

bulletin

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Up Front from the President



It seems fitting to start this *Up Front* with Happy New Year, although there are mixed opinions on how long the salutation is appropriate. None the less, may all your challenges be few and your triumphs many in 2013.

By now everyone has either followed through on their New Year's resolution(s) or as often happens with good intentions, they are wavering as the demands of life get in the way. By now we are all back into the routine of another term at school and it seems like Christmas and the festivities are but a distant memory.

In late December I had the opportunity to listen to Dr. Lyle Wetsch from Memorial University give a presentation on social media. He gave me much food for thought and I think all of us could benefit from his guidance and direction with social media.

Dr. Wetsch's presentation was divided into three sections: social media awareness; social media knowledge; and social media intelligence. Many of us think that our students know so much more than we do when it comes to social media; the fact is however, they have much social media awareness but little of the other two aspects. Students do not know it all. They require social media and digital guidance. They need direction in what online profile/branding is and what it is they are really doing with their online profile/branding.

Have you ever googled yourself? Try it. Everyone should be striving for a positive digital footprint. However, once you google yourself you can get a variety of results and some may not be favourable. I did google myself after listening to Dr. Wetsch's presentation. Lily Cole is a young British model and actor who appears online in a variety of states of dress and undress. She is also running ads for various companies and one is The Body Shop. However, if you google Lily B. Cole the results are mine, pictures and all. According to Dr. Wetsch, your online brand is extremely important.

He commented that today the number one christening gift for children is a domain name. So in future years the child who has a domain name will be the first in line on a list search when googled by potential employers. There is so much more that I need to learn about social media and the effects and possibilities it will have on future generations. Dr. Wetsch stressed five areas that employers look at when they are searching online for potential employees or references from applicants. When hiring, employers look at online social media sites in this order of importance: pictures/references to drugs, sex, profanity, grammar and alcohol. It was of interest that comments about religion and/or political preferences were neutral to potential employers.

"Don't say anything online that you wouldn't want plastered on a billboard with your face on it."

~ Erin Bury, Sprouter
community manager

Dr. Wetsch made a statement that you should "never" connect with students through a personal social media site. The perception is not good. It cannot be stated enough, as staff in our Benefits and Economic Services Division are constantly saying, you must never put anything on a social media site that you would not want printed and put up on a staffroom wall next to your photo. The NLTA has published an *Infosheet No. 26: Cyberconduct and Electronic Communications – Important Information and Guidelines for Teachers*. If you are not familiar with the contents, it can be found on the NLTA website.

I have many teacher friends who say many disconcerting things on social media sites regarding report cards, snow days,

and workload. I am sure you have heard of Facebook creep, where any individual can find you on Facebook through a variety of ways, especially if you are not locked down. Many people do not have their sites locked down and these comments can be viewed by people for which they were not intended. As a parent I would be disappointed to see any comment like that from my child's teacher or to see compromising photos.

A few social media facts that may be of interest:

- as of January 2013, Facebook has 1 billion users, 604 million mobile users;
- YouTube has 800 million users/4 billion views per day;
- Twitter has 500 million users;
- Pinterest has 25 million users; and
- Flickr has 75 million users.

We need to be informed on the constantly changing issues around social media sites. As one student stated, "so much of our lives are conducted through digital media, when this media is left at the classroom door, it makes what happens in the classroom feel a lot less relevant." We need to have courses developed or outcomes added to current curriculum around digital citizenship and social media literacy. In my opinion, I think the beginning of social media education should start no later than Grade 3. We need to explain to students what online branding/profile is and how to best use it to enhance their future opportunities. Social media is a natural part of students' lives and we must be prepared to give them the skills they need to navigate these sites to enhance their lives.

Lily B.

T H E

bulletin

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Important Information re NLTA Membership Card Renewal

We are currently experiencing some technical difficulties producing the new NLTA membership cards. It will be February 2013 before this will be resolved. Please go to the NLTA website, www.nlta.nl.ca, to request your new membership card. Cards will be mailed to the home address we have on file for you. If you have had a recent address change, please update your current address. Should you need your card immediately, we can issue a temporary card.

Please contact:
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PROVINCIAL/NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL
NEWS

SOUTH EAST BIGHT

The carolers of St. Anne's School

"Here we come a-caroling..." was certainly the case on December 17 in South East Bight. The students and staff of St. Anne's School gathered their jingle bells, Santa hats and little treats as they prepared to sing Christmas carols to their parents, grandparents and other members of the community. "Everyone was excited and thankful to see the smiling faces and to listen to the laughter of the carolers as they made their way to all the houses!" said Peggy Lewis, Principal of St. Anne's School.



Students and staff at St. Anne's School bring joy to South East Bight as they gather to sing Christmas carols for family and community members.

CATALINA

Play and Learn fun for all at Catalina Elementary

Learning was exciting during Play and Learn Week at Catalina Elementary from November 5-9, 2012. Each day K-3 students participated in various types of play relating to the theme for that day – Active Play, Outdoor Play, Music Play, Pretend Play and Traditional Games. The highlight each day was a mystery box filled with a surprise activity to be completed when it arrived at the classroom door.

Excitement mounted as the week progressed as to the contents of the mystery box.

Another highlight was the assigned homework each night. Students brought home a play activity card to be completed with a family member. Returned cards were used as entry forms for a chance to win prizes at the end of the week. Family members also participated in an afternoon of play as they rotated through various play stations with their children.

The week ended with members of the local 50+ group sharing with and teaching the students some old-fashioned traditional games. "A fabulous time was had by all, young and old alike!" said Paula Smith, Grade One teacher at Catalina Elementary. "Thanks to the Department of Education for providing funding for this fun initiative."



Young and old alike enjoy old-fashioned traditional games during Play and Learn Week at Catalina Elementary.

ARNOLD'S COVE

Tricentia Academy students participant in unique fundraiser

The students of Tricentia Academy in Arnold's Cove participated in a unique fundraiser – donating slightly used t-shirts to be sent to Guatemala. Volunteers in Guatemala will then convert the t-shirts into diapers. The project goal was to collect 280 t-shirts, one from each student in the school, but upon the dead-

line students had brought in 425 t-shirts, with some coming in even after this count.

“The students of Tricentia Academy are often very generous when it comes to charity drives, and this is just another example of their good hearts,” said Elizabeth Power, a teacher at Tricentia Academy.



Pictured are some Tricentia Academy students representing the donations of the entire student body.

SPANIARD'S BAY

National poster contest winner announced

Holy Redeemer School in Spaniard's Bay is pleased to announce that Olivia Noseworthy in 6D has been named the Provincial Winner for Newfoundland and Labrador in the Immunize Canada's 2012 National Immunization Poster Contest. All the winners from provinces and territories across Canada were announced at the 10th Canadian Immunization Conference in Vancouver on December 3, 2012. Winning artwork was displayed at the Conference, and can now be viewed at <http://immunize.ca/en/publications-resources/posters/childhood/2013.aspx> or on the school's website at www.redeemer.k12.nf.ca.



Olivia Noseworthy and her teacher, Mrs. Deering.

Olivia will receive a Winner's Certificate and a prize from OWLKids Canada. Also, in the spring of 2013, immunization-promotion resources will be created, using the winning artwork from across the country. “Congratulations Olivia, we are very proud of you. Thank you to Ms. Deering as well for encouraging participation in this contest,” said Ronald Fagan, a teacher at Holy Redeemer School.

Holy Redeemer students compete in Remembrance Day contest

As part of their Remembrance Day celebrations, the students of Holy Redeemer School in Spaniard's Bay participated in a poster, poem and essay contest sponsored by the Royal Canadian Legion, Branch 9 in Spaniard's Bay. A winner from each category was selected from each grade level (K-9) and displayed at the annual Remembrance Day dinner held at the Royal Canadian Legion, Branch 9. During the dinner on November 17, the first and second place essay winners from Grade 9 (centered around the theme of Remembrance) read their winning essays. The winning entries of the poster (Primary), poem and essay (Elementary and Intermediate) were sent to Provincial Command of the Royal Canadian Legion to be judged on a Provincial basis. Holy Redeemer extends congratulations to Tyler Lundrigan, first place winner of the Gary Churchill Memorial Essay Contest, and to Jayden Fitzgerald for her second place entry.



Front Row (l-r): Mr. Dan Churchill, Mrs. Shelley Drover (student assistant), Tyler Lundrigan (winner of the Gary Churchill Memorial Essay Contest), Jayden Fitzgerald (runner-up of the Gary Churchill Memorial Essay Contest), Mr. Calvin Crane (President of the Royal Canadian Legion, Spaniard's Bay), Mrs. Marion Sheppard (teacher), Mrs. Gloria Peddle (student assistant).

Back Row (l-r): Mr. Paul Sheppard (teacher sponsor), Mr. David Crane (Principal, Holy Redeemer School), Mr. Robert Bishop (Assistant Principal, Holy Redeemer School).

Holy Redeemer's Christmas ham and pancake breakfast

The students of Holy Redeemer would like to thank the many volunteers and staff who helped prepare and serve a wonderful Christmas ham and pancake breakfast on December 19, 2012. "The ham and pancake breakfast was fantastic and there was even a special visit from Santa Claus," said Ronald Fagan of Holy Redeemer School. "Once again the students would like to say thank you to the following for helping us with this function: Charlotte Bishop, Valarie Williams, Tammy Oliver, Tina Mercer, Carol Smith, Sara Bignell, Adam Crane, Tammy Gifford, Peggy Eveleigh, Amanda Hayward, Tina Drover, Lewis Dawe, Firemen – Victor Hiscock, David Janes, Randy Davis, staff of the cafeteria, Sandra Barrett, Debbie Dyke and Gary Hutchings, David Crane, Marie Sheppard, Robert Bishop and of course, SANTA!!"



Grade 3 students thank the staff and volunteers at their Christmas breakfast.

GANDER

Students brighten children's lives on Christmas morning

On November 16, Gander Academy's Red Cross Youth once again packed shoe boxes for needy children in underdeveloped countries. With Red Cross Youth and numerous parent volunteers, the students from Grade 4, 5, and 6 packed 296 shoe boxes during lunchtime.

"This has been an annual event for the Red Cross Youth participating in Samaritan's Purse and it's the eighth year Gander Academy's Red Cross Youth have been involved in the project," said Diane Vey-Morawski, Vice Principal of Gander Academy. "The students look forward each year to choosing a boy or girl to pack a shoebox for and make another child's life a little brighter on Christmas morning."

Over 150 students stay during lunch hour and pack the boxes, which are then transported, to the



Students from Gander Academy's Red Cross Youth pack shoe boxes for needy children in underdeveloped countries.

distribution center on McCurdy Drive. A special thank you is extended to the Canadian Forces Family Resource Center who also partnered with Gander Academy and filled 25 boxes.

PLUM POINT

VTA Mo Bros give generously during November 2012

On November 30, students and staff of Viking Trail Academy in Plum Point completed a final tally for their moustache growing efforts to raise funds for prostate cancer and male mental health initiatives. The VTA Mo Bros raised a total of \$626.84. Team captain, Bill Fleming said, "This is our second year involved in this campaign. Students from Grade 7 to Level 3 and staff gave generously of their loose change during our twice weekly collections during November."



