

NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

T H E

bulletin

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January/February 2017



EDUCATION
WEEK 2017



SEEDS OF LEARNING



FEBRUARY 12-18, 2017

Up Front

from the President



After climbing a great hill, one only finds that there are many more hills to climb. ~ Nelson Mandela

As teachers, we probably know exactly what Nelson Mandela meant. My wife – a retired Grade 2 teacher – often noted that from the beginning of the school year until the last day of school in June she and her colleagues faced one hill of deadlines and challenges after another. And each new year seemed to bring its own new chain of mountains to climb. Our trek never seems to come to an end.

The same can be said for our Association. When I took office, our “great hill” was our collective agreement. Negotiations had stalled, our contract still had not been settled, and the chances of reaching an agreement soon looked slim. In fact, it wasn’t until the fall of 2014 that we ratified and signed a milestone collective agreement that for the first time guaranteed family leave.

Now as my term winds down, the peaks of a new round of negotiations rise before us, seemingly larger than the previous one. On February 13-14, we will exchange opening proposals. This time, a crushing provincial deficit, an approaching provincial budget, and a government determined to slash spending to balance its budget, will exacerbate the challenges normally associated with collective bargaining and will have an impact on our ability to meet the needs of our students.

Our colleagues in Nova Scotia are in the middle of climbing their own “great hill” as Premier Stephen McNeil and his Liberal government apply their own brand of austerity to collective bargaining. For the first time in their history, Nova Scotia teachers have taken a province-wide job action to back up their demands for fair and meaningful negotiations. On December 6, I joined other Atlantic teacher union presidents and stood in solidarity with NSTU President Liette Doucette and over 2000 Nova Scotian teachers at a rally outside the provincial legislature in Halifax. At one

point we encircled Province House. It was an impressive display of strength, solidarity and commitment to public education.

In many ways, the hill before us is no different from the last round of negotiations or the other hills we have climbed together – and we have climbed a few in the past four years. We settled a contract, stabilized our pension plan, increased public awareness of teacher and education issues and raised the profile of our Association.

And like our Nova Scotia colleagues, we’re becoming more confident and more willing to use our voices. I know it from the many teachers, administrators, and specialists who have taken it upon themselves to call our office seeking advice on how to address violent students, excessive workload demands, and lack of human resources. I know it from the teachers who attended our provincial town halls and eloquently and passionately gave voice to their concerns.

At the time of writing this article 32 educators from across the province gathered to participate in a CBC production on the realities of the classroom. By the time you read this article CBC will have aired or will be airing the town hall in segments as part of a week-long focus on education.

It was a remarkable experience, and marked the first time a group of teachers have gone on air to discuss some of the challenges facing our education system. They exemplified courage and professionalism. We hope this event not only provides the public a glimpse inside the classroom but also encourages our government to reverse the cuts to our education system and restore the resources needed to meet the needs of our students.

When I took office I committed to being your voice, and I have never wavered in that commitment. But I’m only one voice. My voice is amplified by the voices of our 6000 plus colleagues. I’m calling on you again to use your voice. On January

27 NLTA staff and I appeared before the Premier’s Task Force on Improving Educational Outcomes and presented the concerns of teachers and made recommendations on inclusive education, teacher leadership, professional learning and the learning/teaching environment. We argued for the necessary financial, material, and, most of all, human resources needed to achieve educational outcomes. You can view our presentation on the NLTA website.

Now it’s your turn. I sent out a similar message two weeks ago. Consider this a reminder. If anyone knows how to improve outcomes, you do. You know the needs of your students, and you know what is necessary if you are to help them reach their potential. Whether you do so as an individual, as part of a staff, NLTA Special Interest Council, or Branch Executive, submit your thoughts and recommendations to the Task Force. The report of the Task Force will be used to guide government education reform initiatives. Make sure you have input into shaping those recommendations and the future of our province’s education system.

I’m also asking you to stay informed and become involved in the collective bargaining process. Following the exchange of proposals in mid-February, meetings will be scheduled throughout the province to present the contents of those proposals to teachers. It is imperative that you attend these and any other meetings, ask questions, and have your say. We’re in this together, and we have a duty to ourselves and to each other to negotiate a collective agreement that respects and recognizes the work we do as educators.

