University was contracted to work with NLTA staff to carry out this research.

- In January 2008, an online survey (via the VTC) was completed by teachers. This survey instrument (Zoomerang) also provided an electronic compilation of responses which were available to the researchers immediately upon completion.
- In the Spring of 2008, researchers interpreted the data and compiled a comprehensive research report which documented the various models of PD and related those models to the PD Alliance Model which was supported by all educational partners in 2002. To complete the research, a series of key informant interviews were also carried out. The issue of teacher choice (perception, definition, preferences, responses) was a key topic of these interviews.
- As part of the funding requirements and to report on findings to key PD delivery groups (Department of Education, school districts, MUN, etc.), a forum was held in May 2008. This forum clearly advocated for a model which would provide for teacher choice. It also offered partners a means of sharing PD calendars (i.e., expanding opportunities beyond district boundaries) and resources. The invitation to participate in this “Knowledge Exchange Network” was not taken up by other agencies. The results of this research were presented at a national PD forum hosted by the Canadian Teachers’ Federation in Fall 2008.
- We continue to make teacher choice for PD a topic of meetings with the Department of Education and school districts.
- At least one of the resolutions to BGM 2009 reflects continuing concerns and the need for advocacy for teacher choice for PD.
- Given that one model which attempts to respond to teacher choice is the school-based close out, a *Guide to Planning and Hosting School-Based Professional Development* was published (January 2009) and is now available to any school or group upon request.

B. The newly structured SICs (particularly Levels Councils) become a vehicle for PD which respects teacher choice.

- In the Fall of 2007, a Leadership Seminar was held to assist those who had taken on leadership roles to focus on future directions and highlight the Councils’ important role in providing alternatives to prescribed PD.
- In 2007-08 and again in 2008-09, many “Specialist Councils” held conferences. A highlight was the hosting of the Canadian Association of Principals national conference in May 2008, which the School Administrators’ Special Interest Council undertook.
- Some Councils (Senior High Council/School Administrators) have held focus groups or surveyed members to determine their needs and interests.
- The Newfoundland and Labrador Counsellors’ and

Psychologists' Association developed an Ethics Policy for its members, which was endorsed at its Fall 2008 AGM.

- In the Fall of 2008, several Councils, including the three Levels Councils, partnered on a major provincial initiative in bringing renowned facilitator Eric Jensen to St. John's for a two-day institute on the applications of brain research to teaching and learning.
- Councils continue to provide valuable input into Association submissions to the Department of Education (e.g., COSS and NLCPA input into ISSP/Pathways Commission; SAC/Program Specialists input into the Department Study on the Role of Program Specialists).
- Many Councils, although not all, have been actively updating websites and publishing newsletters for members.
- All Council activity is reviewed annually as they complete viability reports.

C. Respond to differing needs of teachers at different career stages.

Beginning Teachers

- NLTA staff regularly respond to requests from the Faculty of Education to present seminars and classes on a variety of topics (financial matters, classroom management, interviewing techniques, professionalism, etc.)
- The VTC hosts a publishing center for students at MUN who are completing graduate-level research.
- NLTA staff are part of district orientation days which take place late summer or early fall. While this used to take place by invitation, the arrangement with districts has now been formalized, and a budget line is specified for this.
- In 2007, the Association piloted the concept of a district-based conference for beginning teachers. Four conferences were held in the Winter of 2007 (Clarenville, St. John's, Gander and Corner Brook); two conferences were held in Winter 2008 (Gander and Corner Brook); and two conferences were held in 2009 (Corner Brook and Gander). A third was planned for the Eastern District for Winter 2009, but was cancelled due to weather conditions.
- In collaboration with Memorial University and the Labrador School District, the NLTA co-sponsored a summer institute for newly hired teachers who are to be teaching in Labrador West, Goose Bay area and the North Coast. This institute is followed up with videoconference and audio conferences facilitated by NLTA staff.
- In 2007, the Association initiated a five-year study of the experiences of beginning teachers in this province. The staff in the PD Division along with Mr. Hayward Blake, Field Services Coordinator (MUN) and Dr. David Dibbon, Dean of the Faculty of Education (MUN) are co-investigators. To date, the participants have completed two surveys, and selected teachers have been interviewed. An interim report was provided to the Professional Issues Committee; however, the final research will not be completed until the school year 2011-12.

Mid-Career Teachers

- Focus groups for mid-career teachers were held throughout the province in the Fall of 2008. Teachers with between 10 and 20 years experience were identified. There was some difficulty in getting participants and, in view of this, teachers in this group were invited to submit feedback individually.
- The information gleaned from the focus groups was compiled and reported to Joint Council in February 2008. Included in that report were some preliminary proposals for programming specifically in response to the needs/interests expressed by mid-career teachers.

Late-Career Teachers

- In the Fall of 2007 and 2008, the Association continued to offer a series of pre-retirement seminars. Teachers continue to give strong endorsement for these seminars, and it is expected that they will continue to be held.

PRIORITY #4: MEMBERSHIP INVOLVEMENT/AWARENESS

A. Continue to improve and monitor internal awareness among the membership of NLTA programs and services.

- *The Bulletin*, the NLTA website, emails, the President's visitation program, brochures and memos to teachers were utilized to provide information to schools and teachers.
- A Members Only section was added to the NLTA website and the website was redesigned to accommodate a public section and a Members Only section. Teachers were provided with a user name and password to access the Members Only section.
- The school representative seminars have continued to take place and have been evaluated annually with modifications made as necessary. The 2007-08 seminars were held in St. John's, Gander and Goose Bay. For 2008-09 they were held in Clarenville, Deer Lake and Plum Point. Summaries and evaluations from the school representative seminars have been compiled into a final report which will be used in planning the next series of seminars.
- The teacher database has been completed and will be updated on a regular basis. Teachers can now complete an NLTA Membership Profile form to be added to the database or can register on the NLTA website. The database will allow us to have regular contact with all teachers in the province and collect information on the membership as needed.
- Sessions have been provided at Executive and Joint Council meetings on specific NLTA programs and services, and emerging/ongoing issues such as group insurance, collective bargaining, dealing with harassment and conflict, financial wellness for the mid-career teacher, cyberbullying, Green Street, CTF programs and services, the Teacher Health and Wellness Promotion Program, and violence in schools.
- A communications survey was completed in late Spring of 2008 to determine awareness of NLTA publications and communications programs. The results were used to guide

the work of the Communications Division with regards to printed publications.

- The NLTA publications were reviewed and updated. These included the BES Infosheets and all pamphlets and brochures. Some of the pamphlets and brochures are now only available through the NLTA website.
- The Teacher Discount List was updated and school representatives and teachers were notified that it can be accessed on the NLTA website. Membership cards and Life Membership cards were issued as requested.
- School reps and branch presidents have been provided with Christmas cards, Christmas ornaments and when possible, small gifts from the Association in appreciation of their support and work on behalf of teachers and the NLTA.

