

bulletin

ELECTION

ISSUE 2014

VOTE

**ELECTION DAY
TUESDAY
DECEMBER 2,
2014**

Candidate for President



Jim Dinn

Candidates for Vice-President



Dean Ingram



Sean Weir



Election of NLTA President and Vice-President December 2, 2014



Voting for the election of NLTA President and Vice-President will take place in your schools on **Tuesday, December 2, 2014**. The voting process will be conducted by your school representative (or designate) and all members will have the opportunity to vote by secret ballot. All voting must be completed by 3:30 p.m. on voting day. For further details on voting arrangements, please consult with your school representative.

The vote on December 2 is extremely important, as it will determine who will lead the Association for the 2015-16 and 2016-17 school years. The remaining ten positions on the Provincial Executive will be elected by voting delegates at the Biennial General Meeting to be held on April 7-10, 2015 in St. John's.

The purpose of the Election Issue of *The Bulletin* is to provide you with background information on, and election statements from, the candidates for President and Vice-President. Please take every opportunity to familiarize yourself with this information and make your vote on December 2 an informed vote. All NLTA members are urged to actively participate in this process by becoming as knowledgeable as possible about the candidates and by casting your ballots on **Tuesday, December 2**.

Editor's Note: *Candidates' biographies and position statements are printed as submitted and, if necessary, have been edited for length/word count only.*

Electoral Committee

Edward Moore (Chair), Past Provincial Executive Member
Kimberly Leonard, Member, Marconi Branch
Darrell Sneyd, Member, Conception Bay South Branch

Any questions you have on the province-wide voting procedures should be directed to the NLTA at 709-726-3223 or 1-800-563-3599 (toll free):

Don Ash, Executive Director [ext. 224 or dash@nlta.nl.ca]

Geralyn Costello, Executive Assistant, Governance [ext. 222 or gcostello@nlta.nl.ca]

Candidate for President

Jim Dinn

Everything you want is on the other side of fear. ~ George Addair



What do we want as teachers? What stops us from achieving it?

Many years ago I took it into my head to climb the large tree in front of my house to prune the branches. No problem, I thought. After all, I had climbed to the top of many trees when I was a kid – usually dismissing my mother’s calls to get down before I got hurt. As an adult, halfway up a tree and clutching the swaying branches, my mother’s warning echoed ominously in my head. I decided the top branches really didn’t need pruning after all and abandoned my ascent.

Many of you are probably thinking I exercised common sense in climbing down. Maybe. However, it was fear that trumped my desire to prune – that and the realization that I was considerably lighter as a child.

Many teachers have asked me if I am enjoying my new role as president. I suppose if I had stopped to think about the issues we’d be facing and the responsibilities I’d be taking on, I probably would have been paralysed by fear and chosen not to run.

I must admit I am enjoying the job, but that’s not to say I haven’t had moments of doubt and anxiety. However, I have been granted an incredible opportunity to work on your behalf and on behalf of your colleagues. I have had the privilege to visit schools and meet teachers and hear their concerns. Most importantly, I have been able to speak to their issues. What truly makes this job so rewarding is the fact that I am surrounded by and have the support of great people – NLTA staff, Provincial Executive, and you, the teachers of this province.

So, what about you? What do we want as teachers? What do we desire for our students? What do we demand as individuals?

The answers are obvious. We want reasonable and manageable class sizes, adequate resourcing for inclusive education, sufficient preparation time, choice and control over our professional development, clean and well maintained buildings, working technology and tools that allow us to be the 21st century educators we are expected to be.

We want these things so we can address the needs of the students in our care, give each child the help he/she deserves, provide our students the opportunity to reach their potential – and sometimes exceed it. It’s about doing a good job and being the best teacher possible.

We also want the time and support to look after ourselves and those we love. We want to balance our personal life with our professional life and not feel guilty that in meeting the demands of one we shortchange the other.

As I visited schools across our province in the first year of my presidency, I heard loudly and clearly what teachers want. I also heard the fear that can often stifle our desire to reach for what we want.

Those same forces of desire and fear were evident in our contract negotiations. We knew clearly what we wanted. But as the negotiation process dragged on and other unions settled their contracts, doubt, anxiety and fear grew. Options under the collective bargaining process were being exhausted, and we appeared to be drifting towards job action. We weren’t sure how it was going to end. There were those who wanted us to drop our demands and reach a deal with government. After two and a half years, it was to be expected. It was even understandable.