The Viking Trail Academy Mo Bros raise funds during November 2012.

ST. JOHN'S

School raises funds for prostate cancer during Movember 2012

During November each year, “Movember and Sons” is responsible for the sprouting of moustaches on thousands of men’s faces in Canada and around the world. With their “Mo’s”, these men raise vital funds and awareness for men’s health. Brother Rice Junior High in St. John’s joined the campaign and rallied together to raise over \$2,700 for prostate cancer during Movember 2012.

Donations were sought via a word of mouth campaign, an official “Movember and Sons Canada” interactive website, a fundraising dance complete with moustache decorations, and a day where all staff and students were encouraged to wear their best fake moustache! The team, led by Mr. Jon Bennett, dedicated their own upper lips to help change the face of men’s health. “The men and their moustaches created a forum for dialogue, a means of community giving, and a great laugh for the entire school,” said Angela Dawe, Music Specialist at Brother Rice Junior High. “Unfortunately, prostate cancer is no laughing matter. An estimated 26,500 men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer in 2012. Awareness, regular medical examinations and early detection and research are all essential in fighting this disease.”

On December 3, Mr. David Dempster of “Prostate Cancer Canada” visited Brother Rice and accepted their donation in an assembly validating the importance of men’s health.



Students and staff of Brother Rice Junior High present their donation to Mr. David Dempster of Prostate Cancer Canada.

Macdonald Drive Junior High School Christmas Card

Macdonald Drive Junior High's innovative school Christmas card was the idea of Terry Ryan, Guidance Counsellor and was drawn out and coloured by two Grade 9 students, Dakshita Jagota and Samantha Wellon. The letters in the word "COEXIST" made with many different symbols represent the beliefs and ideals of the diversity that exists in the school and community. Just like the symbols that come together to symbolically spell "COEXIST", all students and staff were invited to write a message of peace and goodwill to each other. "The response was overwhelmingly positive and much discussion evolved, especially since the greetings were written in several different languages," said Joan McCue, School Counsellor at Macdonald Drive Junior High. This poster-style Christmas card is located on the wall opposite the guidance office and will act as a lead in to a full day diversity fair entitled "Making Connections" that is planned for late January 2013 at Macdonald Drive Junior High School.



Samantha Wellon and Dakshita Jagota display the Christmas card they designed for Macdonald Drive Junior High.

NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR

NLTA Scholarship Winner



Shannon Webb

Shannon Webb from Nain, Labrador has been named the 2012-13 recipient of the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association Scholarship.

Shannon is currently completing her teacher internship at Jens Haven Memorial in Nain and says she is very eager to finish her degree and begin her career as a teacher. "Growing up in an isolated community and seeing how hard it was to keep good teachers, helped me to understand the need for permanent staff members on the north coast of

Labrador," says Shannon. "I am very thankful to those teachers who helped shape me into the person I am today. It is my dream to become a teacher who can help young students see their full potential and realize all of the great things that they can achieve in life. I come from a very supportive family and a great circle of friends who helped me every step of the way, and for that I am very thankful. I am honored to be selected for this scholarship, and take great pride in knowing that I will be joining the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association in the near future."

The NLTA Scholarship is awarded annually on the basis of academic excellence and character to a senior student enrolled in the Faculty of Education. The scholarship, valued at \$565, is awarded annually by the MUN Senate Committee on Scholarships, acting on the recommendation of the Dean of Education.

Dr. David Dibbon Leadership Scholar Award

On December 7, 2012 the inaugural Dr. David Dibbon Leadership Scholar Award was presented to Heather White, a doctoral student in the Faculty of Education. The award was presented at the Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Directors of Education (NLADE) conference at the Capital Hotel in St. John's during the conference luncheon.

The Dr. David Dibbon Leadership Scholar Award was established by his family, friends, colleagues and students to commemorate the life and work of Dr. Dibbon, Dean of the Faculty of Education, 2008-2010. The Scholar Award is awarded to a doctoral student in educational administration who holds Dr. Dibbon's ideals.

Dr. David Dibbon was a stellar family man, educator, administrator, leader and friend. He was committed to research focused on improving schools and school systems in Newfoundland and Labrador and elsewhere. He had great dreams of what public education could be. He was passionate about enabling schools to become better places for students to learn and for teachers to work. He was a transformational leader and change agent committed to collaborative partnerships and teamwork. He had a gift of innovative thinking, a visionary spirit, and the tenacious patience required to successfully lead meaningful educational reform.

Heather White, the newly appointed Dr. Dibbon Scholar noted, "In many ways, I feel myself to be carrying on his legacy in my own humble way – a midwife of his vision of improving the working lives of teachers and leaders and in turn improving school environ-

ments for students as well as society at large. I stand on the shoulder of giants, of which he is surely one.”

The award was presented to Heather White by Dr. Dibbon’s wife, Janice Cooper and his two daughters, Katherine and Lauren Dibbon.



Heather White is presented with the Dr. David Dibbon Leadership Scholar Award.

The Ella Manuel Scholarship 2013

The Ella Manuel Scholarship is being offered in 2013 to assist a young woman from Newfoundland and Labrador to further her education in topics related to social, cultural and environmental well-being of the province. Valued at \$2500, the award is in memory of Ella Manuel, Newfoundland writer, broadcaster, feminist, and peace activist.

Applicants expecting to graduate this year from high schools in Newfoundland and Labrador are asked to submit through their school Principal a two-page essay (1000 words maximum) describing how their interests and ambitions relate to environmental and social issues in their communities. This must be accompanied by the Principal's Recommendation Form, duly signed and completed. This can be found at the Trust website.

Copies of the transcripts of marks for Grade 10, 11 and 12 are also required. Only one application from each school will be accepted. Preference may be given to applicants from rural areas.

For more information see www.TheEllaManuelTrust.weebly.com.

Applications must be received by **April 1, 2013**, by the Professional Development Division, Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association, 3 Kenmount Road, St. John's, NL, A1B 1W1.



Going on Leave? Things You Should Know

by STEVE BROOKS

Whether you are going on maternity leave, approved leave without pay, unpaid sick leave, educational leave, or deferred salary leave, it is your responsibility to ensure your desired benefits are maintained while on leave. The purpose of this article is to ensure teachers going on leave are aware of the steps which must be taken to maintain these benefits which include NLTA Membership, Group Insurance and Pension service. As well, we are often asked about the impact of such leaves with respect to pension and salary increments. The following table has been prepared to assist teachers in addressing these questions.

Type of Leave	NLTA Membership	Group Insurance	Pension	Salary Increments
Maternity/Parental Leave	N1	G1	P1	S1
Approved Unpaid Leave	N1	G2	P1	S2/S3
Approved Unpaid Sick Leave	N3	G2	P1	S3
Paid Educational Leave	N2	G3	P2	S1
Deferred Salary Leave	N2	G3	P3	S1

NLTA MEMBERSHIP

N1: Payment of \$2.00 per month must be made to the NLTA to maintain membership rights and benefits as per NLTA policy. Normally, one cheque covering the entire period of leave is mailed to the NLTA, attention: Finance Division, 3 Kenmount Road, St. John's, NL, A1B 1W1.

N2: Membership dues continue to be paid as normal via deduction from paid salary.

N3: Dues not required in order to maintain membership.

GROUP INSURANCE

G1: Teachers must arrange with the plan administrator, Johnson Inc., to pay their share of the group insurance premiums by bank deductions. Failure to do so will result in termination of insurance. If insurance is terminated, the teacher will be required to apply for coverage, and provide proof of medical insurability subject to policy limitations, should the teacher wish to resume coverage. Should a teacher take more than 39 weeks, they must arrange with Johnson Inc. to pay by bank deduction both their share and the government's share of the group insurance premiums for the additional leave period. Otherwise, if insurance is allowed to lapse during a period of parenthood leave, medical proof of insurability may be required in order to be reinstated in the plan.

G2: Teachers must arrange with Johnson Inc. to pay by bank deduction both their share and the government's share (Life, Accidental Death and Dismemberment, and Health plans only) of the group insurance premiums. Failure to do so will result in termination of insurance. If insurance is terminated, the teacher will be required to apply for coverage, and provide proof of medical insurability subject to policy limitations, should the teacher wish to resume coverage.

G3: Payment of group insurance premiums continue to be paid via normal payroll deduction and government's contribution of their share continues.

PENSION

P1: Pension premium is unpaid and no pension service accrues while on leave. Teachers may arrange with Pensions Division to purchase lost pension service within six months from return to work. If the service time is purchased within this window, the

cost is at current contribution rates matched by government. After six months, the cost is at full actuarial value.

P2: Pension premium is paid on 80% salary, and 80% pension service accrues while on educational leave. Teachers may arrange with Pensions Division to purchase the lost 20% pension service within six months from return to work. If the service time is purchased within this window, the cost is at current contribution rates matched by government. After six months, the cost is at full actuarial value.

P3: Pension premium continues to be paid on the full salary (not the reduced deferred salary), and full pension service accrues.

SALARY INCREMENTS

Teachers' placement on the salary grid is reviewed and changes made once per year at the beginning of the school year or at the date of initial employment of a teacher. To determine the number of teaching years for salary increments, all teaching days to the date of calculation are totalled and this total divided by 195, which is the number of days in a school year. A fraction of half a year or more is required to move to the next step on the salary grid.

S1: Credited fully as time taught for the period of leave (maximum 39 continuous weeks for maternity/adoption/parental purposes) for the purpose of salary increment.

S2: Most unpaid leave is not credited for salary incremental purposes; however, it is credited fully as time taught when leave is related to upgrading qualifications or experience.

S3: Not credited for the purpose of salary increment.

Inquiries should be directed to an Administrative Officer in the Benefits and Economic Services Division of the NLTA.

Steve Brooks is an Administrative Officer in the Benefits and Economic Services Division of the NLTA.



Financing a Year of Deferred Salary Leave

by STEFANIE TUFF

The Deferred Salary Leave Plan (DSLPL) is available to any tenured teacher in a permanent position covered by the NLTA Collective Agreement. The terms of reference and other details of the DSLPL are set out in Article 51 of the provincial contract (Article 57 of the Labrador West Collective Agreement). Many teachers find the DSLPL an excellent means of financing a year of leave to pursue travel, family time, other employment, further studies, or any interest that an individual might have. Leave under the DSLPL is fully credited for purposes of pension, seniority, severance pay, salary increments, and sick leave. The plan is registered with the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA), which does not allow the year of leave to be taken as the last year before retirement. **The deadline to apply for enrolment in the DSLPL beginning in September is April 30 of the previous school year.**

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

The following comparisons of net salary for a teacher on full salary versus the various DSLPL options are rough calculations for illustrative purposes only. Each individual teacher’s situation will be different. The estimates are based on the salaries that were in effect as of September 2011 as the current collective agreements for teachers expired at the end of August 2012 and the amount of any future salary increases are not known at this time. Taxes deducted vary for each teacher and they are approximations only, based

on information provided by Teacher Payroll. EI and CPP deductions are based on 2013 formulae. All estimated figures are rounded to the nearest dollar. Teachers participating in the DSLPL continue to pay pension premiums based on the full, unreduced salary. EI premiums are paid on the full salary, but are not paid during the year of leave. Therefore, teachers may not be eligible for EI benefits in the year following the year of deferred salary leave, which may have implications for those wishing to take maternity leave right after a deferred salary leave.