B. Continue and enhance existing programs for specific audiences and promote new programs as necessary.

- An up-to-date school representative list including a mail list, email groups, website listing, etc., has been maintained. The school representative information is collected at the beginning of each school year and updated as necessary. School representatives are provided with updated NLTA materials and information as soon as it becomes available either by email, fax, or regular mail.
- The “Ceremony of Induction into the Teaching Profession” has continued and has taken place at the St. John’s campus and the Corner Brook campus of Memorial University of Newfoundland, with plans underway for Spring 2009.
- The VTC and the NLTA, through funding provided by the Canadian Council on Learning, partnered with Dr. Bruce Sheppard to conduct research into professional development practices in the province. (*See Priority 3.*)
- The Leadership at Work program continued to operate in most districts and provided high quality professional development for leaders and aspiring leaders. (*See Priority 3.*)
- The VTC provided support for ongoing initiatives such as: the Green Street pilot, supports for mid-career teachers, leadership programs (DSS) and the NLTA Special Interest Councils. The VTC also gave presentations and workshops to MUN students upon request.
- The VTC continued to operate a Publishing Centre for students at MUN who are completing graduate level research. An Illuminate Live Web Conferencing Room was also hosted by the VTC for MUN graduate students completing distance education courses.
- Mentor Training was conducted with mentors and beginning teachers in the Nova District and was revitalized in Western District.
- The second series of Beginning Teachers Conferences took place this year.
- The BES Division presents a 90-minute presentation entitled *Financial Matters for Beginning Teachers* at the Teacher Orientation sessions held by the ESD, WNLS, NCSD,

and LSD each August/September.

- The BES Division has developed a presentation entitled *Financial Wellness for Teachers* and delivered the presentation to more than 20 schools and branches.

C. Review the information from the 2005-06 internal review re Association programs and services that enhance member involvement/awareness and provide recommendations, as necessary.

- The Ad Hoc Committee on Internal Review of NLTA Programs and Services was established by the Executive in the Fall of 2007.
- Five meetings of the Internal Review Committee were held during 2007-08. Minutes of all committee meetings were provided to Executive, with updates at each Executive meeting.
- At a full-day meeting of the committee in October 2008, the Committee drafted its recommendations. A final report was prepared and approved by the Committee, and considered by Executive at its November 2008 meeting. The report was then presented to the November Joint Council meeting.
- Executive further considered the Committee’s recommendations, and the November Joint Council discussions, at the February 2009 Executive meeting. The Committee Report and Executive’s recommendations will be presented to BGM 2009, as per the motion from BGM 2007.

PRIORITY #5: TEACHER ALLOCATION AND ISSP/PATHWAYS COMMISSION REPORTS

A. The release of the two Commission reports.

- The Report of the ISSP/Pathways Commission was released December 17, 2007. The President provided a preliminary response in the media.
- The Report of the Teacher Allocation Commission was released on March 12, 2008. The President provided a brief preliminary response to questions from the media.

B. NLTA analysis of the reports and their recommendations, and government’s implementation plan.

- The Association undertook a detailed analysis of each of the two reports immediately upon their release. Analysis of each report and government’s response, and the preparation of a draft NLTA reaction document based on the original NLTA input to the two Commissions, was carried out by Staff for Executive’s consideration and approval.
- The Executive met on January 17, 2008 to finalize its analysis of, and the Association’s response to, the ISSP/Pathways Commission Report. The completed response to that Report and the Department’s implementation plan was delivered to Department officials on February 11, 2008.
- The Executive met in a special session as part of the Executive meeting on April 2, 2008 to finalize its analysis of, and the NLTA response to, the Teacher Allocation Commission Report and government’s new Teacher Allocation Model. Further meetings were held with Department officials to clarify elements of the Teacher

Allocation Model and provide additional input to the Department. Due to the unavailability of the Minister, the Association's formal response document was not presented to the Department until the Fall of 2008.

C. Implementation of Commission recommendations that are supportive of NLTA's proposals to the Commissions.

- The Department has provided an anticipated timeline for implementation of the ISSP/Pathways recommendations. Most of NLTA's recommendations to the Commission were covered by the Report.
- The NLTA is continuing to monitor the implementation of the ISSP/Pathways Report. Regular updates on the implementation of the ISSP/Pathways recommendations have been provided by the Director of Student Support Services. The NLTA is also represented on the Department's Advisory Committee for Student Support Services.
- A special session on the implementation of the ISSP/Pathways Report was held with the Director of Student Support Services at the September 19-20, 2008 meeting of the Provincial Executive.
- Further meetings with the Minister and Department officials have been held since the new Teacher Allocation Model was released in the Spring of 2008, most recently in January 2009, to discuss details re the implementation of the new Model and its application to schools.
- Two editions of the "President's Digest" were distributed to members in April and May 2008, detailing the new Model and its application for 2008-09.
- The Association continues to closely monitor the implementation of the new Teacher Allocation Model and its impact on schools. Schools were surveyed in the Fall of 2008 on the impact of the new Teacher Allocation Model. Results of the survey were communicated to Provincial Executive in November and, with Executive input, were then provided to the Department in January 2009.
- The Association is continuing to advocate for improvements to a number of areas in the new Model, most recently in meetings with Department officials, NLTA's pre-budget Brief to the Minister of Finance and correspondence to the Minister of Education.
- The Department has confirmed that the phase-in of class size maximums will continue (Grades 5 and 8) for September 2009. Further, the allocation for specialists in Grades 7-9 will be improved from 1:175 to 1:125 for 2009-10.

Election of NLTA President and Vice-President by Province-wide Vote

February of 2009 saw the fourth province-wide election of the NLTA President and Vice-President. The 2008-09 electoral committee consisted of Chairperson Leo Freeborn (retired teacher and past branch president), Dolly Brace (past Branch President), and Roxanne Skanes (past Branch President).

This committee conducted the province-wide election in accordance with the approved by-laws, policies and procedures with the assistance of NLTA staff. Two candidates were nominated for the office of President. These were: Lily Cole (Creston South) and Scott Crocker (Conception Bay South). In addition, three candidates were nominated for the office of Vice-President: James Dinn (St. John's), Dean Ingram (Clarenville), and Paul Pinsent (Stephenville).

The vote, carried out on February 3, 2009, resulted in the election of Lily Cole as the NLTA President and James Dinn as the NLTA Vice-President for 2009-11.

Under the direction of the Electoral Committee, the wide range of duties required to conduct such an election were carried out from the NLTA office. Specific voting instructions and procedures were issued to branches and schools, decisions of the Electoral Committee were disseminated, membership lists were provided to candidates, on-line website links for candidates were established, election newsletters were circulated to schools, ballots were prepared, counted and packaged for branches/schools, and packages of all voting materials and instructions were disseminated.

This year, for the first time, a Candidates Forum was held in an attempt to provide greater information on the candidates to teachers. It was held in St. John's on November 28, 2008 and disseminated via the web and DVD.

As per the by-laws and policy governing the election, and the voting instructions issued, all votes were collected from schools and counted at the branch level by a committee of the branch executive. Voting results were telephoned or faxed to the NLTA office where a vote count was compiled.

The Electoral Committee will now be conducting an analysis of the 2009 election and will be making a full report to Provincial Executive. A note of appreciation is extended to school representatives and branch presidents from the Electoral Committee for their time and attention in ensuring the voting process ran smoothly and efficiently.