The hills stretch out ahead of us. The time for rest is short. Together we’ll scale them. So, strap on your climbing gear and put on your hiking boots. We’ve got some climbing to do.

THE bulletin

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ATTENTION: GUIDANCE COUNSELLORS AND PRINCIPALS

THE ELLA MANUEL SCHOLARSHIP 2017

The Ella Manuel Scholarship is being offered in 2017 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 **\$3000**, the award is in memory of Ella Manuel, Newfoundland writer, broadcaster, feminist, and peace activist.

Completed applications must be received by **April 15, 2017**
and sent to:

Programs and Services
Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association
3 Kenmount Road, St. John's, NL, A1B 1W1
Fax: 726-4302 or toll-free 1-877-711-6582
jwarford@nlta.nl.ca

For more information see www.EllaManuelTrust.ca

PROVINCIAL/NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL NEWS

NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR

2016-17 NLTA scholarship winner announced



Lisa Symonds

Lisa Symonds of Mount Pearl has been named the 2016-17 recipient of the NLTA Scholarship.

Lisa first attended Memorial University after graduating high school in 2006. She completed some general studies courses for a few years while deciding which career path to pursue. Lisa always knew that teaching was something she wanted to do, however, she also wanted to travel and experience life in another province. With a passion for Interior Design she decided to move to Ontario where she completed a two-year diploma program at Sheridan College. Being away from home and living on her own allowed Lisa to discover who she really was and helped her decide what she really wanted to do with her life. In 2013, Lisa moved back home to attend Memorial University, again with hopes of getting accepted into the Faculty of Education to start her journey to become a teacher. Lisa says she is very appreciative that her efforts are being recognized by the Faculty and Education and she hopes to continue her success as she completes her final semester at Memorial University this winter.

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 \$1,000, is awarded annually by the MUN Senate Committee on Scholarships, acting on the recommendation of the Dean of Education.

2015-16 NLTA scholarship winners announced

Six Newfoundland and Labrador students who completed high school last June have been awarded NLTA scholarships for 2015-16. They are: Olivia Cumbie (Holy Spirit High), daughter of Denise Cumbie, Conception Bay South; Aaron Hillier (Indian River High), son of Heather Denise Hillier, Springdale;

Ashley Loveless (John Watkins Academy), daughter of Janet Loveless, Hermitage; Maria Park (Corner Brook Regional High), daughter of P. Michelle Park, Corner Brook; Evan Penney (Holy Trinity High), son of Erinne Kearsey, Torbay; and Nicholas Power (Exploits Valley High), son of Edgar Power, Grand Falls-Windsor.

The scholarships are awarded annually to dependents of active, retired, disabled or deceased members of the NLTA and are valued at \$1,000 each. Awards are based on the criteria used by the Department of Education for the selection of provincial scholarship recipients.



Olivia Cumbie



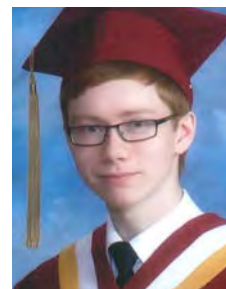
Aaron Hillier



Ashley Loveless



Maria Park



Evan Penney



Nicholas Power

ON LOCATION

Kids Eat Smart thanks educators

Kids Eat Smart Foundation Newfoundland and Labrador (KES) supports 247 KES Clubs in schools and community centres in our province. Every school day, thanks to the dedicated 6,100 volunteers and generous donors, KES serves over 25,000 meals.

KES relies on teachers, principals and school administrative staff to work with local volunteers to ensure every aspect of running a breakfast program is completed and to ensure the success of their program.

"It is the commitment of our educators that ensures the KES Breakfast Club is run in a non-stigmatizing, friendly and safe environment so that every child has access to healthy food at school, at no cost to children or their families," says Sonya Smith, Director of Communications and Fund Development with Kids Eat Smart Foundation.