Any further questions on the Deferred Salary Leave Plan should be directed to an Administrative Officer in the Benefits and Economic Services Division of the NLTA at 726-3223 or 1-800-563-3599.

	Full Salary		
	Top of V Salary Scale	Top of VI Salary Scale	Top of VII Salary Scale
Salary	67,001	77,604	87,792
Estimated Tax	12,805	16,076	19,288
Estimated EI	891	891	891
Estimated CPP	2,356	2,356	2,356
NLTA Fees	838	970	1,097
Pension Deduction	6,265	7,256	8,209
Estimated Net*	43,846	50,055	55,951

* Estimated Net does not include an individual’s insurances and other deductions.

2/3 Deferred Salary			
	Top of V Salary Scale	Top of VI Salary Scale	Top of VII Salary Scale
Salary	44,667	51,736	58,528
Estimated Tax	5,663	7,243	9,226
Estimated EI	891	891	891
Estimated CPP	2,038	2,356	2,356
NLTA Fees	558	647	732
Pension Deduction	6,265	7,256	8,209
Estimated Net*	29,252	33,343	37,114

* Estimated Net does not include an individual's insurances and other deductions.

3/4 Deferred Salary			
	Top of V Salary Scale	Top of VI Salary Scale	Top of VII Salary Scale
Salary	50,251	58,203	65,844
Estimated Tax	7,105	9,450	11,710
Estimated EI	891	891	891
Estimated CPP	2,315	2,356	2,356
NLTA Fees	628	728	823
Pension Deduction	6,265	7,256	8,209
Estimated Net*	33,047	37,522	41,855

* Estimated Net does not include an individual's insurances and other deductions.

4/5 Deferred Salary			
	Top of V Salary Scale	Top of VI Salary Scale	Top of VII Salary Scale
Salary	53,601	62,083	70,234
Estimated Tax	8,221	10,768	13,208
Estimated EI	891	891	891
Estimated CPP	2,356	2,356	2,356
NLTA Fees	670	776	878
Pension Deduction	6,265	7,256	8,209
Estimated Net*	35,198	40,036	44,692

* Estimated Net does not include an individual's insurances and other deductions.

Stefanie Tuff is an Administrative Officer in the Benefits and Economic Services Division of the NLTA.

Workers' Compensation – What You Should Know

by STEFANIE TUFF

Article 16 of the Provincial Collective Agreement and Article 34 of the Labrador West Collective Agreement provide for special leave in the event that a teacher is injured in the performance of his/her duties. The parties to the Collective Agreements have agreed that the procedure for the processing of teacher claims for such Injury on Duty shall be in accordance with the legislative provisions outlined in the Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation Act (the Act). This procedure has been accepted by the NLTA Provincial Executive. Teachers should ensure that they are familiar with and follow this process in the event that they lose time for a work-related injury.

When is an Injury Work-Related?

Teachers often ask when an injury is considered to be an “injury on duty” for the purpose of being covered by the Act. Section 61 of the Act states that: *Where the injury arose out of the employment, it shall be presumed, unless the contrary is shown, that it occurred in the course of the employment, and where the injury occurred in the course of the employment, it shall be presumed, unless the contrary is shown, that it arose out of the employment.*

Therefore, any job-related duty/responsibility that has been assigned to a teacher (mandatory) or that the teacher has agreed to assume (voluntary) would be considered by the WHSCC to be part of the teacher's employment in the event that the teacher was injured in the course of carrying out said duty or responsibility. **Teachers should be aware that they are considered to be acting in the course of employment whenever they are involved in school related activities, including extra-curricular activities which involve supervision of and travel with students outside of the regular school day or during weekends or school holiday periods.** Any time an injury occurs during an activity involving a teacher and student(s) for which the teacher's involvement, whether mandatory or voluntary, is linked

to his/her role and responsibilities as a teacher, said injury would be considered to be work-related and, therefore, compensable by the Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation Commission (WHSCC).

Injury on Duty

The Collective Agreements provide for Injury on Duty leave if a teacher loses time from work due to a work-related injury. Effective January 1, 2002, the following process has been implemented for the reporting and assessment of Injury on Duty claims.

(i) Reporting Process:

a) Worker's Report of Injury

Teachers should report work-related injuries to their principal and/or school district officials as soon as possible. Teachers should then complete a Workers' Report of Injury (Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation Commission Form 06) and forward the report to WHSCC as soon as possible. A teacher who fails to submit this report to WHSCC within three months from the date of the accident giving rise to the injuries may be denied benefits. A copy of Form 06 should also be provided to the school principal and/or school district Director.

b) Employer's Report of Injury

The principal, upon being informed of the accident/injury, shall conduct an investigation immediately, prepare a written report, complete an Employer's Report of Injury (WHSCC Form 07) and forward all relevant documents to the school district Director. The Director and/or designate, shall notify the Commission of the accident, in writing, within three days. The Director shall:

- a) Review and assess the Employer's Report of Injury (WHSCC Form 07) and forward the report on to WHSCC if the employee loses time from work beyond the date of the injury or requires medical attention;
- b) Complete salary details on the Employer's Report of Injury Form and forward immediately (with any principal's report) to the WHSCC;

- c) Place the injured teacher on Injury on Duty leave effective the date of the injury, as per the Collective Agreements;
- d) Notify Teacher Payroll immediately that the employee has been injured and the necessary documentation has been forwarded on to WHSCC (optional);
- e) Advise the teacher of the process and their responsibilities;
- f) Maintain contact with the teacher and WHSCC and seek updates on the status of the claim; and
- g) Ensure that teachers cooperate with the WHSCC. Failure to do so may result in the employee being placed on alternate leave, in accordance with other provisions within the Collective Agreement.

c) Physician's Report of Injury

If a teacher sustains a work related injury which results in the need to visit a medical professional, the attending physician is required to submit a Physician's Report (WHSCC Form 8/10) detailing the condition of the teacher and the medical treatment prescribed (if necessary).

(ii) Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation Adjudication

The WHSCC shall adjudicate all claims and shall notify both the teacher and the school district of its recommendation.

- a) Claims rejected – teacher placed on alternate leave in accordance with other provisions of the Collective Agreement.
- b) Claims approved – if the teacher is unable to report for work, then Injury on Duty leave will be granted in accordance with the provisions of Collective Agreements. Also, benefits payable to a teacher on Injury on Duty leave shall be in accordance with WHSCC legislation.

(iii) Claim for Rehabilitation Services

The WHSCC shall review claims for rehabilitation services at the earliest opportunity and shall advise both the teacher and the school district Director, in writing, as soon as possible as to whether: a) the nature of the disability is such that the employee will eventually return to pre-accident employment; or b) the nature of the disability is such that the employee will be unable to return to pre-accident employment.

Early and Safe Return to Work (ESRTW)

The Act places certain obligations on both the employer and employees when considering the return of an injured worker to the workplace.

(i) Employer's Obligations

In order to comply with the legislation, school districts must meet the minimum standard of cooperation as defined by Section 89(1) of the Act:

- a) Contact the injured worker as soon as possible after the injury occurs and maintain communication throughout the period of the worker's recovery and impairment;
- b) Provide suitable employment that is available and consistent with the worker's functional abilities and, when possible, restore the worker's pre-injured earnings;
- c) Give the WHSCC such information as it may request concerning the worker's return to work; and
- d) Do such other things as may be prescribed.

(ii) Workers' Obligations

In order to cooperate with the facilitation of a return to work plan, workers must satisfy the following minimum requirements:

- a) Contact their employer as soon as possible after the injury occurs and maintain communication throughout the period of their recovery and impairment;
- b) Assist the employer, as may be requested or required, to identify suitable employment that is available and consistent with their functional abilities and that, when possible, restores their pre-injury earnings;
- c) Give the WHSCC such information as it may request concerning the return to work process; and
- d) Do such other things as may be prescribed.

Post-Injury Employee Options Consultation

If a teacher is deemed unable to return to pre-accident employment, the school district Director, in consultation with appropriate resource personnel, including the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association, the Human Resources Division, Department of Education, and, where applicable, the WHSCC, shall review appropriate options, taking into consideration the employee's age, service, experience and training. Options include:

- alternate employment;
- retraining; and
- medical retirement.

Any of the options undertaken will be in keeping with the Collective Agreement, The Teachers' Pensions Act, the Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation Act and in consideration of any other medical benefits which may be available under the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association Group Insurance Plan.

(cont'd on page 16)

Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation Commission Benefits

(i) Earnings Loss Benefits

The Act determines that the benefit level for all employees who are injured on duty will be 80 percent of net wages, with maximums established as indicated below. As well, the legislation states that employers, including school districts, may not pay an injured employee an amount in excess of that which the employee is entitled to under the Act.

The legislation defines “net” wages as gross wages minus EI, CPP and Income Tax deductions. Any other deductions from the employee’s regular pay (e.g. group insurance premiums, pension premiums) will continue to be deducted from the WHSCC benefit levels. **While the WHSCC benefits are set at the above percentage levels, teachers should be aware that the maximum insurable gross pay effective January 1, 2013, used in the calculation of benefits is \$54,155 per annum (\$2,082.88 bi-weekly).**

Thus, any teacher beyond Certificate V (Step 2), or at any step on Certificate VI or VII of the provincial salary scale (as determined for September 2011 in the current Collective Agreements) will be negatively affected by the cap of \$54,155 on maximum insurable gross pay. The 80 percent benefit will be calculated on the maximum insurable gross pay and not on the teacher’s actual gross pay, if the actual gross is greater than \$54,155 annually (\$2,082.88 bi-weekly).

Teachers receiving WHSCC benefits for lost earnings will continue to receive pay cheques, with the deductions noted above, issued by the Teacher Payroll Division, not by the WHSCC. A teacher on Injury on Duty leave will be considered to be in receipt of full salary for the purpose of all benefits under the Collective Agreements. Any teacher who is in receipt of WHSCC benefits at the end of a school year will have their regular bi-weekly salary reinstated for the period during which school is closed for summer vacation. If a teacher is required to continue on WHSCC benefits at the beginning of the following school year, then the teacher’s income at that point in time will revert to the amount calculated at WHSCC rates.

Teachers are strongly advised to report all injuries **immediately** in order to avoid possible delays in receiving WHSCC benefits or potential reductions in WHSCC compensation benefit levels. A reduction in WHSCC compensation benefits would occur when a teacher has not reported an injury immediately and eventually decides to do so. The WHSCC benefit would then be reduced proportionately to provide for repayment of any paid sick leave already received.