ISSP/Pathways and Teacher Allocation Commission Reports

Since the release of the ISSP/Pathways Commission Report in December 2007 and the Teacher Allocation Commission Report in March 2008 the NLTA undertook a detailed analysis of the two reports. Formal response was prepared and delivered to appropriate officials from the Department of Education. Further information on work specific to the two reports can be found under the Priorities section of this document.

Benefits and Economic Services

Collective Agreement administration and teacher benefits and welfare are key to the work of the Benefits and Economic Services Division which oversees collective bargaining, pensions, group insurance, grievance and arbitration, the Employee Assistance Program, legal assistance and other economic services to the membership.

Collective Bargaining

Provincial Collective Agreement

A 2008-12 Provincial Collective Agreement was negotiated and ratified by 93% of the general membership in January 2009. The Agreement contains a salary increase of 8% retroactive to September 2008, and annual increases of 4%, 4%, and 4% effective September 1 of each of the subsequent three years. Further details are provided under the Association Priorities section of this report – Priority 2.

Labrador West Collective Agreement

The Labrador West Collective Agreement was concluded and ratified by the membership on April 1, 2009. The language of the provincial agreement changes were rolled into the Labrador West agreement. There were no changes to articles related to local issues.

Labrador Benefits Agreement

The Labrador Benefits Agreement was ratified by the five participating unions in June 2008, with applicable retroactivity of benefits. Significant increases were obtained in the Labrador allowance and travel benefit, along with improvement for communities which were previously not covered by three days leave when an interruption of transportation occurred on travel to their communities. The Agreement expires on March 31, 2009. On February 26, 2009, Provincial Executive carried a motion approving the participation of the NLTA in the multi-union Negotiating Team for a new Agreement. Notice to open bargaining was served to the Government's Director of Collective Bargaining on February 25, 2009. The multi-union Negotiating Team will be meeting in the near future and submissions from the membership will be sought prior to the development of opening proposals.

Pensions

An actuarial valuation of the Teachers' Pension Plan occurs every three years. The results of the most recent valuation of August 31, 2006 was reported to Joint Council in November 2007 and showed an 82.2% funded ratio as compared to 26.4% in August 31, 2003. The valuation is based on the assumption of 7.5% annual returns on investment. If this return is not achieved, the funded ratio will be negatively impacted. This past year's downturn in equity markets has significantly impacted returns on all public sector pension funds and will affect the funding level of the TPP. The next valuation will be as of August 31, 2009. Joint Council will receive detailed information following receipt of this valuation.

The 2008-12 Provincial Agreements contain a three-month window of opportunity for teachers to buy pension service lost to a

previous work stoppage. The window closes June 30, 2009. The cost is twice the contributions in place at the time of the work stoppage, plus applicable interest.

Administrative Staff in the Benefits and Economic Services Division continue to be directly involved in representing teachers' interests on pensions and the general administration of the Teachers' Pension Plan (TPP). This includes communicating information to the membership on the pension plan, presentations at the Pre-Retirement Seminars, working through the Pensions Administration Committee to ensure consistent management and administration of the plan, and interceding on teachers' behalf with Pensions officials when difficulties arise. The NLTA is also represented on the Pensions Investment Committee, which oversees the investment of the province's pooled pension fund.

Group Insurance

The annual renewals of the group insurance plan options occurred in February 2008 and February 2009, with corresponding changes in premium and benefits effective May 1 of each year respectively (April premium deduction). While the premiums in most plan options have remained relatively stable, annual premium increases continue to be necessary in the health and dental plan options specifically. The following is a summary of changes in premium over the last two years:

Option	2008	2009
Basic Life	5.5% increase	unchanged
Health	11.1% increase	9.4% increase
Dental	3.7% increase	6.0% increase
Single AD&D	unchanged	increase from \$0.09 to \$0.15 / \$1,000
Voluntary Life	unchanged	approximately 5% decrease
Post 65 Retiree Life	unchanged	26.9% increase
LTD	unchanged	unchanged with a 4 month premium holiday for teachers from April 1- July 31, 2009

Grievance and Arbitration

Articles 31 and 32 of the Provincial Collective Agreement (articles 50 and 51 of the Labrador West Collective Agreement) outline the grievance and arbitration process, which is the manner in which disputes are dealt with related to the application or interpretation of the provisions of the Collective Agreement. Advice and assistance from the staff of the BES Division are available and essential when resolving disputes through these methods. In some cases, a grievance by a teacher will actually represent more than one alleged violation of the collective agreement.

During the 2007-08 school year, a total of nineteen new grievances were initiated by teachers. There were also four grievance cases that were still open from the previous school year. Employment and layoff issues gave rise to the highest number of new grievances with a total of eight, while three dealt with term contracts and disciplinary action respectively. There were

two cases that dealt with sick leave and one grievance initiated in relation to each of the issues of teacher contracts, notification of vacancies, recognition, salaries, termination of contracts, transfers and travel allowances.

Eleven grievances were resolved through the grievance process. Four cases were ongoing at the end of the 2007-08 school year and one grievance was successfully arbitrated. Two cases were resolved following a successful arbitration in a related case. Six grievances were withdrawn by teachers after discussions with the school board. One case went through Stage I and II of the grievance process and, based on legal advice, was not moved to arbitration. Two cases were moved to arbitration and had not yet been resolved at the end of the school year.

Employee Assistance Program for Teachers

The Employee Assistance Program for Teachers continues to provide a variety of services uniquely designed to assist teachers towards optimal health and well-being. The top three counseling issues were: relationships, emotional/mental health and workplace issues. In the past 12 months there have been 131 new cases opened, 98 older cases reopened and an average of 278 cases ongoing each month. The number of counselors on our provincial list has reached 305 with this list updated annually.

Teacher well-being is fostered through school support, personal contact, information sessions and workshops aimed at the promotion of health and the prevention of illness. In the past 12 months the EAP Wellness Program has offered 52 workshops, reaching 1,406 teachers and covering 38 schools throughout the province. In addition, there have been four workshops which have reached a Board or Provincial audience.

EAP and District Safe and Caring Schools coordinators are working jointly to ensure teacher wellness is on District agendas. EAP Coordinators also regularly work with School Development Teams to encourage teachers to include teacher wellness under criteria 13 and 15 of their School Development Plans. In addition, coordinators are assisting the Climate and Culture Teams to consider a comprehensive and inclusive approach to teacher wellness in creating their school atmosphere.

The EAP Coordinators are strategic partners with numerous workplace health promotion groups and initiatives including: the Provincial Wellness Advisory Council for the Minister of Health; National Workplace Wellness Council; Community Health Promotion Network Atlantic; Provincial Wellness Coalitions; Avalon East Wellness Coalition; Family Resource Programs; Newfoundland and Labrador Employee Assistance Program Association; and, the Ontario Comprehensive Workplace Wellness Coalition. Membership on these committees provide further access to programming and information and offer a network of similar professionals.

Current EAP policies and programs are under revision to reflect the ever-evolving needs of the teachers of the province.

Legal Assistance

Members of the NLTA have access to free legal assistance under the Association's Legal Aid Policy providing the case arises from a situation that is contingent upon the member's role as a teacher. Any teacher who feels they may need legal assistance in this type of situation must submit their request to an administrative officer in the BES Division for approval, which will be decided in consultation with the Association's legal advisors.