But we didn’t capitulate to our fears. We stood by our bargaining team and by each other. Together, we made the collective bargaining process work. I was messenger, but it was our combined voices that helped us achieve a contract that addresses some of the major “wants” we have sought for many years.

However, we still have challenges ahead and work to do. There are things I want for us. I want us to be a strong Association so we can continue to improve our working conditions. I need you to be engaged in our Association. If our Association is to change our working conditions then each of us must have an active role in shaping it.

It will not be easy, and we cannot allow fear to paralyse us. If you are willing to place your trust in me for another term, I promise to continue working towards strengthening our Association, to advocate on your behalf, to continue to be your voice. So, if you are up to climbing a few trees, and are not afraid to crawl out onto the branches where the choice fruit is, I’m ready to climb with you.

jamesdinn@nf.sympatico.ca

www.jimdinn.com

@JimDinn

709-726-3223, ext. 223

Candidates for Vice-President

Dean Ingram

Professional/Academic Experience

- B.Sc. (1991), B.Ed. (1992), M.Ed. (2001)
- Biology Teacher, CDLI (2010-Present)
- Science Itinerant, CDLI (2008-10)
- Teaching Principal, Swift Current Academy (2001-05, 2007-08)
- Department Head, Discovery Collegiate, Bonavista (2006-07)
- Assistant Principal, Discovery Collegiate, Bonavista (2005-06)
- Bishop White All Grade, Port Rexton (1993-2001)
- Dorset Collegiate, Pilley's Island (1992-93)
- J.M. Olds Collegiate, Twillingate (1992)



NLTA Involvement

- Eight Years as Branch President (Trinity, T. Bay. Clarenbridge)
- Member, Provincial Collective Bargaining Committee (2001)
- Member, Provincial Executive (2003-Present)
- Group Insurance Trustee (2004-06)
- Member, Finance and Property Committee (2003-05)
- Member, Pooled Investment Fund Committee (2003-07)
- Chair, Finance and Property Committee (2005-07)
- Deferred Salary Leave Committee (2003-05)
- Chair, Ad Hoc Committee on Teacher Wellness (2005-07)
- Chair, Standing Committee for Teacher Wellness (2007-09)
- Chair, Staff Negotiations Committee (2008-12)
- Negotiating Team Member (2009 Round)
- Table Officer (2007-15)
- Member, National Committee on Diversity and Human Rights (CTF)
- Member, Hiring Committee (2007-Present)
- Delegate, Council of Atlantic Provinces Teacher Organizations (CAPTO) AGM (2008-14)
- Delegate, Canadian Teachers' Federation AGM (2008-14)
- Chair, Collective Bargaining Committee (2011-13)
- Chair, Negotiating Team (Current Round)
- Vice-President (2012-14)

For the past year I consider myself fortunate to have been given the opportunity to sit as your Vice-President. I am humbly asking that on December 2nd you vote for me to continue in that role. My experience with our Association has been broad in scope and detailed in focus. As chair of the Negotiating Team I was able to head a team that took the needs that our members identified as being key and worked towards meeting them in the resulting collective agreement.

Yet there is another battle yet to come. Information has been distributed that outlines the status of our pension plan. In order for the plan to remain sustainable modifications will need to be made. The changes must allocate for accrued benefits such that any changes are made on a go forward basis. The changes must ensure that the plan provides for a reasonable standard of living for our members and these changes must bring sustainability to the plan. We cannot find ourselves having to go back and revisit the plan again and again. We need a long term solution.

The issue of inclusion is one that continues to dominate discussions around teacher work life. The model, while sound in theory, has not worked in a practical sense. In order for the model to work and deliver the quality of service to our membership, additional HR resources must be deployed. Through the new collective agreement a joint committee with NLTA was established. From this committee the issues will be formally delineated and we will need to act to ensure that there are actions on the findings of this committee. As I have stated on numerous occasions our working conditions are the learning conditions of our students. They are intertwined and inseparable.