As we start 2017, Kids Eat Smart Foundation would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to the many dedicated men and women who grace the halls of our schools and work tirelessly to ensure our children have a Breakfast Club.

ST. JOHN'S

St. John's principal chosen to build school in Dominican Republic

Kyran Dwyer, Principal of St. Teresa's Elementary School in St. John's, was one of two Canadians chosen by Lifetouch Photography to join some 50 volunteers to help build an elementary school in Rio Grande, a small community in Constanza, Dominican Republic from January 16-24, 2017.

The Lifetouch Memory Mission team consists of superintendents, principals, educators, PTA members and Lifetouch employees who all share a passion for serving children and families. Memory Mission volunteers work on a variety of projects, including block and concrete work and stucco and paint finishing for school classrooms. They also visit with community members to learn more about them – their lives, families, traditions – and the Dominican culture.

Kyran says that for most parents and kids, crossing the street to catch the school bus may be the riskiest part about getting to school. "Could you imagine sending your child on a 2 ½ mile hike up a mountain in order to receive an education? Or what if you didn't have the ability to send them in the first place?" Children in Constanza face these unfavorable condi-

(continued on page 6)



Do you know an educator who could be Health and Safety Educator of the Year?

Organized by WorkplaceNL, the Health and Safety Educator of the Year Award is awarded annually to an educator who has demonstrated a commitment to the promotion and advancement of young worker health and safety.

Nominations for this award will be accepted from the Department of Education, school administrators, peers, and students.

The 2016/2017 Health and Safety Educator Award includes \$500 for the award recipient and a presentation of health and safety equipment to the school.

Closing
date for
nominations is
May 5, 2017

Find out more at workplacenl.ca

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tions daily. Many choose not to take the long journey to school and stay home instead. With the lack of educational resources in this part of the world, children are being deprived of reaching their full potential.

In a recent CBC News interview, Kyran said he planned to get St. Teresa's School involved in the mission by hosting an interactive video chat with Grade 3 to 6 classes so he could share the experience with his students back in St. John's.

POINT LEAMINGTON

Point Leamington Academy donates to local food bank

In December, students at Point Leamington Academy donated about 200 food items and \$517.80 to the Botwood Interfaith Goodwill Centre Food Bank.

The funds were raised through various events at the school. The Student Council organized a Christmas dance for students and all proceeds from admission fees were donated. In addition, the Council sold candy canes to students and the staff at Point Leamington Academy also came together to raise funds.

The food items were donated and collected by students over a two-week period. Food bank donations were also collected at the admission table during the school's Christmas concert and dance.



Point Leamington Academy Student Council President Devan Peddle presents a cheque to the Botwood Interfaith Goodwill Centre Food Bank.

"We wanted to do this because Christmas is meant to be a season of giving and not always receiving," said Devan Peddle, Student Council President at Point Leamington Academy. "So as a school, we wanted to do our part to give back to our communities. This year, the whole school came together and worked very hard to ensure we all did our part to improve the Christmas season for families in our communities. A lot of work and effort went into doing these events and it would not have been pos-

sible if the whole school (students and staff) never came together and each done their part to ensure our donation would be a success."

GRAND FALLS-WINDSOR

Exploits Valley Branch scholarship winner announced

Anika Walsh, a graduate of Exploits Valley High School in Grand Falls-Windsor, accepted the Exploits Valley Branch Scholarship for the 2015-16 school year on December 21, 2016. The \$500 scholarship goes to the son or daughter of an active NLTA member of the Exploits Valley Branch who has achieved the highest overall average (provided by the Department of Education) during their graduating year. They have to be attending a post-secondary institution full time. Anika is the daughter of Jacqueline Walsh, a teacher at Woodland Primary School in Grand Falls-Windsor. Money from the scholarship is donated by the teachers of the branch.



Anika Walsh is presented with her scholarship by Paul Moore, President of the Exploits Valley Branch.