The Association has provided legal assistance to its members in relation to many different issues, including questions related to defamation, parental complaints, child protection matters, allegations of abuse, harassment and police statements.

During the 2007-08 school year, thirty requests for legal assistance were approved and referred to legal counsel, which is seven more than in the previous year. The largest number of these, fifteen, related to providing legal advice to teachers. Six related to allegations of physical/sexual/impropriety. Three dealt with each of child protection and parental harassment. Two dealt with each of child custody, employer harassment, parental conflict and parental complaints. Individual cases dealt with assault by student, damage to personal property, employment issues, harassment of a colleague, inappropriate language, inappropriate conduct, and threats by students.

In the majority of cases legal assistance was provided and the issue resolved, two cases are awaiting a court date, and a trial date has been set for one case. Three cases remained ongoing at the end of the school year.

Employment Insurance

The Association's publication "Teachers' Guide to Employment Insurance," which is revised annually, is available to all members and provides up-to-date, practical information to assist teachers with employment insurance matters. The majority of inquiries and requests for assistance come from substitute/replacement teachers and teachers applying for maternity/parental benefits. Teachers' access to EI benefits during the non-teaching periods, particularly July and August, have been significantly limited based on the decisions in a number of Federal Court of Appeal decisions in 2002 and 2003. However, the Association continues to provide legal assistance for EI appeals to teachers whose circumstances can be distinguished from the facts in these cases.

In October 2008, the NLTA participated in meetings sponsored by the Canadian Teachers' Federation on EI issues for teachers. There was representation from a number of provincial teacher organization and participants had an opportunity to raise and explore teacher issues and concerns with officials from the EI Commission, Appeals Directorate and the federal department of Human Resources and Social Development.

Workers' Compensation

The NLTA continues to provide assistance and support to teachers who are injured in the course of their employment. During the 2006-07 and 2007-08 school years, ten files were opened in relation to teachers seeking advice regarding work related accidents/injuries and claims for workers' compensation benefits.

One of the most important issues for the NLTA over the years has been the significant negative financial impact for teachers who are in receipt of workers' compensation benefits. However, while provincial legislation still prevents an employer top-up of these benefits, the NLTA's efforts to provide a supplement through the Group Insurance Long Term Disability Plan (LTD) have been successful. Effective September 2006, any teacher who has LTD coverage through the NLTA Group Insurance program and has lost time due to an injury at work will be entitled to an LTD "top-up" once the teacher is in receipt of workers' compensation earnings loss benefits. The LTD "top-up" is non-taxable and will pay an injured teacher the difference between 85 percent of regular net income and the workers' compensation benefit received. Information and applications for the LTD "top-up" are available through the Benefits and Economic Services Division.

Teacher Health Assistance Program (THAP)

The Teacher Health Assistance Program is designed to make contact with teachers who are in danger of running out of paid sick leave, in order to provide whatever support is possible and to make these teachers aware of benefits which may be available should their paid sick leave expire. In addition to daily contact, 166 THAP information packages have been sent from September 2007 to March 2009 to teachers identified as running low on sick leave. Over 1,600 packages have been mailed out since the inception of this program in 1999. While this program attempts to reach all teachers running low on sick leave, it is not always possible to do so. Teachers in this situation are encouraged to contact the NLTA.

Deferred Salary Leave Plan

Benefits and Economic Services staff are available to provide advice and assistance to members in relation to the Deferred Salary Leave Plan (DSLP). This includes liaising with school district and Department of Education officials, providing annually updated information in *The Bulletin*, and working with the Deferred Salary Leave Committee. A detailed information and application package is available from the NLTA office. As of March 24, 2009 there are 251 teachers enrolled in the DSLP, 168 of whom are paying in, 59 of whom are on leave, and 24 of whom have deferred their year of leave.

Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S)

The NLTA continues to provide advice and assistance to teachers in relation to Occupational Health and Safety issues and inquiries. OH&S Committees (or Representatives, depending on the number of employees in a school) play an important role in overseeing and ensuring workplace safety. Specific workplace safety concerns should be brought to the attention of school administrators and school OH&S Committees or Representatives.

Professional Development

The Professional Development Division of the NLTA is primarily responsible for the design and delivery of professional development programs in response to the demands from the field – individuals, schools, districts and other groups. It is also an advocate for teachers in areas of professional issues such as teacher certification and equity. Through our committees, we represent the concerns of the field to Provincial Executive and develop policy for the Association on professional issues.

The following is a report on the activities of the Professional Development Division to March 2009.

Special Interest Councils

In 2007-08 and again in 2008-09, many “Specialist Councils” held conferences. One of the highlights was the hosting of the Canadian Association of Principals National Conference in May 2008, which the School Administrators’ Special Interest Council undertook. Some 650 delegates representing all regions of Canada attended. Another highlight occurred in the Fall of 2008 when several Councils, including the three Levels Councils, partnered on a major provincial initiative in bringing renowned facilitator Eric Jensen to St. John’s for a two-day institute on the Applications of Brain Research to Teaching and Learning. Before the end of the current school year, a number of other conferences will be held. Conference details may be found on the NLTA website.

Other Special Interest Council highlights include:

- Some Councils (Senior High/School Administrators) have held focus groups or surveyed members to determine their needs and interests.
- The Newfoundland and Labrador Counselors’ and Psychologists’ Association has developed “draft” Ethics Guidelines for its members, which was endorsed at its Fall 2008 AGM. The draft document is currently being reviewed by NLTA solicitors.
- Councils continue to provide valuable input into Association submissions to the Department of Education (e.g., COSS and NLCPA input into ISSP/Pathways Commission; SAC/Program Specialists and Music Council input into the Department Study on the Role of Program Specialists).
- Many Councils, although not all, have been actively updating websites and publishing newsletters for members.
- Councils have submitted a number of important resolutions for consideration at the upcoming BGM.
- All Council activity is reviewed annually as they complete viability reports.

Response to Membership

Beginning Teachers

For a number of years, the NLTA led a Teacher Induction Program, in collaboration with school districts. This program has changed over time as the restructuring of districts and the

changes in personnel at district offices has presented major challenges to implementing the model as it was designed. However, in recognition of the need for support for this group, the Association continues to provide support by being part of the orientation sessions held in late summer or early fall and by providing a “new teacher orientation kit.” As well, 2009 will mark the third year of offering conferences with an agenda designed specifically for beginning teachers. These conferences are held regionally and take place in February and March.

In collaboration with Memorial University of Newfoundland and the Labrador School District, the NLTA co-sponsored a summer institute for newly hired teachers who will be teaching in Labrador West, Goose Bay area and the North Coast. This institute is followed up with video conference and audio conferences facilitated by NLTA staff.

The PD Division staff regularly respond to requests from the Faculty of Education and Memorial’s Education Society to present seminars and classes on a variety of topics (financial matters, classroom management, interviewing techniques, professionalism, etc.).