I am offering myself for re-election as Vice-President because I believe that my 21 years of knowledge of our Association at both the Branch and Provincial level has allowed me to represent our membership well in this capacity. My teaching experience has had me teach in both small and large schools and at all levels of our system. My approach is pragmatic and grounded in what will best serve our membership. I will listen, I will understand and I will act on your behalf. I humbly ask for your support in my bid for re-election as Vice-President. Thank You.

dingram@persona.ca
users.eastlink.ca/~deaningram
@dean_ingram
709-427-2250

Sean Weir



Information:

Originally from Mount Pearl, I began substituting in St. John's (1996), after which I moved to Port Hope Simpson (1999) to pursue a permanent teaching position. I have remained at the same school (D.C. Young/Bayside Academy) ever since.

In this multi-grade K-12 school, I have had teaching assignments ranging from grades 4-10 in the core subject areas (but also including French, Music, Art, and Physical Education) along with some duties in the area of literacy/numeracy support. Recently (May, 2014), I completed my M.Ed. (Educational Leadership Studies) on-line from Memorial and am currently the Assistant Principal (with teaching duties) at Bayside Academy.

NLTA Experience:

- Branch President, Coastal Labrador South (2007-2011)
- Member of Provincial Executive Council (2011-15)
- Group Insurance Trustee (2011-13)
- Chairperson, Group Insurance Trustees (2013-15)
- Member of Labrador Benefits Negotiating Team (2009-10)
- Chairperson, School Board-Teacher Liaison Committee for WNLSLSD (2009-10)
- Member of Finance and Property Committee (2011-13)
- Member of Pooled Investment Committee (2013-15)
- Participated in successful NLTA policy grievance hearing with WNLSLSD on carpooling/sharing accommodations (2009)

Statement:

I have always been an advocate for teacher rights and the learning environment of our students. My own personal philosophy in terms of our current system of education is based upon my 15 years as a classroom teacher in this province and tempered by my interpretation of what should be deemed as the "reasonable expectations" placed upon a professional educator. When philosophy trumps practicality, I always feel the urge to speak up and be heard. I have done this at the school level, branch level, board level, and, on our current Executive, at the provincial level.

With our new contract firmly in hand and a solution to the pension problem on the horizon, many people outside of the classroom may be assuming that all the collective needs of teachers have been satisfied for the foreseeable future. Sadly, this is not reality. While I applaud our negotiating team for

obtaining the best possible deal available to them at present and securing three days of guaranteed family leave for our members, there are still many outstanding issues that remain unresolved in terms of the day-to-day operations of our schools.

From my discussions with teachers, it is very clear that the demands placed on teachers during the school day are becoming more than what many of us can handle. Classrooms have seen dramatic changes in the past ten years, and many teachers are struggling to keep up. The dramatic increase in the number of long-term disability claims for teachers involving mental-nervous disorders would indicate this. Among other things, teachers have been asked, either directly or indirectly, to use differentiated instruction, integrate technology, sustain PBS initiatives, document student interventions, create inclusive classrooms, enforce unpopular district policies, offer tutorials, eliminate bullying, and participate in extracurricular activities. These activities require some combination of teacher time and teacher training. Unfortunately, both of these have become scarce commodities in the modern NL classroom. The increasing demands of the job are causing many teachers to feel overwhelmed and dissatisfied with their own job performance. Many of us feel as though we are a "Jack of all Trades," but a master of none.

If elected as NLTA Vice-President, I promise to advocate strongly for changes in teacher workload. A failure to do so would seem, to me, to be neglecting the purpose of our Association. For as the NLTA mission statement states, "We dedicate ourselves to the professional excellence and personal well-being of teachers, through support, advocacy, educational leadership and the development and delivery of outstanding programs and services." Together, we can reduce teacher stress and make our classrooms better places.

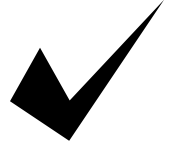
seanweir2014@hotmail.com

www.facebook.com/seanweir4NLTA VP

709-960-0224 or 709-690-5451 (c)



Important Election Information for Teachers



Ballots will be distributed by the NLTA Office to school representatives in each school and board office in numbers sufficient for each teacher in that school and allowing extra ballots for substitute teachers, teachers on leave and teachers from other schools or branches.

Voting **MUST** take place on **December 2, 2014** unless special circumstances at a school require the vote be conducted at another time. With the approval of the Electoral Committee, a vote may be conducted on a date other than the designated date only if required by conditions of geography, weather, school closure, etc.

Members will be notified of the time and place for conducting the vote in your school by your school representative. All voting **MUST** be completed by 3:30 p.m. on the day of the election. Detailed voting guidelines will be supplied to your school representative early in November.