PASADENA

Pasadena Elementary wins nat'l award for conservation efforts

Pasadena Elementary was recently awarded the 2016 Graeme Loader Community Panda Award by the World Wildlife Foundation in "recognition of their contributions and efforts in building a better future for our planet". Spearheaded by Grade 3 teachers Audrey LaVallee and Jennifer McWhirter, the school has fundraised and contributed annually to the WWF over the past seven years.

Through their studies of the Rainforest and World Oceans, students in Grade 3 (both past and present) have been exposed to the threats of these habitats



Pasadena Elementary accepts the Graeme Loader Community Panda Award in recognition of their contributions in building a better future for our planet.

such as overfishing, pollution and habitat destruction. Students have researched conservation issues critical to the health of our planet. In addition, both Grade 3 classes are also involved in the Little Green Thumbs Program and vermicomposting, two initiatives set out by the Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Agriculture – Agriculture in the classroom.

POLLARD'S POINT

Main River Academy students brighten lives of local seniors

This past December, primary and elementary students at Main River Academy in Pollard's Point helped brighten the lives of seniors in their area when they raised funds in order to visit the local senior's home with a treat and some singing. Thanks are extended to Kayla Legge and Donna Fudge, primary/elementary teachers at Main River Academy, for organizing the visit. In addition, senior/junior high teacher Natalie Jackson's NL Studies class took the time to revive the Newfoundland and Labrador tradition of "mum-mering" by first visiting classes at Main River Academy and then the seniors. A wonderful time was had by all!



Primary/elementary students from Main River Academy visit their local senior's home with treat bags and songs.

EXCEPTIONAL TRAINING AND RESOURCES-Mental Health, Counselling and Violence Prevention



MINDFULNESS COUNSELLING STRATEGIES - Activating Compassion and Regulation

St. John's: March 1-2, 2017

This workshop is designed to teach participants how to facilitate development of these skills with their clients and develop their own capacity for using mindfulness-based strategies in their counselling work. Participants will practice mindfulness, regulation and activation strategies meant to promote self-awareness and emotional balance.

WORKING IN SOCIAL SERVICES-The Essential Skills

St. John's: March 16, 2017

This introductory workshop provides the fundamental understanding and skills required for working with people in a helping capacity. Participants will be provided with awareness and introductory skill-building in core areas related to the helping role including: communication, listening, service coordination, ethics, diversity and promoting helper resilience.

SELF-INJURY BEHAVIOUR IN YOUTH-Issues and Strategies

St. John's: March 30-31, 2017

This workshop provides a general overview to assist participants in understanding the experience and motivations of adolescents who intentionally injure themselves. Participants will leave this workshop with increased insight regarding self-injury behaviour in youth, practical strategies for working with youth and a framework for effective intervention.

DE-ESCALATING POTENTIALLY VIOLENT SITUATIONS™

St. John's: April 11, 2017

This workshop is designed to teach people to de-escalate potentially violent situations through assertiveness and interpersonal communication. Participants will develop a clear understanding of how to assess the potential for violence and respond with a diverse set of tools and strategies designed to defuse potentially violent situations.

DEPRESSION-Practical Intervention Strategies

St. John's: April 26, 2017

This workshop reviews a variety of effective strategies that can be used to help an individual who is struggling with depression. Participants will learn practical strategies to help engage the depressed person on two levels: changing the negative relationship within oneself and changing interpersonal dynamics that perpetuate depression.

UNDERSTANDING MENTAL ILLNESS IN CHILDREN AND YOUTH

St. John's: May 18, 2017

This workshop is designed for education and social service providers, caregivers and anyone seeking a better understanding of the complexities that surround mental illness with this population. Participants will be provided with a general overview of the common mental health issues for children and youth, signs and symptoms, themes for treatment and the controversies that surround some of the diagnoses.

MOTIVATING CHANGE-Strategies for Approaching Resistance

St. John's: June 1-2, 2017

Drawing from the approaches of Motivational Interviewing, Positive Discipline and Internal Family Systems Model, this experiential workshop will equip helping professionals with an enhanced style and new strategies that will strengthen relationships and maximize potential for motivating change.