In 2007, the Association initiated a five-year study of the experiences of beginning teachers in this province. The staff in the PD Division, along with Mr. Hayward Blake, Field Services Coordinator (MUN) and Dr. David Dibbon, Dean of the Faculty of Education (MUN), are co-investigators. To date, the participants have completed two surveys, and selected teachers have been interviewed.

Mid-Career Teachers

The VTC hosts a publishing center for students at MUN who are completing graduate-level research.

Focus groups for mid-career teachers were held throughout the province in the Fall of 2008. Teachers with between 10 and 20 years experience were identified. There was some difficulty in getting participants and, in view of this, teachers in this group were invited to submit feedback individually. The information gleaned from the focus groups was compiled and reported to Joint Council in February 2008. Included in that report were some preliminary proposals for programming specifically in response to the needs/interests expressed by mid-career teachers.

Late-Career Teachers

In the Fall of 2007 and 2008, the Association continued to offer a series of pre-retirement seminars. Teachers continue to give strong endorsement for these seminars, and it is expected that they will continue to be held. Note: These are carried out by staff in the Benefits and Economic Services Division.

Leadership Initiatives

Leadership at Work

This program, which was originally developed and piloted by the NLTA, in collaboration with the former Avalon West School District, continues to be the premiere leadership development and support program for our school administrators. While it has taken on various models, it is operating in every district, with funding support from the Department of Education. The staff

of the PD Division continue to provide support and are often consulted to provide input into the agendas for these groups as they meet on a regular basis throughout the school year.

Developing Successful Schools

This leadership institute, held annually at Mount Allison University, Sackville, New Brunswick, is also a joint initiative of the four teachers' organizations in Atlantic Canada. The NLTA has 12 of the 60 spaces at the institute. In 2008, the facilitator was Bruce Wellman, a well-known and much-respected leader in the field of collaborative inquiry. Feedback on the event was so positive that Mr. Wellman will be facilitating DSS 2009. This is the first time in the history of this event that we will have had a return engagement.

Leading for Learning – Summer Institute

The Association is partnering with the Western School District to host a leadership institute to take place in Corner Brook in July 2009. This institute will feature Dr. Kenneth Leithwood, along with Nicole Vagle and a host of local facilitators. The topics will be Leadership and Assessment for Learning, both within the framework of learning communities. Much of the planning for this has taken place in the Winter and Spring of 2009.

Joint Ventures

CONTACT

The Conference on New Techniques and Classroom Teaching is a summer conference, hosted in rotation by the four teachers' organizations in the Atlantic region. The Nova Scotia Teachers Union was the host for CONTACT 2008. The NLTA was represented by our President, the Chair and two members of our Professional Issues Committee, the Administrative Officers in the PD Division and a delegation of 25 teachers from all regions of the province. We are looking forward to CONTACT 2009, to be held in Charlottetown, hosted by the Prince Edward Island Teachers' Federation, where the NLTA will be once again be represented by teacher delegates and a presenter.

Atlantic Canada Connected Community (ACCC)

The Atlantic Canada Connected Community (ACCC) is now well established as the first ever "Connected Community" to ASCD, the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. This prestigious international parent organization has acclaimed our local efforts in just three years in existence. The ACCC has developed a constitution, gained a solid membership base, developed and mounted a website www.virtualteachercentre.ca/accc, published several volumes of a PD journal titled *Connections* and offered a number of professional development sessions. The ACCC is currently exploring the option of becoming a full-fledged ASCD Affiliate, and discussions were held at the ASCD Annual Conference in New Orleans regarding the process required to move from Connected Community to Affiliate status. The NLTA's Professional Development Division is represented on the ACCC Board of Directors, and our ACCC members are, for the most part, members of the NLTA who recognize the importance and value of partnerships and of professional development. The ACCC is

currently exploring the feasibility of bringing well-known author and educator Jay McTighe to St. John's in October 2009 as the keynote presenter at a conference on "Assessment and Grading for Learning."

ONSITE

The eighth annual teacher summer institute (ONSITE) took place on the Northern Peninsula during mid-August 2008; it was co-sponsored by the NLTA, Parks Canada and the Department of Education. The Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Education provided full funding for a maximum of forty teachers to participate in two, weeklong institutes that occurred simultaneously. One institute had a Science focus, and the participants comprised the pilot teachers who are teaching the Senior High School Environmental Science course. A second institute had a Social Studies focus, and participants came from the ranks of teachers who are piloting the new Social Studies courses implemented in schools in September 2007.

Discussions for ONSITE 2009 are ongoing. Again this year, the Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Education will be providing full funding for forty teachers to participate in two, weeklong institutes that will occur simultaneously. Each institute will host twenty teachers. As in 2008, one institute will have a Science focus while the second institute will be geared to the curriculum needs of Social Studies Teachers.

Sharing Our Cultures

March 2009 marked the 10th anniversary of Sharing Our Cultures, a showcase of the many diverse cultures represented in our school communities. This year's event was held at The Rooms, and one of the highlights was the inclusion of a Citizenship ceremony. Sharing Our Cultures has grown from a small multicultural fair to a major event which hosts school groups for two full days following an official ceremony. There is also a rural event, a downscaled version of the original. In 2009, the site for this was Marystown, and students from the Burin-Marystown region were able to participate. The NLTA took on the lead sponsorship of Sharing Our Cultures three years ago and continues in that role until the end of this year when a newly incorporated Board of Directors will assume this responsibility.

International Programs

The NLTA continues to contribute to international educational programs in the developing world through the Canadian Teachers' Federation. We sponsor one participant annually for Project Overseas. In the summer of 2008, Mr. Daryl Rideout, an elementary teacher from St. John's, worked as a tutor to teachers in Dominica, in the Caribbean. The Professional Issues Committee has selected Ms. Jacinta McGrath as our 2009 participant. Ms. McGrath will be working with teachers in Guyana. Beverley Park, Senior Administrative Officer, continues to provide leadership on the John M. Thompson Programme. Her participation is funded by CTF with grants from the Canadian International Development Agency. In the Fall of 2008, she worked with colleagues from the National Teachers' Union in France to deliver a program in Guinée, West Africa.

Last Spring, she once again assisted the Uganda National Teachers' Union as they redesigned their TAG (Teachers' Action for Girls) project. This project not only advocates for safe schools for girls and encourages educational partners to ensure that girls have a place in school, it has become a major part of UNATU's programming and given them credibility as an organization. Using TAG, UNATU has grown its membership and become a well-respected player among the educational agencies in Uganda.

Workshop Delivery

Workshops, keynotes and conference sessions are a major part of the work of the Professional Development Division. Staff in the Division design and deliver programs upon request. This work puts them in direct contact with teachers and with school districts and helps the Association remain current on issues, ideas and topics of concern to teachers.

Green Street Pilot

In September 2008, the Association signed on to a Canadian Teachers' Federation pilot of the Green Street Program. Twenty-three teachers and their 500+ students from all areas of the province are field testing this resource which focuses on building citizenship in the local and global community through exploring the themes of democracy, solidarity, peace and the environment. Newfoundland and Labrador is one of four pilot provinces. The pilot will be completed in May.

Publications

In collaboration with a Leadership At Work group in the Central District, a *Guide to Planning and Hosting School-based PD* was written and published in the Fall 2008. This guide is available free of charge and provides a practical tool to teachers who take on the responsibility of planning a school-based professional development event.