Substitute teachers who have taught on at least one occasion during this school year and teachers on leave will be provided an opportunity to vote. Please contact any teacher on leave or substitute about the date and time for the vote.

Teachers can vote by secret ballot and each teacher must sign the "Registration of Voters" (Form B) at the time of casting their ballot. Proxy voting is not permitted. This includes voting by telephone and voting by one member who holds a written proxy on behalf of another.

A faxed ballot is permissible, if it is impossible for a member to be physically present in any Branch on voting day, provided that the completed ballot which is returned by facsimile is accompanied by a signed statement from the member in question, stating that the ballot was indeed cast personally by him/her. Such a vote would have to be administered by the Electoral Committee and the completed ballot received only at the NLTA Head Office.

All ballots from each school will be forwarded to the Branch Executive for counting. Ballots will not be counted in the schools, with the exception of the following isolated branches/schools:

Coastal Labrador South Branch:

Bayside Academy	Port Hope Simpson
Henry Gordon Academy	Cartwright
Raymond Ward Memorial	Norman Bay
St. Mary's All-Grade	Mary's Harbour
St. Lewis Academy	St. Lewis
St. Peter's School	Black Tickle
William Gillett Academy	Charlottetown

Nutak Labradorimi Branch:

Amos Comenius Memorial	Hopedale
B. L. Morrison All-Grade	Postville
J. C. Erhardt Memorial	Makkovik
Jens Haven Memorial	Nain
Northern Lights Aademy	Rigolet

Isolated Schools:

Appalachia Branch	École Sainte-Anne	La Grand'Terre
	École Notre Dame Du Cap	Cap St. George
	Our Lady of the Cape Elem.	Cape St. George
Belleoram-Wreck Cove Branch	St. Stephen's All-Grade	Rencontre East
Burgeo Branch	St. Simon & St. Jude	Francois
Exploits Valley Branch	Cottrell's Cove Academy	Cottrell's Cove
	Leading Ticks Primary	Leading Ticks
	Lakeside Academy	Buchans
Ganova Branch	Charlottetown Primary	Charlottetown
	St. Gabriel's All-Grade	St. Brendan's
	Holy Cross School Complex	Eastport
Green Bay Branch	Long Island Academy	Beaumont
	H. L. Strong Academy	Little Bay Islands
Lake Melville Branch	Mud Lake School	Mud Lake
Long Range Branch	Long Range Academy	Cow Head
	Holy Cross All-Grade School	Daniel's Harbour
Marconi Branch	St. Augustine's Elementary	Bell Island
	St. Michael's High	Bell Island
Notre Dame Branch	A. R. Scammell Academy	Change Islands
Port aux Basques Branch	Douglas Academy	LaPoile
Rameaux Branch	All Saints All-Grade	Grey River
Rushoon-Terrenceville Branch	St. Anne's School	South East Bight
Seagaulher Branch	St. Peter's All-Grade	McCallum
Southern Shore Branch	Stella Maris Academy	Trepassey

Special instructions for voting will be sent to the above branches/schools.

The branch executive may release the voting results of the branch to the members of the branch, only after the Electoral Committee has officially declared the name of the incumbent for that office. All results of the vote which are released to the public will be released by the Electoral Committee.

An "Election Info" section has been set up on the NLTA website (www.nlta.nl.ca) with pertinent information on the candidates (with links to the candidates' websites) and the voting process.

An online question/answer forum is available on the NLTA website. Members are invited to send questions to mail@nlta.nl.ca. These questions will be forwarded to all candidates each Friday and answers will be posted as they are received. Please include your name and school with your question; however, only your name will be posted with your question.



A Candidates Forum took place on October 24-25, 2014. It can be viewed on the NLTA website, www.nlta.nl.ca.



The **deadline for nominations** for the positions of NLTA President and Vice-President was **Sunday, November 2, 2014.**



A section has been set up on the main page of the **NLTA website (www.nlta.nl.ca)** with pertinent information on the candidates and the voting process.



An online question and answer forum is available. Members are invited to send questions to mail@nlta.nl.ca.

These questions will be forwarded to all candidates each Friday and answers will be posted as they are received. Please include your name and school with your question(s); however, only your name will be posted with your question(s).



Be Informed! Be part of the process! Cast your vote on December 2, 2014.