(ii) Medical Aid

Whether or not an employee misses time from work

due to a workplace injury, WHSCC benefits for other expenses may be payable. For example, fees for medical reports, physiotherapy, chiropractic services, prescription medication, crutches and prostheses, and travel expenses for attending appointments are covered by WHSCC. Therefore, even though the NLTA Group Insurance program may cover a portion of some of the above referenced costs, they should be charged to the WHSCC when incurred due to a workplace injury.

Long-Term Disability (LTD) Top Up Benefit

Any teacher who has Long-Term Disability (LTD) insurance coverage through the NLTA Group Insurance program and has lost time at work due to a workplace injury, will be entitled to receive a “Top Up” Benefit through the LTD coverage once they are in receipt of WHSCC benefits for lost earnings. The LTD Top Up Benefit is non-taxable and will pay teachers the difference between 85 percent of their regular net income and the WHSCC benefit received. Under the LTD Top Up Benefit program, net income is defined as gross salary, less Income Tax, Employment Insurance premiums, and Canada Pension Plan contributions. In order to qualify for this benefit, the teacher must be a member of the LTD benefit plan under the NLTA Group Insurance program and must complete the applicable application. Applications are available from the NLTA office.

Experiencing an injury that requires an employee to miss work for any period of time is not what anyone hopes for, and the stress of this may be increased by having to comply with and face the financial realities of the WHSCC claims process and compensation regime. NLTA staff are available to provide information and assistance in navigating the WHSCC system to teachers who are injured on the job.

For inquiries to the Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation Commission, please call 709-778-1000 or 1-800-563-9000.

Stefanie Tuff is an Administrative Officer in the Benefits and Economic Services Division of the NLTA.

Are You Thinking About Retiring?

Information You Need to Know

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

- (a) At age 60, with between five and 24 years of pensionable service.
- (b) At age 55 or after, with at least 25 years of pensionable service.
- (c) After completing 30 years of worked service*, regardless of age.
- (d) Reduced pension with 29 years of worked service and at least 30 years of pensionable service. Pension will be reduced based on the number of months a teacher will be retired prior to reaching age 55.

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

Access to Pension Estimator

Teachers also have access to a pension estimator through the main page of the NLTA website (www.nlta.nl.ca); click on "Publications" and go to "P". Teachers can now go on-line and using their individual Teacher Benefit Statement that they receive from the Pensions Division, input their salary information and obtain an estimate of their expected pension at a chosen point of retirement. As well, there is a website dedicated to the Teachers' Pension Plan under the government site at www.fin.gov.nl.ca/fin/government_employee_benefits/pensions/plans_TPP.html.

Checklist for Retiring Teachers

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

- Apply to the NLTA to attend a pre-retirement seminar up to two years prior to your year of retirement;
- Confirm the eligible date of your retirement with the Pensions Division at the pre-retirement seminar or by contacting Pensions Division.
- Submit your resignation to School Board (do not resign until eligibility has been confirmed): one month notice is required if retirement is to occur anytime prior to Christmas; three months notice (March 31st) is required if retirement is to occur after Christmas.

- Apply for pension by completing the appropriate "Teachers' Pension" application.
- Complete and submit the Direct Deposit Form to Pensions Division.
- Apply for severance pay by completing the "Severance Payment Request" form.
- Confirm/consult with Johnson Inc. on Group Insurance coverage: 1-800-563-1528.
- Consider joining the Retired Teachers' Association by completing the application form and submitting it to the Pensions Division.
- Consider seeking personal financial advice regarding financial decisions related to retirement.
- Keep your mind active and your body healthy. Enjoy life!

Changes Effective Upon Retirement

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

Any questions or comments can be directed to Perry Downey, Administrative Officer in the Benefits and Economic Services Division of the NLTA at pdowney@nlta.nl.ca, Tel: 726-3223 or 1-800-563-3599, ext. 226.



Understanding the HSP (Highly Sensitive Person) in the Workplace

by GAIL CARROLL

Happy New Year to all of you! May 2013 bring you an abundance of wonderful things including new learning and tools to add to your already wonderful knowledge base. To get you off to a start on new learning for 2013 we will explore the area of HSP or Highly Sensitive Person. This is a relatively new term used to describe people who appear very sensitive. What is high sensitivity? Is it a personality type? Is it a diagnosis? Do I have it? These are questions that are often asked when the topic of High Sensitivity arises. Highly Sensitive Person or HSP is a trait one is born with. It is a normal trait that indicates that you are more aware than others and can also indicate that you can become easily overwhelmed. It is not a personality type and it is not a diagnosis. This trait and its associated research was identified by Elaine Aron, PhD psychologist, author and expert on Highly Sensitive People and she describes HSPs as “individuals with a single innate temperament trait” which is expressed as a great awareness of subtleties in stimuli (i.e. temperature of a room, scents...) as well as the potential to be overwhelmed by too much stimuli (i.e. noise, strong scents, large groups of people). (www.hsperson.com)

According to Dr. Aron's research, about 15-20% of the general population have the HSP trait. There are no favors of gender. HSPs are usually highly intelligent people and/or individuals with a background of abuse or neglect. (www.hsperson.com)

HSP is not a clinical diagnosis nor is it to be confused with other mental health diagnoses. It is a personality trait.

Why is HSP of interest to us in the workplace?

Every day we all come to work with our personalities and interact with one another, our students and members of the public. We develop friendships, social and collegial relationships and what we all really would like from one another is not just to feel that sense of belonging, but to feel understood! Understanding personality and traits can help us build our own self-confidence and self-esteem. It can

also help us in understanding one another, communicating effectively and getting along.

As you can see by taking the quiz on the following page, HSPs show sensitivity in the following areas: Physical; Emotional; Senses; Values.

HSPs present as shy, quiet individuals. They are great friends and colleagues! Some things to note about HSPs:

- They were seen as shy and/or sensitive as a child.
- They are more aware of subtleties in the environment.
- They have high sensitivity to pain.
- Busy days can create more tiredness for them.
- They are very sensitive to caffeine and its effects.
- They are sensitive to bright lights, loud noises, scents.
- They have a rich inner complex life.
- They are deeply moved by beauty i.e. music and the arts.
- They are industrious and conscientious.
- They can be agitated when forced to do too much in too short a time frame.
- They are prone to perfectionism.
- They avoid violence i.e. movies and books.
- They arrange their lives to avoid upsetting or overwhelming situations.
- They have performance anxiety.
- Change can create chaos for them.
- They can be emotionally intense.
- They are attuned to detail and therefore note things sometimes before others do.
- They are good listeners, thoughtful co-workers and fair leaders.
- They are excellent at building morale and they are very concerned with doing the right thing.
- They can hold on to things and feelings.
- They need closure.
- Many times they can be misunderstood and can be seen as a troublemaker in the workplace.
- Conflict can be very overwhelming for them.
- The words “I'm sorry” can be very powerful and meaningful for them.

(article cont'd on page 20)

Are You Highly Sensitive? Take the test...

A Self-Test *

Instructions: Answer each question according to the way you personally feel. Check the box if it is at least somewhat true for you; leave unchecked if it is not very true or not at all true for you.

I am easily overwhelmed by strong sensory input.

I seem to be aware of subtleties in my environment.

Other people's moods affect me.

I tend to be very sensitive to pain.

I find myself needing to withdraw during busy days, into bed or into a darkened room or any place where I can have some privacy and relief from stimulation.

I am particularly sensitive to the effects of caffeine.

I am easily overwhelmed by things like bright lights, strong smells, coarse fabrics, or sirens close by.

I have a rich, complex inner life.

I am made uncomfortable by loud noises.

I am deeply moved by the arts or music.

My nervous system sometimes feels so frazzled that I just have to go off by myself.

I am conscientious.

I startle easily.

I get rattled when I have a lot to do in a short amount of time.

When people are uncomfortable in a physical environment I tend to know what needs to be done to make it more comfortable (like changing the lighting or the seating).

I am annoyed when people try to get me to do too many things at once.

I try hard to avoid making mistakes or forgetting things.

I make a point to avoid violent movies and TV shows.

I become unpleasantly aroused when a lot is going on around me.

Being very hungry creates a strong reaction in me, disrupting my concentration or mood.

Changes in my life shake me up.

I notice and enjoy delicate or fine scents, tastes, sounds, works of art.

I find it unpleasant to have a lot going on at once.

I make it a high priority to arrange my life to avoid upsetting or overwhelming situations.

I am bothered by intense stimuli, like loud noises or chaotic scenes.

When I must compete or be observed while performing a task, I become so nervous or shaky that I do much worse than I would otherwise.

When I was a child, my parents or teachers seemed to see me as sensitive or shy.



Scoring: If you answered more than 14 of the questions as true of yourself, you are probably highly sensitive. But no psychological test is so accurate that an individual should base his or her life on it. We psychologists try to develop good questions, and then decide on the cut off based on the average response.

If fewer questions are true of you, but extremely true, that might also justify calling you highly sensitive.

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- Their personal boundaries can be weak (which lends to being taken advantage of, not being able to say no, overstepping boundaries ...)
- Their communication can be unclear.
- They are sensitive to others' energies and moods.
- They can be overwhelmed by too much stimulation and need to take breaks to recharge their batteries, i.e. they may not frequent the break room as they may use this time to have a quiet period to recharge their batteries. This can lead to being seen as anti-social.
- They seem to have a sixth sense; a knowingness about people, places and things.

When HSPs are overburdened with stress they can: shut down; be reactive; be hurt easily; get headaches; feel unwell.

When you are a teacher and an HSP, here are some things you can do to make your workspace a better experience: (These are also good tips for everyone!)

- Make your classroom space as calm as possible and clutter free. Beautiful posters, plants, etc....
- Open windows.
- Take a walk in the fresh air during a break.
- Allow yourself extra time to do things when possible.
- Show good listening and problem solving skills.

- Set good class rules. This will help you maintain a sense of calm and prevent the feeling that things may be running away from you.
- All of this will also help both you and your students enjoy a better classroom experience.

If you are friends and/or colleagues with an HSP here are some tips for support:

- Listen
- Be understanding
- Have patience
- Be clear in your communications
- Be kind

Remember, whether you are an HSP or not, it's not what you say but how you say it! Kindness, gentleness and understanding are always appreciated and help us build and keep collegial relationships, friendships and respectful work environments!

To continue to foster your learning and to see the research and resources about Highly Sensitive Persons please visit Elaine Aron's website: www.hsperson.com.

Gail Carroll is a coordinator with the Employee Assistance Program for Teachers. For confidential assistance contact Gail Carroll (ext. 242) or Judy Beranger (ext. 265).



Proudly presents SAC Conference 2013 Featuring:



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Extreme runner and author
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Bishops College Teacher Wins Health and Safety Educator of Year Award

Robert Smith, the Workplace Safety 3220 teacher at Bishops College in St. John's, has been awarded the Health and Safety Educator of the Year Award for 2012 by the Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation Commission.

Mr. Smith was presented with this honour on December 4, 2012 at the launch of the fifth season of the successful youth game show SAFE Work NL's – Who Wants to Save a Life? In the season opener, Bishops College defeated O'Donel High School of Mount Pearl by a score of 390-330, and advances to the semi-final game in February 2013.