Virtual Teacher Centre

In July of 2008, the NLTA and CDLI hired Mr. James Murphy as Coordinator for the Virtual Teacher Center, replacing Mr. Alex Hickey, who retired. The following briefly outlines the goals, strategies and activities of the current Virtual Teacher Centre. The vision of MyVTC.ca is to create an online collaborative network of educators; a place where members can get resources, find colleagues and share ideas. All the regular resource offerings of the previous site are available as well as access to a host of new tools that will transform how members interact with colleagues and share ideas.

Goals

- To rebuild the VTC site so that it will continue to provide rich resources for teachers and administrators.
- To evolve a collaborative learning community in which teachers will be able to share and to mentor using synchronous and asynchronous technologies.
- To continue to develop and foster relations with partner organizations that will enhance resources and PD opportunities for educators.
- To research and implement approaches and projects that will enhance resources and PD opportunities for all educators in the province.
- To provide opportunities for PD for teachers through the use of available asynchronous and synchronous technologies.

Strategies

- Review current website offerings and interface and complete a redesign of the site and how teachers access the current content.
- Integrate new tools into the current website that will allow teachers to interact professionally.
- Communicate and network with current partner organizations in an effort to continue to build capacity and resources.
- Seek out partnerships with organizations that will further enhance resources and PD opportunities.
- Research current literature on PD and its relationship to student achievement.
- Develop a strategic plan for the deployment of supports through CAMET and the Department of Education that will enhance teacher professional development opportunities and resources in the province.
- Promote use of video and internet conferencing software.
- Build a collaborative online network of educators.
- Promote individual learning plans and growth plans through the VTC.
- Develop and populate learning exchange communities on the VTC.

Activities

Community Server

The VTC purchased and installed a new platform for educators that allows them to share resources and ideas in collaborative communities. Users have the ability to use tools such as discussion forums, media folders and wikis in closed and open community settings. It is a powerful tool that is gaining momentum as we continue to promote it with SICs and other user groups. To date, we have user communities from the NLTA, CDLI and the Department of Education using the platform to build and share resources. Several of our SICs have started using the software to guide their future communications and interactions with their various user groups. As well, much of the old content from the VTC site will be transferred over and will represent something more in the way of a searchable “edupedia” of content to support teaching, leadership and learning. Efforts are ongoing to promote and grow the centre and its available tools and resources.

Professional Learning

The VTC/CDLI plays an active role in the future directions of professional development in the province. The Department of Education tasked the VTC/CDLI with researching the latest literature on professional learning in highly successful school systems and to make recommendations on future directions for the delivery of professional learning opportunities for educators in the province. It wants to ensure the province offers the best possible approaches to the efficient delivery of professional learning that will have the maximum impact on student learning.

Partnerships

The VTC continues to build partnerships with the various SICs in support of their goals. It offers web services and space, programming and training as well as space on the new community server where the SICs can build resources for their members. The VTC has partnered with CASLT to develop and deliver online professional learning opportunities for French Teachers. The VTC continues to work with groups such as Teachers as Researchers who require support and space in order to continue the work being done in the area of research in education.

Emerging Technologies

The VTC is interested in investigating the newest technologies for teaching and learning. It continues to offer videoconferencing tools to user groups and has recently introduced a SmartBoard for which it will begin offering opportunities for integration into the Professional Development Division’s tools for PD delivery.

Communications

The Communications Division is responsible for managing all aspects of the NLTA's internal and external communications, public relations and advertising programs. The division is responsible for *The Bulletin* as well as other communications to teachers, media relations, coordinating member and public attitude research, developing and implementing communications strategies/plans, and for the Association's Internet communications. The following summarizes some of the initiatives of the Communications Division for the 2007-08 and 2008-09 school years.

Provincial Budget

In 2008 and 2009 the NLTA prepared submissions to Government's Pre-Budget Consultations. The focus of the NLTA submissions were that education must be a priority area. Government was urged to make every effort possible to ensure that its approach to the budget process would result in improvements in educational services to our students. In the 2008 budget submission the NLTA concentrated on improvements in the learning and working conditions in our province's classrooms, particularly in the areas of teacher allocations, the ISSPs/Pathways model for student support services, the substitute teacher budget and discretionary leave, the need for technological support, increased school instructional and operational grants, and issues around student supervision. While the 2008 Provincial Budget did provide some positive news for education in Newfoundland and Labrador there were several areas that needed further consideration by Government and that need to be addressed in the 2009 Provincial Budget. These included discretionary leave and substitute teacher days, teacher allocations, and ISSP/Pathways.

Education Week

The theme for Education Week 2008 was *Learn... Respect... Grow • J'apprends... Je respecte... Je m'épanouis*. The Opening Ceremonies were scheduled to be held at Mountain Feild Academy in Forteau, NL on March 3 but were delayed for three days due to weather conditions. The event was rescheduled and messages were delivered via video conference from NLTA President Sean Noah and a representative from the Department of Education.

The theme for Education Week 2009 was *Celebrate Our Heroes • Célébrer nos héroïnes et héros*. The Opening Ceremonies took place on March 2 at St. Catherine's Academy in Mount Carmel. In attendance were Sean Noah; MHA Felix Collins, representing Government; and Darin Pike, Director of Education with the Eastern School District. The event featured a visit by an actor playing Captain Bob Bartlett as part of the 2009 Bartlett Celebrations. Education Week has been sponsored by the NLTA since 1936 and is organized by a committee of teacher volunteers.

Computers for Schools

The NLTA continues its involvement with the Computers for Schools (CFS) program. The program is a national volunteer-based initiative that collects, repairs and delivers surplus

computers – donated by governments, private corporations and individuals – to schools, public libraries and non-profit organizations across the country. The program was established in Newfoundland and Labrador in 1994. To date, CFS has shipped over 30,000 refurbished computers to schools, districts and libraries throughout Newfoundland and Labrador. The NLTA is represented on the CFS Board of Directors by the NLTA Communications Officer who also is a member of the CFS Finance Committee and Vice-President of the Board of Directors. She was acting President for part of 2008 and again in 2009.

Print Publications

The Communications Division has responsibility for all publications of the NLTA that are available to teachers and various publics. Many of the NLTA publications were reviewed and updated during the 2007-08 and 2008-09 school years. These included the BES Infosheets, and all pamphlets and brochures. Many of the printed materials are now available only on the NLTA website. A more detailed report on the printed publications of the NLTA can be found under the Printing Services section.

NLTA Website – Members Only Section

The NLTA website was revamped in 2008-09 and redesigned to accommodate a public section and a members only section. Teachers were provided with a user name and password to access the members only section. The NLTA website is updated on a regular basis and all information available to teachers is posted on the website often before it is in print. New sections are added to the website as needed or as requested.

The members only section provides the opportunity for teachers to update their personal information and request an NLTA membership card if needed.

NLTA Display

The NLTA display was utilized to promote the work of the Association on behalf of teachers. Additions to the display, banner bugs, have been utilized when the larger display was not available or not suitable for the venue.