Mr. Smith established, organized and trained the first student-led Emergency Response Team at Bishops College. On his own time, he has taken steps to make the school bus drop-off area safer for students. He is the teacher sponsor for the school's Students Against Drunk Driving chapter and serves as a tremendous resource to other teachers in the school and around the province.

Congratulations are extended to Mr. Smith on his award, and for continuing to find creative and engaging ways to improve workplace safety for young workers. Along with the honor of being the 2012 Health and Safety Educator of the Year, Mr. Smith received a commemorative plaque and a cash prize of \$500. The school received \$500 to purchase safety equipment.



Leslie Galway of the WHSCC presents Robert Smith with his award.

HATS OFF!

Have you recently won an award or know of a teacher who has been recognized for their contribution to the education of children in Newfoundland and Labrador? If so, we'd like to hear from you. Please send information on the award as well as a profile of the award winner(s) to:

Lesley-Ann Browne, Editor, *The Bulletin*
 Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association
 3 Kenmount Road, St. John's, NL A1B 1W1
 Fax: 709-726-4302 or 1-877-711-6582 (toll free)
 E-mail: labrowne@nlta.nl.ca





Unions Must Fight for Survival

by EDWARD HANCOCK

Bill C-377, an Act to amend the Income Tax Act (requirements for labour organizations) was passed in the House of Commons about two weeks prior to Christmas. If that statement sounds rather innocuous and you are wondering, “Well, what does that have to do with me?” please read on.

This new federal legislation requires that labour organizations provide a huge amount of financial information annually to the Canada Revenue Agency for public disclosure. The financial information required to be publicly disclosed includes financial statements, and statements for any amounts over \$5000 with the name and address of the payee including accounts receivable, loans receivable, investments, accounts and loans payable, any disbursements or remuneration to officers or directors, disbursements to employees and contractors, and disbursements on labour relations activities, political activities, lobbying activities, organizing activities, collective bargaining activities, convention, education, training and legal activities. Introduced into the House of Commons as a private member’s bill by Conservative MP Russ Hiebert, this Bill was strongly promoted by the Government and eventually passed by the House. It is now before the Senate. Promoted with claims that it is intended to make unions more accountable, the Bill is seen by many unions and labour organizations, including the Canadian Labour Congress, as an attempt by the Conservative Government to kill or weaken unions and to hobble their ability to participate in public life.

As noted by writer Duncan Cameron on rabble.ca, “The Harper Government is imposing new financial regulations that will add steep compliance costs and time consuming administrative requirements to the normal activities of representing [union members].” Cameron’s article goes on to note that this amendment to the Income Tax Act rests on the proposition that because union dues are deductible from income reported by union members at tax time, the use of the money received as dues by unions must be fully disclosed in detail to the public. However, the Federal Conservatives are ignoring the fact that unions already provide public financial accounting to their members (the people who pay the dues in the

first place) who are the same people who elect the union leaders, debate their policy positions at convention and direct or approve union activities by vote at conventions and through representation at executive tables. The insidious goal of this new legislation is to discredit union political activity and diminish the role unions play in the debate over public policy.

What are the implications of this Bill for unions and what are the objections to it? In its role of representing teachers throughout the country, the Canadian Teachers’ Federation carried out a huge amount of lobbying in its attempts to have this legislation derailed. However, the Conservative majority in the House of Commons guaranteed its passage. The CTF’s main objections to the Bill include the following:

1. It is Undemocratic

This legislation is an attempt by the Federal Government to silence yet another democratic voice which does not share the Harper Government ideology. It singles out labour unions and does not apply to other dues collecting professional organizations. Why is the Government trying to tie the labour movement in red tape while potentially taking away valuable services from its members due to increased costs to meet the requirements of this legislation? Although this was a private member’s bill, the support of Government and the Prime Minister’s Office was well known. For example, Merit Canada is a national voice for eight different provincial “open-shop” construction associations (i.e. an organization opposed to organized labour in the construction industry). Merit Canada met frequently with senior staff members in the Prime Minister’s Office, at Finance Canada, and with a number of Conservative MPs to discuss Bill C-377 before its passage. In the meantime, Government refused to meet with union leaders on the same matter.

2. It is wasteful and failed the transparency test

This Bill was pushed through the House with so much haste that a proper review of the potential cost was not possible. The Parliamentary Budget Officer has estimated the cost to be over \$38M. Inevitable legal challenges will add additional costs to taxpayers. Why is Government willing to place this additional burden on taxpayers when the Federal Government is telling us it is trying to cut costs to balance the budget?

3. Constitutionality

This amendment to the Income Tax Act will apply to both federally and provincially regulated unions. The reporting requirement crosses a constitutional boundary in jurisdictions; a boundary that prevents the federal government from regulating unions under provincial jurisdiction. It will be challenged as unconstitutional.

4. Invasion of Privacy

The Bill violates federal privacy laws in that it requires disclosure of personal financial information such as details of pension and health plans, labour trusts, financial information of employees and union officers, the business dealings of the organization and solicitor-client privilege.

5. Labour Relations

Public release of detailed union financial information provides an unfair advantage to employers who will have detailed knowledge of the financial circumstances of the union. In addition, union resources (human and material) will have to be dedicated to gathering and reporting the data required, thus reducing the union's efficacy in its core responsibilities of representing its members.

6. It is mean spirited and discriminatory

The Bill is discriminatory because it does not treat similar organizations the same. Why should the public need to know how much my union spent on political action any more than they need to know how much the Merit Canada contractors spent lobbying to get this Bill passed? This type of paternalistic control over any institution has no place in civil society, especially one purporting to be a democracy. The Canadian Bar Association has gone on record as saying it has "serious reservations about the Bill," citing privacy concerns, potential costs to unions and the Federal Government, and constitutional concerns.

According to the Canadian Teachers' Federation, "Bill C-377 is not occurring in a vacuum but rather a broader context of legislative and other actions being put in place that are perceived by many to be attempts at weakening labour activities and undermining collective bargaining in this country". (Please see the article on page 24 of this issue of *The Bulletin* by CTF President Paul Taillefer for a look at how Bill C-377 fits into this broader context.)

In early October 2012, NLTA President Lily B. Cole wrote Newfoundland and Labrador's only Government MP and representative in the Federal Cabinet, Peter Penashue, outlining the Association's concerns with the Bill. To date (i.e. three months later) no response has been received.

There is no doubt about it, organized labour is in for the fight of its life over the next few years. An *Ottawa Citizen* article earlier last fall was head-

lined "Public Service Unions Worry Whether They Can Survive Government Campaigns". The focus of this article was not Bill C-377, but the attempts by Conservative MP Pierre Poilievre to promote so-called "right to work" legislation that would effectively scrap union security and eliminate the Rand Formula which is the long-standing practice in Canada that requires employers to deduct union dues from the pay cheques of workers who are covered by collective agreements whether or not they choose to remain members of the union. The Rand Formula is based on the principle that if I am an employee covered by a collective agreement (i.e. a member of the bargaining unit) in a unionized workplace then I am benefiting from the work and representation of the union that has negotiated the collective agreement, so I am required to pay union dues even if I choose not to be a member of the union. The legality of the Rand Formula has survived several court tests over the years since it was established in 1946 but it does remain vulnerable to repeal or weakening through legislation. Dr. Jim Guy, professor of political science and international law at Cape Breton University, recently stated that it is the Rand Formula that is the real target of Bill C-377. The so-called "right-to-work" legislation being promoted by Poilievre (what labour organizations have characterized as "servitude" legislation), eliminating obligatory union dues in unionized workplaces, has now become law in 24 states in the U.S. and Poilievre is attempting to bring it north at the federal level. The leader of the Ontario PC Party, Tim Hudak, has gone on record as supporting such legislation for that province. If these efforts find their way across the country, it will be one of the biggest battles for organized unions in decades.

All members of organized unions must remain vigilant against such efforts. Unions are one of the few independent voices for the rights and the well-being of citizens. Unions have fought hard and long for improvements in the lives of people including improved wages, employee benefits, limitations on the workday and work week, workplace safety and overall working conditions. Unions are also a strong voice for social justice, equality and sharing of the country's economic wealth. There are those in this country who would like nothing better than to silence these voices. Unions are not faceless organizations; they are the workers who have had the collective strength and, indeed, the audacity (often in the face of strong opposition) to organize and support each other for their collective best interests. It is our task to ensure that this collective strength and support exists for future generations.

.....
Edward Hancock is Executive Director of the NLTA.



Governments' Incremental Assaults on Democracy Undermine our Canadian Principles and Values

by PAUL TAILLEFER

Many Canadians have, of late, bemoaned the decline of democracy and have expressed worry about the state of their political representation. These views have been supported by the recent release of the results of an online survey.

On December 3, Samara, a not-for-profit organization aimed at improving political participation released the results of its online survey of 2,287 Canadians. Of note, just 55% of respondents were very or somewhat satisfied with the way democracy works in Canada, down from 75% in 2004. A majority of respondents also expressed the view that elected officials do a better job representing the views of their party than that of their constituents.

This discontent was felt across the country. Are we surprised? A reading of newspaper headlines over the past few years has given proof to these results. When Federal and Provincial governments of all stripes interfere in collective bargaining and reduce the voices of those most vulnerable in our society, it is easy to express the view that democracy is under assault.

Teachers and their organizations have been targets of this trend where the political imperative overrules democracy and our elected officials use the rule of law to advance policy that is ideological or expeditious.

On the national scene, we have seen a philosophical shift where Canada's foreign aid agency – the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) has moved towards a more active role in promoting Canada's economic interests abroad and reduced its focus on poverty reduction. This has resulted in a shift towards aiding Canadian mining companies while cutting off financing to organizations with a distinguished record of international aid such as CTF and Kairos.

Of late, the federal Conservatives have also moved to restrict the ability of unions and teacher organizations to effectively represent their members through the adoption of Bill C-377, a bill which will unneces-

sarily burden these organizations, including CTF and its Member organizations, with the responsibility, through changes to the Income Tax Act, for extensive financial reporting, the likes of which have never been seen before. The pretext for this is a need for transparency for members, even though most provinces and territories – and unions and teacher organizations themselves – have mechanisms in place that allow free access to those financial records.

In Ontario, the provincial Liberal government – once the champion of public education – has passed Bill 115 which curtails the right to free collective bargaining and imposes a collective agreement on the province's teachers. The bill also gives the government unprecedented powers over school board negotiations with no accountability through legislative debate.

Teachers across the country are standing up to these kinds of initiatives and trying to engage the public and their students in a larger debate about the current state of our democratic institutions. Teachers take their civic responsibilities seriously and are engaged in sharing that commitment with their students and the community. They adhere to CTF's policy on civic education which states that all education programs must be designed to prepare students to become responsible members of society. That's a pretty tall task as it involves more than getting students to obey the rule of law, to pay taxes and to vote. Education programs must promote student inquiry, must familiarize them with the issues which affect their communities and define their lives and incite them to become engaged.

Teachers always look for authentic learning experiences for their students. There is some irony in the way in which governments are providing them with the tools to do this.

More than ever, as is evidenced by the results of the Samara report, teachers in classrooms across Canada need to encourage students to take an interest in democracy and in public service. By standing up to ensure that democratic processes are respected, teachers are helping to ensure that in the future, public interest will increase and policy debate will reflect the values which we, as a society, hold dear.

Stand up for democracy, contact your MP and sign the petition against Bill C-377 (www.change.org/fr/p/%C3%A9titions/je-m-oppose-%C3%A0-l-adoption-de-c-377-i-oppose-c-377)

Paul Taillefer is the President of the Canadian Teachers' Federation.

The Registered Disability Savings Program

Teachers/Parents: This is a Game Changer

by GEORGE TUCKER



As an Administrative Staff Officer with the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association, I have the privilege and pleasure of sitting on many committees and boards. One of my favourite groups is the Newfoundland and Labrador Association for Community Living (NLACL). The folks that comprise the NLACL are extraordinary individuals who are committed to making a difference on behalf of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians who present with exceptionalities.

At a recent NLACL meeting I was introduced to the Registered Disability Savings Program (RDSP). While this program is primarily the responsibility of the parent(s) of a child with a disability, I began thinking that teachers may be able to play a crucial role in helping to inform parents of the existence of the RDSP. Hence, I thought that it would be prudent to provide this article. My hope is that you will encourage parents, who have children with disabilities, to investigate the feasibility of starting a RDSP. As you will read, the benefits are unbelievable.

Ray McIsaac, the Chair of the Newfoundland and Labrador Association for Community Living Future Planning Committee, is also a parent who has spent his entire life maneuvering through the complex web of bureaucracy in an attempt to meet the needs of his child, as well as the needs of many other NLACL members who have disabilities. He has provided the content for the following article. Ray writes...

What will happen when families and primary caregivers are no longer able to provide the supports necessary for their sons/daughters, relatives and friends to live in their own home in their community?

The establishment (2008) of the Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP) by the Government of Canada has been a major step forward, enabling persons with disabilities and families to plan for a secure and financially better future.

Newfoundland and Labrador showed great leader-

ship as the second province in Canada to embrace the RDSP. This means making it fully exempt from consideration when determining eligibility for provincial income and disability programs and services. It is absolutely clear that provincial and federal income and disability support programs will not be affected, regardless of how much money a person has in their RDSP.

“The establishment (2008) of the Registered Disability Savings Plan by the Government of Canada has been a major step forward, enabling persons with disabilities and families to plan for a secure and financially better future.”

The RDSP allows for personal savings and has generous grants and bonds which grow tax deferred for use later in life. When the money is drawn out it is taxed in the hands of the person with a disability and that usually has positive tax advantages.

The intent of this article is to raise general awareness and to stimulate the creation of many more RDSP's in the province. The program is becoming better known and parents should seek an appointment with their bank or other financial groups to discuss setting up a RDSP.

Young families are in the best position to take full advantage of this program. Taking early action is quite important because it takes many years for the RDSP to achieve its full benefit. Small amounts of money accumulate over time. Combined with the substantial federal grants and bonds, a sizable amount of money can be accumulated for later in life. The RDSP should be thought of as a pension plan rather than a bank savings account.

(cont'd on page 26)

Young families are challenged to recognize the gift that time represents. RDSP participation rates are still quite low across Canada. Typically, participation rates with new programs stay low for long periods of time. So far, only 11% of those eligible have opened a RDSP. This needs to change because families cannot leave this money on the table.

In order to qualify for a RDSP a person must have a severe and prolonged disability as defined by the Federal government. RDSPs are limited to those individuals who qualify for the Federal Disability Tax Credit. The Canada Revenue Agency has a special form called the T2201 to be filled out by the individual and doctor.

The other major requirements are the person must be under 60 years of age, have a social insurance number and be a Canadian citizen. Tax returns must be filed for two years prior to applying so the calculations can support the levels of grants and bonds that are available. The banks and the federal government do all of the background work once the RDSP is set up.

There is a “lifetime” personal savings contribution limit to a RDSP of \$200,000. Most families will not be in a position to contribute near that amount but this is not a lot of money for a person who has high support needs.

For those people who contribute savings to the program, government provides for up to \$70,000 in matching grants over a 20-year period of time. For most people the matching grants will be \$3 government contribution for every \$1 put in by the individual. To get the maximum grants, annual contributions of at least \$1500 must be made for 20 years.

Bonds were created to ensure benefits for individuals with lower incomes who may have little or no money to contribute. No personal contributions are required to receive \$20,000 at a rate of \$1000 per year deposited into the RDSP by government.

In total, grants and bonds can reach \$90,000 over 20 years. Together with individual or family contributions, an individual can reach up to \$290,000 plus the growth of the investments. Federal grants and bonds from the government as well as investment growth are allowed to accumulate tax sheltered. When it is time to be paid out, personal contributions will not be taxed, just the grants and bonds and the investment growth.

For children, the parent’s income is used to determine eligibility for bonds and matching grants. Once a child becomes an adult it is always the person with a disabilities income that is counted, not the parent, regardless of where the young adult is living. If the person with a disability marries, the family income

will be the baseline used to determine the government’s contribution.

Where the person with a disability is a child, the decision of when to start a RDSP is a difficult judgment call. For those under 18 years of age the parent’s income is considered the “family income”. If accessing the grants and bonds is the main concern where family income is fairly high, some parents will elect to wait until the child becomes 18.

Parents may choose to forego some part of the grants and bonds to get an earlier start with the RDSP. The advantage to the early start is there is additional time for the growth of investments. For most they would enjoy the peace of mind knowing the RDSP is accessible earlier than if you waited until the child became an adult. Parental income often plays an important role in making this decision.

For those concerned with missed grants and bonds, new rules state contribution room can be carried forward for up to ten years. Because the RDSP began in 2008, the deadline for anyone concerned with permanently losing out on years of contribution would be 2018. Government automatically organizes contributions to your best advantage. Contributions made to a new RDSP today would be credited to 2008, which is very much to the benefit of the RDSP owner.

Some ideas that families have come up with should be considered by others as ways and means of finding funds to take best advantage of the RDSP.

One creative option is to ask extended family members or friends, who do not have all of their estate committed, to consider earmarking financial resources for the future needs of the child identified. This may be seen as giving value to someone not unlike the experience of being a Godparent.

There is a new provision in the RDSP for rollovers of retirement savings (RRSP) upon a parents’ or grandparents’ death without triggering taxation at that stage. Another feature is if a RESP for whatever reason is not going to be used for educational purposes it can be transferred to a RDSP.

Life insurance is another possible way to build capital through manageable payments. The life insurance option favors younger persons where older parents are often uninsurable due to pre-existing health issues.

The supportive needs of a son or daughter may have to trump the normal plan to divide the assets equally in the parent’s estate. Many people have value in their homes which might be better put to use as a liquid asset instead of leaving the home to their son/daughter who would then be responsible for upkeep. On this basis, do what is possible. Every bit makes a difference.

EXAMPLE

In 2008, Brooke is 10 years old, and has a RDSP opened on her behalf. Brooke and her mom contribute \$1,500 each year, and receive the annual maximum grant (\$3,500) and annual maximum bond (\$1,000) each year. Once the lifetime limits of the grant (\$70,000) and bond (\$20,000) have been reached, Brooke stops making contributions. Brooke decides to wait until she is 45 years old to start making withdrawals from her RDSP. Government contributions will exceed private contributions making her RDSP worth \$412,450. (This is projected by PLAN-BC on the assumption of interest earned at 5% annually.)

Under new rules, Brooke will be able to withdraw the amount determined by the formula or 10% of the total assets. Therefore, up to \$41,245 may be withdrawn in the calendar year and she is eligible for all income and disability supports she might otherwise receive.

The Newfoundland and Labrador Association for Community Living (NLACL) offers information and support to individuals and families through funding from Advanced Education and Skills and the Poverty Reduction Strategy.

Upon opening a RDSP you will receive a grant of \$150 from the Provincial Incentive Program NLACL houses, which will trigger grants and bonds to net about \$2000 to make a good start.

There is a tendency for parents to focus entirely on education when children are in school. It is difficult to think ahead 30-40 years when you are young. Older parents advise younger families to recognize that they have opportunities that did not exist even 10 years ago. Take nothing for granted.

While the RDSP comes with a lot of details and it seems complicated, every eligible person with a disability should open a RDSP.

For further information contact Ray McIsaac at rmcisaac@we-center.nl.ca.

George Tucker is an Administrative Officer in the Professional Development Division of the NLTA.



NLTA Special Interest Councils Setting a New Direction – By-Law Change Proposed

by GEORGE TUCKER

At the upcoming NLTA Biennial General Meeting (BGM) scheduled for April 2-5, 2013, delegates will be asked to discuss and vote on a By-Law change. **The proposed By-Law change, if passed, will see the dissolution of the current levels-based Special Interest Councils (SICs) and the potential creation of new SICs that are subject or speciality based.** In other words, the goal is to build on the success of the eight current 'specialist' SICs. Interested, energetic, focused, like-minded educators with common interests will have an opportunity to establish new SICs to meet their unique professional learning needs.

A Little Background

Since its formation in 1890, the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association has had two main foci, namely teacher welfare and professional development. The Special Interest Councils of the NLTA have been a fundamental component of professional development programming for some 45 years. Like Branches, the Councils are designed to encourage widespread grassroots leadership and participation in the Association. Historically, our Special Interest Councils have played a very significant role in providing professional development opportunities for teachers. Essentially it is professional learning planned by teachers for teachers – relevant and practical – designed to support teaching at the classroom level. During their stellar history, Special Interest Councils have hosted hundreds of successful conferences, have played a key role in curriculum development and implementation and in advising Provincial Executive on the position the Association should take on many professional issues. In short, SICs have and continue to provide valuable services to thousands of teachers. They have always demonstrated that professional development is not only the responsibility of the employer but is most relevant and diverse when there is grassroots genesis.

Change in the SIC Model

Starting in the 1990s, SICs began experiencing a significant challenge as a result of a dramatic decline in the availability of substitute teacher time for professional development. It became increasingly difficult for teachers to obtain the necessary leave to attend SIC conferences and, as a result, active membership in many Special Interest Councils declined, and the number of Councils fell from a peak of 37 to 10 when SICs were restructured in 2006. Given the realities that we were all facing, it was time to regroup. Thus, during 2004-06, a new model was developed by the Ad Hoc Committee on Special Interest Council Restructuring. The underlying premise of the new model was the establishment of a SIC structure that would allow us to continue to offer all our members opportunities for professional involvement and leadership within the NLTA. Indeed, it was thought that the new structure would provide an opportunity for inclusion by all members while necessitating a focus on greater collaboration with school districts and the Department of Education.