NLTA Membership Cards

The NLTA membership cards were updated as requested and we are currently reviewing the most cost effective means to get these cards to new teachers and teachers who have misplaced their cards. Teachers can now complete a form on the NLTA website to request an NLTA Membership Card. As well, we continue to provide life membership cards to members of the Retired Teachers Association who are life members in the NLTA (20 or more years of service).

Teacher Recruitment Fair

The Annual Teacher Recruitment Fair is intended to provide job opportunities and information for students, teachers, and others interested in entry into the profession. The Provincial Recruitment Fair is organized in partnership with Memorial University, the NLTA, the Department of Education and the Newfoundland and Labrador School Districts. The 9th Annual

Recruitment Fair is scheduled for May 11th in Corner Brook and May 13th in St. John's.

NLTA Database

The NLTA has established an internal database of members. Information forms were sent to teachers asking for information on the areas of specialization, years of teaching, education, etc. This information was compiled into the internal database for NLTA use only and allows us to communicate with teachers in a more efficient and effective manner. We have email addresses for almost all of the membership and have utilized this email group to communicate important information when needed.

Teachers can now complete an NLTA Membership Profile form so they can be included on the database or can register on the NLTA website.

Teacher Discount Program

The list of businesses that provide discounts and special services for teachers has been continued. The list is available on the NLTA website for easier access by teachers. The Communications Division continues to monitor this program and other businesses and companies will be added as they become available. The QSP Magazine Discount Program was again offered to teachers in the fall where they could take advantage of hundreds of magazines at enormous discounts.

Communications Survey

A survey on various aspects of the NLTA's Communications was completed in late Spring 2008. The purpose of the survey was to determine awareness of various publications of the NLTA and its communications programs. The results were used to guide the work of the Communications Division with regards to printed publications.

School Representative Seminars

Three School Representative Seminars were held in the Fall of 2007 and another three in the Fall of 2008 as part of the NLTA's initiative to keep the membership informed of the programs and services available to teachers. The 2007 seminars were held in St. John's, Gander and Goose Bay. For 2008 they were held in Clarenville, Deer Lake and Plum Point. The School Representatives are a vital part of the communications network with teachers and it is important that regular contact and feedback occur between those in the field and those who perform the work on their behalf.

Staff from the Benefits and Economic Services Division, the Communications Division, and the Professional Development Division coordinated their efforts to present information on the numerous services available to teachers. The school representatives were also provided with information about their roles within the structure of the Association through case studies and role activities. The seminars are rotated throughout the province and all school representatives have the opportunity to participate. The summaries and evaluations from these seminars are compiled into a final report and suggestions are utilized for the planning and organization of future seminars.

Other Projects

The NLTA Communications Officer also represents the NLTA on various other joint projects and/partnerships including the Alliance for the Control of Tobacco (ACT), the Coalition for School Nutrition, Sharing Our Cultures, and the Atlantic Communicators in Education (ACE). The ACE group consists of communications officers and directors from the other Atlantic provinces. They meet 3-4 times a year to share ideas, discuss Atlantic teacher issues, and to cost share projects if and when possible.

The Communications Division also has responsibility for organizing Janeway Day in the Schools which was held on February 13, and for the organizing and judging of the NLTA Christmas card contest. The winning entries are usually judged in early March and the card is used for that year's NLTA Christmas Card.

Printing Services

The Printing Services Division is responsible for all matters related to the design, printing and distribution of information to teachers. Projects completed since the 2007 BGM are outlined below.

Province-Wide Vote/Elections

Two Election newsletters, a special Election issue of *The Bulletin*, and posters for candidates were completed and circulated to teachers, along with voting materials (ballots, voting instructions, etc.).

The Bulletin

Eight regular issues of *The Bulletin* are printed and mailed annually. *The Bulletin* is mailed on the basis of one per every two teachers, with provision for schools to order more if so desired. Retired teachers and others may receive this publication on request by paying an annual subscription fee. Special editions of *The Bulletin* are also printed and mailed biennially for BGM and the Province-Wide Election for President and Vice-President.

Biennial General Meeting

In addition to the special Convention issue of *The Bulletin*, numerous items are designed and printed for inclusion in the Convention Kit that is mailed to delegates. Other Convention support materials are printed for BGM, such as luncheon menus, programs, and award winner cards.

Internal NLTA Work

Finance

The NLTA Expense Claim forms, Child/Dependent Care Expense Claim forms, financial statements, and preprinted envelopes are printed as required.

Administration

Responses to government reports, President's Alert, and President's Digests were printed and circulated to teachers. Support materials for Joint Council meetings were also provided.

Benefits and Economic Services

News Bulletins, Infosheets (27 in total), legal services folders and pre-retirement seminar kit items were printed.

Support materials for the Teacher Health and Wellness Promotion pilot project and a Teacher Health and Wellness Survey were designed, printed and circulated to teachers.

For Group Insurance, letterhead and envelopes, application and opt-out forms, and overviews of the Plan were printed. Memos to Plan members re the annual insurance renewal are also printed and mailed annually.

For the Employee Assistance Program, conference and workshop support materials and a Wellness Log were printed. Banner bugs were also designed.

Collective Bargaining

The opening proposals, Bargaining Briefs, tentative agreement, and voting packages were printed and mailed to teachers.

Communications

Many of the NLTA's pamphlets have been reprinted. These are available to teachers, at no cost, and can be ordered online or through Printing Services.

Kits containing support and promotional materials are printed and circulated annually for Janeway Day in the Schools and Education Week. Education Week certificates and bookmarks are also provided to schools on request.

Promotional materials were printed for our School Representative Seminars that were held in the fall and for our Pre-retirement Seminars, also held in the fall. The NLTA Bulletin Board/NLTA News signs were printed and distributed to school reps, along with a poster and handout on the role of the school rep.

The NLTA press kit is being redesigned and will be printed by year-end. Both the Provincial Collective Agreement and the Labrador West Collective Agreement are scheduled to be printed in-house.

Other member support materials sent to teachers include: Dates/Observances posters; NLTA staff extension numbers stickers; Wall Calendars; and the NLTA Awards Poster. Posters re our members-only website and for the Teacher Recruitment Fairs (held in St. John's and Corner Brook) were also designed, printed and circulated to schools.

Professional Development

Materials are printed twice annually for the Ceremony of Induction into the Teaching Profession, a ceremony held for graduating education students at Memorial University. Scholarship, grants and other application forms were revised and printed. The Student Equity program was supported by printing and distributing application forms, posters and other information. CONTACT application forms and guidelines were sent to schools. A Guide to Planning and Hosting School-Based Professional Development was designed and printed. A Summer Leadership Institute poster was printed and sent to schools as part of a joint project with a school district.

For the Virtual Teacher Centre, website icons were designed, business cards and notepads were printed, and a survey poster was sent to schools. The Coastal Labrador Institute was also supported through the printing of invitations and programs.

Branches

The majority of work for branches is usually completed during the spring as retirement dinners are hosted for newly retiring teachers, but we have also supported our branches by printing Christmas cards and other special event promotions on request and on a cost-recovery basis.