Levels-Based Special Interest Councils

Effective September 2006, three levels-based Special Interest Councils – Primary/Elementary, Intermediate, and Senior High – were introduced. All NLTA members were provided NLTA-sponsored membership in one of those councils, depending on which level of schooling members were assigned. In the case of multi-level assignments, members had the option of choosing free membership in one or more of the three levels-based councils. Members could also join any of the specialized councils by registering and paying the appropriate membership fee. **Unfortunately, in spite of a considerable amount of effort by hardworking, dedicated NLTA members who comprised the new executives, the levels-based SICs have struggled mainly due to**

the vast geography of our province as well as a near impossible mandate. The Senior High and Intermediate Councils never did gain a foothold. The Primary/Elementary or K-6 Council has experienced moderate success in the vicinity where its executive is located.

Specialized Councils

As part of the restructuring process in 2006, the Ad Hoc Committee on Special Interest Council Restructuring assessed and approved the continued operations of several important and viable specialized councils. The criteria for continued operations focused on four characteristics:

1. The SIC has a minimum of 75 NLTA members.
2. The curriculum, programs or services delivered by SIC members are designed to be offered by individuals who have received specialized training which qualifies them to function at all levels of schooling.
3. Typically, in medium to large schools, one or a small number of individuals deliver the program or services to all grade levels.
4. A national or international affiliate organization exists.

As a result of the SIC Viability criteria, eight Specialized Councils currently exist within the NLTA family of SICs. These are:

- Council of Special Services
- Modern Languages
- Music
- Newfoundland and Labrador Counsellors' and Psychologists' Association
- Physical Education
- School Administrators
- Teacher Librarians of Newfoundland and Labrador
- Technology Education

In future we hope that additional SICs will be formed. If there is a will, we will certainly find a way. The NLTA is at its best when its members are involved. We welcome the participation of our members.

What Do Special Interest Councils Offer?

Special Interest Councils are professional learning communities dedicated to lifelong learning and the ongoing professional growth of its members. Their mandate includes offering a range of PD programs including conferences, institutes, focus groups, teleconferences and e-learning initiatives. Each council is encouraged to maintain a website and circulate at least two e-newsletters a year. As they have for many years, councils will respond to curriculum and program concerns, develop position papers on critical issues, work with government on curriculum devel-

opment, and advise the NLTA on matters of importance to the council members.

How Can I Become Involved?

One of the powerful features of the proposed By-Law change is that NLTA members, with unique professional learning goals, will have an opportunity to establish SICs that address their specific needs. The NLTA Executive will consider proposals that come forward as it did recently with a proposal that led to the creation of the Teacher Librarians of Newfoundland and Labrador (TLNL) SIC. Beyond this there are a number of leadership opportunities within the existing specialized councils that you may wish to investigate. For additional information on our current SICs, please visit the Members Only section of the NLTA website, www.nlta.nl.ca (go to the section titled, *About the NLTA*).

As stated earlier in this article, the Special Interest Councils represent one of the pillars of our proud and strong Association. They represent the unique and specialized interests of members. They are a vehicle for grassroots involvement.



Inukshuk at Red Bay, Labrador. Photo by G. Tucker

Equally important, the mandate, goals and programming of the SICs are the sole jurisdiction of the respective SIC members and their executives. Someone once quoted, "Build it and they will come". I hope that you will consider becoming a builder and/or supporter of the next Special Interest Council.

If you have any questions, concerns or feedback re the proposed By-Law change, please contact me at your convenience. I may be reached at gtucker@nlta.nl.ca. I look forward to hearing from you.

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George Tucker is an Administrative Officer in the Professional Development Division of the NLTA.



The “Every Teacher in Every School” Project

by ANN SHORTALL

Emphasis on inclusion has permeated 21st century learning philosophies nationwide. After a decade of professional development on best inclusionary practices, differentiated instruction and anti-bullying policies, we strive to meet the diverse needs of all our students. The “Every Teacher in Every School” Project is researching teachers’ perceptions and experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, Two-spirit and questioning (LGBTQ) education.

“The goal of the LGBTQ school initiative is to reinforce inclusive practices for our LGBTQ students by providing professional development for every teacher in our province.”

All teachers are invited to participate in the Every Teacher Project, the first national survey aimed at how we as educators feel about the support and inclusion of LGBTQ and other students who are harassed because of their perceived sexual diversities. Every teacher organization in Canada has endorsed this project, and to date thousands of teachers have participated in the study. The NLTA has been actively promoting this survey in our province. The results will not only research the present climate, but also provide recommendations for educators to make our schools more safe and welcoming for this population of students.

The Every Teacher Project aims to reach all teachers in Canada, as teachers are as diverse a group as our students in our sexualities, races, family backgrounds, religious affiliations, cultures, geographical locations and education. Our individual expertise, experiences and opinions influence how we support our LGBTQ students. Therefore, the survey investigates teachers’ perceptions of how the climate of our

schools supports LGBTQ students, our expertise in supporting students and our knowledge and awareness of inclusive policies at the department and district levels.

The “Every Teacher in Every School” survey can be found on the NLTA website (www.nlta.nl.ca). It takes approximately 20 minutes to complete, but you can click on the “Save and continue later” button located at the bottom of every page. There is also a supplemental section of the survey in which participation is optional. Questions are composed around themes such as accommodating LGBTQ visibility, advocacy for school safety and acceptance of LGBTQ-inclusive curriculum.

This research is headed by Dr. Catherine Taylor from The University of Winnipeg, in partnership with Manitoba Teachers’ Society. Dr. Taylor was also lead researcher for the “First National Climate Survey on Homophobia, Biphobia, and Transphobia in Canadian Schools”, in partnership with Egale Canada. This survey questioned students’ perceptions of school climates. Results of this study can be found at MyGSA.ca, Canada’s national LGBTQ-inclusive and safer schools’ website. If you have any questions on this survey, Dr. Taylor can be contacted at c.taylor@uwinnipeg.ca.

In this province there have been several initiatives undertaken regarding inclusive practices. The NLTA has been instrumental in efforts to increase awareness and equity of our LGBTQ population. The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador was the first in Canada to advocate province-wide initiatives to support the inclusion of LGBTQ students. The Safe and Caring Schools Division, in partnership with Egale Canada, has been travelling the province providing workshops to prepare administrators and guidance counselors in addressing the needs of the LGBTQ school community. Presently, most administrators and guidance counselors in this province have participated in this professional development. The goal of the LGBTQ school initiative is to reinforce inclusive practices for our LGBTQ students by providing profes-

sional development for every teacher in our province.

In addition, the Department of Education is presently distributing *MyGSA.ca: Equity and Inclusive Education Resource Kit for Newfoundland and Labrador, Grades 7-12* to all junior and senior high schools in the province. This teacher resource was developed and compiled by Egale Canada. The kit is intended to assist teachers and students in developing and maintaining safe and caring schools through the process of awareness, acceptance, and inclusion. It also provides students and teachers with suggestions for developing Gay Straight Alliances (GSAs) in their schools. The Minister of Education, Clyde Jackman, is very clear in his message on inclusion for LGBTQ students in his opening remarks of the kit. "Bullying and harassment of any individual, for any reason, is unacceptable. Our Safe and Caring Schools initiative recognizes that all students should be valued and respected for who they are, regardless of economic origin, language group, religion, gender, age, ability, sexual orientation or gender identity. This resource will focus on issues around sexual orientation and gender identity, and protecting a population which we know is among the most vulnerable to bullying in our schools, and in our communities."

I hope that you also feel proud of our government taking these initiatives to make our schools more welcoming, safe, and inclusive for our LGBTQ students. Let's continue that trend by taking the time to celebrate our experiences of inclusion by participating in the Every Teacher Project.

Ann Shortall is a member of the Egale Canada Education Committee. Her interest in LGBTQ-inclusive schools stems from her Master of Women's Studies degree thesis "The Social Construction of Homophobia and Heterosexism in the Newfoundland Education System" and her subsequent resource reader "Piecing Together a Caring Community: A Resource Book on Dismantling Homophobia", published in 2000. Ann is a teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing at Gonzaga High School in St. John's, where she is Teacher Monitor for the Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA). If you have any questions, concerns or ideas about the "Every Teacher in Every School" project, visit the Egale Education Committee or the MyGSA.ca website, or you can contact Ann at annshortall@esdnl.ca.

Pre-Service Teacher Dress

From Lecture Room to Classroom

by DR. HEATHER MCLEOD & DR. KEN STEVENS

Is how you dress as an educator linked to how you teach? In a study at Memorial University of Newfoundland during the fall and winter of 2010 we explored the context of pre-service teacher dress and how it changed during the participants' school internships. We use the terms dress, clothing, costume, appearance and adornment, to mean body modification including clothing, hairstyles, jewelry, glasses, make-up, body decoration, tattoos, accessories and other possibilities.

Earlier Canadian studies found that pre-service teachers' dress is important to their sense of identity. When asked to draw an ideal teacher, participants in the study depicted plain, conservative, uniform, and middle-class attire. Male teachers were portrayed as scruffy. Expressing sexuality was portrayed as problematic. Some depictions changed over the course of the study in response to particular situations. Within educational environments, as elsewhere, clothing demarcates gender, and in addition, body modification in the form of tattooing has recently gained popularity amongst young people.

We used Goffman's ideas from *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, published in 1959, about impression management by which he means an adjustment of posture, facial expressions or clothing to match a given situation and present an idealized version of the character one is performing. In our research, this character is the teacher, who reflects the values of society. Wearing an appropriate costume enables the teacher to be recognized which contributes to his or her social inscription. However, if we are thoughtful actors with agency, making choices equipped with a coherent inner self, what is the relationship between our outer performance and our inner consciousness? In *Bodies That Matter: On The Discursive Limits of Sex*, published in 1993, Butler suggested that there is no natural body that exists before the body is culturally inscribed. That is, gender is a performance; it is what you *do* at particular times, rather than a universal of *who you are*.

Configurations of gender have come to seem

natural, but it does not have to be this way. Rather than being a fixed characteristic in a person, Butler promotes a proliferation of genders and therefore identities. Similarly, we argue that performativity can extend into teaching; we are not born to teach, instead through a set of repeated acts, we *do* teaching. We perform the teacher, framed by a "script", which includes the presentation of oneself through costume. Thus, while "appropriate" dress works to convince others that one is a teacher, teachers also have to convince themselves through repeated acts of "dressing like a teacher".

Our participants took digital photographs of themselves dressed for teaching, with a minimum of one photo a week. At the end of the internship we interviewed them. (Beforehand, the researchers also participated in interviews so that we became aware of our biases.) The photographs and names will be used with permission (one chose to use a pseudonym) for publication as illustrations of the narratives that emerged. Six women and two men participated. We were particularly interested in the experiences of men as their views have seldom been explored, however a perfect balance was deemed not necessary. Four were enrolled in the primary/elementary program and four were in the intermediate/secondary program. During the interview the participants were invited to recall stories of how they developed their style of dress for teaching. We used mostly open questions in the form of a semi-structured interview. Transcripts were produced from the digital recording of the sessions. We used narrative analysis and analysis of narrative. Narrative analysis produces a story created by the researcher based on those elicited from the participants. We looked at the whole story and re-reading helped us discern themes for each, which expressed the essence in abstraction. The research product was reviewed with the participants. Analysis of narrative is useful to understand abstractions. This involved analyzing the narratives to identify common themes.

Three common themes emerged: the existence of implicit teacher dress codes, changes in dress, and

dress as communication about self. Participants negotiated a balance between dressing for others and dress as a means to communicate about self.

We noted an emerging sense that good teaching is associated with the acceptance and exploration of the concept of social and cultural difference for both educators and students. For example, Kayla's views on dress were also reflected in how she supported children in their exploration of gendered dress:

There was this little boy in my class ... he loved to wear the aprons and have bandanas on his head and go around and clean everything ... In playtime he would go straight for that. Has a purse over his arm and we're like, "Sure, go ahead!" ... in the class we would support ... whatever you want.... If he wanted to go and dress out and be a little maid, which is a stereotypical girl role, he could do it. All of it was encouraged.

Our research is significant because role models are important to youth and we believe that students need a broader range of models. The results sketch a bigger picture about the operations of power in schools. Our awareness that we are performing to a script allows us an opportunity to reflect and the possibility to choose other options. If we become aware that we are unconsciously following a 'script' we can think about other ways of being a teacher; instead of there being only one right way of doing and learning, there are often many valid ways. This larger concept has significance as part of a democratic education, which can better prepare children to contribute to a complex and constantly changing world where there are many 'right answers' and ways of being. Our results are relevant for the broader education community such as school boards and teacher organizations, where they may contribute to the revision of existing policies.

A longer article by the authors, *Personal Presentation as it Relates to Becoming a Teacher*, is available at: www.mun.ca/educ/faculty/mwatch. Click on the link titled SeHeather pt_28_12 Morning Watch REV 1 Personal Presentation as it Relates to Becoming a Teacher (EDIT).pdf (Oct. 25, 2012). Dr. McLeod is currently conducting research on teacher dress in Newfoundland and Labrador. If you're interested in participating, please contact her at: hmcLeod@mun.ca.

Dr. Heather McLeod is an Assistant Professor and Dr. Ken Stevens is a Professor with the Faculty of Education at Memorial University of Newfoundland.

NLTA Education Week 2013

The next Education Week will take place October 5-11, 2013

The theme is being chosen from a contest among teachers. The winning selection will be announced in early February on the NLTA website.

The Education Week Planning Committee is reviewing activities associated with the week, making changes to enhance the event and to provide a new focus.

Suggestions are welcome at:

mail@nlta.nl.ca

or by contacting:

Lesley-Ann Browne

NLTA Communications Officer

726-3223 or

1-800-563-3599, ext. 227

labrowne@nlta.nl.ca



RESOURCES

TRY JUDGING/ESSAYEZ DE JUGER: AN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCE FOR TEACHERS OF LAW AND CIVICS

George Tucker, Administrative Officer in the Professional Development Division of the NLTA, recently had an opportunity to meet with John Gann who is the National Public Education Liaison with The Canadian Superior Courts Judges Association (CSCJA). John described an educational resource that George feels may be invaluable to educators who teach social studies, civics and law.

A few years ago, the Public Education Committee of the CSCJA conceived, designed, produced, and began to disseminate an educational resource aimed at engaging both teachers and students in both official languages about the courts and the judiciary in Canada: *Try Judging/Essayez de Juger*.

Try Judging/Essayez de Juger is a multimedia educational programme designed to be integrated into Canadian high school curricula wherein law, civics, and social studies are either mandatory or optional courses of study taught in either English or French. It introduces students to the role of judges in Canada's judicial system, and encourages students to explore important concepts such as the Rule of Law, judicial independence, and judicial impartiality – all of this within the Canadian context.

The *Try Judging/Essayez de Juger* programme consists of three components:

- a substantive Teacher's Manual
- an interactive CD/DVD programme for both teachers and students
- websites for teachers and students... www.tryjudging.ca or www.essayezdejuger.ca

All three components cover the same content but are presented in different formats: hard copy, disc, on-line. Each contains familiar teaching terminologies:

- learning outcomes
- resource materials
- case studies
- means of assessment
- additional exercises for classroom use

- internet links to additional resources

The resource is built around five guiding questions, each forming a separate module that leads students through five courtroom case scenarios and issues associated with the role of judges in Canada's judicial system. The objective is to place the student squarely in the middle of our justice system, to let them assume the role of a judge. By putting students in a judge's shoes, students will face the kind of cases and arguments judges face and will see firsthand what a balancing act there is between rights and interests. The program is designed to challenge students to think about how justice is administered in Canada. Students will discover as they work their way through the interactive program that judges do not investigate crimes, or "charge" an accused, write laws, or set and enforce prison or release dates or parole. It is the role of the judge to apply the law and render a fair and impartial decision. Understanding the themes of judicial independence and impartiality and the Rule of Law is at the heart of the program.

Details of the Five Unit Modules:

Each unit module (question) has a case study with 3-4 video clips and follow-up activities associated with it. Each one depicts different thought-provoking case scenarios that speak to a teenager's world and challenges them to form an opinion. They are titled, based on the five guiding questions:

#1 Why Do We Need Judges?

Case study: *Drugs in the backpack*.

Object of unit: To explore the role of the judge as an impartial adjudicator who decides whether evidence is admissible or rights have been violated.

#2 Why Must Judges Be Fair and Impartial?

Case study: *Hotel suing group of students for damage caused to rooms*.

Object of unit: To explore the need for objective decision making and how judges conduct themselves to ensure they act – and are seen by the public to act – with fairness and impartiality.

#3 What Is the Judge's Role in the Justice System?

Case study: *Teacher sued for assaulting student*.

Object of unit: To explore the judge's role in the courtroom and the kinds of decisions a judge is required to make in the course of a trial.

#4 How Do Judges Make Decisions?

Case study: *A judge is asked to decide whether a youth charged with armed robbery should be released while awaiting trial*.

Object of unit: To explore how judges make decisions and the factors they must take into consideration, using the example of a bail hearing in a criminal case.

#5 Why Are Judicial Independence and Judicial Impartiality So Important?

Case study: *The judge is asked to rule that the law making it a criminal offence to possess child pornography violates the Charter's guarantee of freedom of expression and must be struck down*.

Object of unit: To examine how judges make decisions independently of government and popular opinion, and why judicial independence is a key element of a fair and impartial justice system.

This educational resource for teachers and students alike is an initiative and brainchild of the Canadian Superior Courts Judges Association, is national in scope, and is truly unique in that it was conceived, designed, and produced by judges, and written by teachers. It is a wonderful tool with the potential to engage students to better understand the role of a judge and the Canadian administration of justice in our constitutional democracy.

Discussions are currently ongoing with John Gann re the possibility of hosting a workshop for educators re the *Try Judging/Essayez de Juger* programme in St. John's, as well as other jurisdictions in the province. If you are interested in attending such a workshop, please contact George Tucker at gtucker@nlta.nl.ca.



**NL ASSOCIATION FOR COMMUNITY LIVING –
DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION**

February 18, 2013

The Capital Hotel, St. John's. Providing students with different ways to learn and developing teaching materials to assist all students within a classroom learn effectively, regardless of differences in ability. Session Presenter: Patti Winsor, Program Specialist for Student Support Services, Nova Central School District. Registration Fee: \$30.00 for professionals and para-professionals. Session limited to 50 participants. To register contact Sherry at sherrygw@nlacl.ca, Tel: 709-722-0790.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION SIC CONFERENCE

February 21-23, 2013

Grenfell College, Memorial University, Corner Brook. Theme: *What's Your Summit? Reaching New Heights*. Delegates will need to register for the PESIC Conference at <http://web.wnlsd.ca/pesic/AM/main.aspx>.

AUTISM SOCIETY OF NL: SOCIAL THINKING

March 27-28, 2013

The Capital Hotel, St. John's. Speaker: Michelle Garcia Winner. **Day One:** Informal Dynamic Social Thinking Assessment and Core Treatment Strategies for Home and School. **Day Two:** Zooming In on Emerging Social Communicators Across the Classroom, Playground and Home. This workshop would be of interest to educators, psychologists, ABA therapists, families and all other service providers working with individuals with autism spectrum disorders. For further information contact the Autism Society of NL, Tel: 709-722-2803 or toll free: 1-866-722-2803; info@autism.nf.net.

SAC 2013 CONFERENCE

May 15 (evening), 16, 17, 2013

Delta Hotel, St. John's. The SAC 2013 Conference Organizing Committee are really excited to make the following announcement regarding SAC Conference 2013 – Open the following link: <http://prezi.com/fxqyhywnxsp/sac-2013-conference/>. To register go to www.sac2013.ca. For more information, contact: Dale Lambe at dalelambe@esdnl.ca.

COSS WORKSHOP:

FALLEN ANGELS: WHAT CAUSES CHILDREN TO BECOME VIOLENT AND HOW CAN WE PREVENT IT?

October 10, 2013

Sheraton Hotel, St. John's. Featuring Dr. Kathy Seifert. Registration opens February 18. Download registration form at www.nlta.nl.ca/pd_opportunities. For more information contact: Keith Adey, keithadey@nf.sympatico.ca or Tel: 709-489-6481.

COSS WORKSHOP: TEACHING WITH WIT AND WISDOM

October 11, 2013

Sheraton Hotel, St. John's. Featuring international best selling author and speaker, Barbara Coloroso. Registration opens February 18. Download registration form at www.nlta.nl.ca/pd_opportunities. For more information contact Keith Adey, keithadey@nf.sympatico.ca or Tel: 709-489-6481.

TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION SPECIAL INTEREST COUNCIL (TESIC) BGM & CONFERENCE 2013

November 7-8, 2013

St. John's, NL. Theme: *Is There an App for That?* Details will be available soon.

2013 Convention Deadlines

February 3, 2013

- All nominations for Provincial Executive for publication in Convention issue of *The Bulletin* must be postmarked or hand delivered to NLTA Office.
- Names of elected delegates and alternates to Convention should be forwarded to NLTA Office for printing in Convention issue of *The Bulletin*.
- Resolutions to Convention must be received at the NLTA Office.

March 3, 2013

Mailing of Convention issue of *The Bulletin*.

April 3-5, 2013

Biennial General Meeting

April 4, 2013

Final deadline for receipt of nominations for Provincial Executive.

Dates to Remember

February 2013

- Feb 13-14 Provincial Executive Meeting
- Feb 14 Janeway Day in the Schools
- Feb 15-16 Joint Council Meeting
- Feb 21 **Deadline:** PD Fund applications

March 2013

- Mar 21 **Deadline:** PD Fund applications
- Mar 31 **Board Deadline:** Notice for retirement at end of school year
- Mar 31 **Deadline:** Centennial Study Award Applications

April 2013

- Apr 1 **Deadline:** Johnson Bursary Applications
- Apr 15 **Deadline:** Notice of postponement of Deferred Salary Leave or withdrawal from DSLP
- Apr 18 **Deadline:** PD Fund applications
- Apr 30 **Deadline:** Deferred Salary Leave Applications
- Apr 30 **Deadline:** Year-end resignation from contract

CONTACT

**August 6-9, 2013
Charlottetown, PEI**

Theme:

***The More Things Change...
Plus ça change...***

For further information CONTACT:

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