Special Interest Councils

Support materials printed and circulated on behalf of the Special Interest Councils include: membership cards and application forms; newsletters; conference/workshop/institute posters, brochures, registration forms, and other handouts; business cards for executive members; ad design; invitations to special events; and

Christmas Suite vouchers and programs. Special mail outs were also completed for councils as requested. Printing and mailing for councils is completed on a cost-recovery basis.

On request, membership databases are also set up and maintained for councils.

General Membership

For schools we have printed notepads, tickets, posters, report forms, note cards, certificates, prom programs, letterhead, envelopes, concert programs and school calendars. These items are completed on a cost-recovery basis and only when time permits (all NLTA work takes precedence over such projects).

RTANL

Numerous projects have been printed and circulated for the Retired Teachers' Association, including: BGM (October 2008) materials, provincial newsletters (usually two annually), divisional/regional newsletters, flyers, greeting cards, and other informational items. These items are completed on a cost-recovery basis.

The RTANL database was set up, and is maintained, by Printing Services staff.

Other Affiliated Organizations

We occasionally assist other affiliated groups with their printing requirements. These requests are considered on an individual basis and are vetted through the Communications Officer and/or the Executive Director.

Finance

The Finance Division of the NLTA is responsible for ensuring that all revenues and expenditures are accounted for in accordance with the By-laws and Policies of the Association and for the maintenance and upkeep of the NLTA property. The primary source of revenue (approximately 96%) comes from the membership in the form of fees, which are currently set at 1.25% of salary and bonuses. In accordance with Resolution FL17 from BGM 2007, 50% of the 2007-08 financial surplus was transferred to the Emergency Fund (\$204,242). Also, in accordance with Resolution FL18 from BGM 2007, the remainder of the 2007-08 surplus was also transferred to the Emergency Fund to help offset the cost of the Political Action Campaign from the year before.

Funds of the Association

There are seven funds operated by the Association, which are:

General Fund

This is the daily operating account of the Association.

Group Insurance Fund

This fund is operated by the Group Insurance Trustees and is reported on under the Benefits and Economic Services Division.

Emergency Fund

Pays for all expenses related to job action, as well as collective bargaining and grievance/arbitration costs.

Centennial Fund

Spending from this fund is controlled by the Professional Issues Committee and is limited to the annual interest earned.

Reserve Fund

Used to cover any annual deficits that might occur in the General Fund.

Professional Development Fund

Spending from this fund is limited to the annual interest earned on the fund and is controlled by the Professional Issues Committee.

Support Staff Pension Fund

This is the pension fund for the Support Staff of the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association.

Pooled Investment Committee

The pooled investment committee monitors the investment performance of the fund manager using an investment scorecard which compares our investment returns with the appropriate benchmark and the fund manager's performance in comparison to other fund managers in Canada. Members of the Pooled Investment Committee meet at least annually to review policy, to receive formal updates, and to make recommendations to Provincial Executive and Group Insurance Trustees, as appropriate.

Property

The Finance Division is also responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of the NLTA building and property at 3 Kenmount Road, St. John's. The usual care has been provided to the grounds and building.

Financial Statements

Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association Statement of Operations*

Year Ended August 31			2008	2007
	General Fund	Restricted Funds	Total	Total
Revenue				
Membership fees	\$4,426,290	\$384,802	\$4,811,092	\$4,599,986
Contributions	276,894	190,946	467,840	403,155
Government grants	199,812	-	199,812	195,746
Interest on investments	52,332	1,570,762	1,623,094	363,390
Miscellaneous	11,539	41,250	52,789	74,803
	<u>4,966,867</u>	<u>2,187,760</u>	<u>7,154,627</u>	<u>5,637,080</u>
Expenses				
Administration	1,534,036	236,533	1,770,569	1,969,472
Benefits and Economic Services	1,139,915	183	1,140,098	1,044,869
Communications	692,351	-	692,351	691,165
Contributions	-	20,000	20,000	10,000
Employee Assistance Program	-	50,121	50,121	52,846
Branch Operations	264,483	-	264,483	222,202
Investment fees	-	42,687	42,687	47,199
Professional Development	519,115	40,954	560,069	540,560
Grievances and Arbitrations	-	157,896	157,896	153,956
Negotiations and Other Lock-out	-	22,151	22,151	427,949
	<u>4,149,900</u>	<u>570,525</u>	<u>4,720,425</u>	<u>5,160,218</u>
Excess of revenue over expenses before other item	816,967	1,617,235	2,434,202	476,862
Other item, Decrease in fair value of investments	-	1,572,503	1,572,503	-
Excess of revenue over expenses	<u>\$ 816,967</u>	<u>\$ 44,732</u>	<u>\$ 861,699</u>	<u>\$ 476,862</u>

* For more information or details about the Financial Statements please contact the Finance Division of the NLTA.

Financial Statements

Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association Restricted Funds' Statement of Operations*

Year Ended August 31	2008					2007			
	Emergency Fund	Professional Development Fund	Centennial Fund	Reserve Fund	Outreach Program Fund	Virtual Teacher Fund	Safe Schools Fund	School Administrators' Council PD Fund	Total
Revenue									
Membership Fees	\$ 384,802	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	\$ 384,802
Contributions	-	\$ 102,479	\$ 73,467	\$ 15,000	\$ 73,467	-	-	-	\$ 367,910
Interest on Investments	810,044	\$ 177,724	166,559	\$ 409,715	1,993	3,464	\$ 192	\$ 1,071	\$ 190,946
Miscellaneous	-	-	-	-	-	41,250	-	-	\$ 1,570,762
	<u>1,194,846</u>	<u>177,724</u>	<u>269,038</u>	<u>409,715</u>	<u>16,993</u>	<u>118,181</u>	<u>192</u>	<u>1,071</u>	<u>41,250</u>
Expenses									
Administration	7,315	1,288	1,288	1,288	3,524	204,115	415	17,300	236,533
Benefits and Economic Services	183	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	183
Contributions	-	-	-	-	20,000	-	-	-	20,000
Employee Assistance Program	-	-	50,121	-	-	-	-	-	50,121
Investment Fees	17,568	7,172	6,944	11,003	-	-	-	-	42,687
Professional Development	-	16,041	24,913	-	-	-	-	-	40,954
Grievances and Arbitrations	157,896	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	157,896
Negotiations and other lock-out	22,151	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	22,151
	<u>205,113</u>	<u>24,501</u>	<u>83,266</u>	<u>12,291</u>	<u>23,524</u>	<u>204,115</u>	<u>415</u>	<u>17,300</u>	<u>570,525</u>
Excess of revenue over expenses (expenses over revenue) before other item	989,733	153,223	185,772	397,424	(6,531)	(85,934)	(223)	(16,229)	1,617,235
Other item									
Decrease in fair value of investments	820,147	177,092	162,562	412,702	-	-	-	-	1,572,503
Excess of revenue over expenses (expenses over revenue)	<u>\$ 169,586</u>	<u>\$ (23,869)</u>	<u>\$ 23,210</u>	<u>\$ (15,278)</u>	<u>\$ (6,531)</u>	<u>\$ (85,934)</u>	<u>\$ (223)</u>	<u>\$ (16,229)</u>	<u>\$ 44,732</u>
									<u>\$ (9,109)</u>

* For more information or details about the Financial Statements please contact the Finance Division of the NITA.



April 2009