To register or for
more information:

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KIMBERLEY COLE**Kimberley Cole**

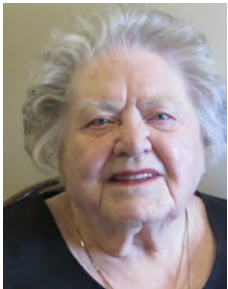
A true artist is not one who is inspired, but one who inspires others. ~ Salvador Dali

This quote was the philosophy of Kimberley Cole, a dedicated and passionate elementary teacher at St. Andrew's Elementary School in St. John's. An accomplished artist herself, Kim fostered a love of learning in her students through the arts, exposing them to new ideas and creative ways of learning new things. She was one of the pioneering classroom teachers that understood the innovative practice of partnering with artists in the schools. She worked very closely with the Arts Council and was a consistent participant in the ArtsSmarts program. Her collaborative projects with artists in her classroom added to the culture of her school.

A lifelong learner, during her Master's program Kim developed a keen interest in restorative justice and masterfully incorporated its tenets as a routine part of her classroom practice. A true humanitarian, she valued diversity and challenged injustice. Her classroom environment was one of acceptance, equality and mutual respect. She was loving, supportive and respectful of all and she modelled this to her students just by being who she was – confident, creative, compassionate, full of “joie de vivre”. She believed in building and cultivating relationships with her students. Kim taught with her heart, valuing each and every student, knowing that once they believed in themselves, as she did, everything else would find its place. To many of her students she will be remembered as the best teacher ever!

Her positive energy and spirited outlook permeated interactions with all who had the opportunity to meet and know her. Kim lived life to the fullest with every intention of leaving her footprint on this world. Her legacy lies in the hearts and minds of those of us lucky enough to call her teacher, colleague and dear friend. Kim Cole – an inspiration to all!

(Submitted by Kim Decker, Elizabeth Park Elementary)

STELLA RITA HAPGOOD, 1928 – 2016**Stella Rita Hapgood**

“There are no such words as I can't.”

Stella Rita Hapgood was one of six children born to Amelia and Ambrose Tapper on October 14, 1928 in Frenchman's Cove, Burin Peninsula. She began her teaching career near the age of 17, teaching in various communities around the province, one of which took her to Burin where she met Lloyd Hapgood who later became her husband on June 29, 1953. They settled in Frenchman's Cove, Lloyd being a fisherman and Stella continuing her teach-

ing career there. On October 17, 1955, they had a daughter, Judith Hapgood.

Stella taught Kindergarten to Grade 11 to her students in St. Luke's Anglican Church, a one-room church which served the purpose of both school and church. She instilled learning, belief in oneself, respect for others and the love of God and country in children of the community. When schools were transformed to grade schools on the Burin Peninsula, St. Luke's Anglican School closed and Stella proceeded to teach two primary grades at the United Church School, Frenchman's Cove, until it too was closed. She and area students were moved to Seaman's Memorial Elementary School, Garnish, a few kilometers away. There she continued her fulfilling career until she retired in June 1984.

I, her daughter, had the exceptional experience of being a student of Stella's, my wonderful mother, from Kindergarten to Grade 7 at St. Luke's Anglican School. Humorously speaking, not being an exemplary student, I could be made a prime example of what punishment could befit anyone who may not follow the rules. I was treated equally, no less nor more than any other student she dearly loved and to whom she devoted her attention to give him/her the best education she could possibly provide under the circumstances. With the strong foundation Stella provided for her students, who loved and respected her in return, and the belief that “You Can”, many of her students continued to lead successful lives with careers and families of their own.

Another very important part of Stella's life was her unwavering dedication to her church. She was an avid supporter of St. Luke's Anglican Church, so much so that she held the position of Treasurer for over 40 years. No cent would go unaccounted while Stella handled the books and maintained meticulous records. Though not well by any means, two days before her passing, she was at peace having had delivered the final deposit to the bank. Her work was done – “Please God”.

Stella passed peacefully away on August 27, 2016, knowing she is dearly loved by her daughter, Judith, and granddaughter, Brittany. She lived a rewarding, simple life while touching many lives on her journey. She was laid to rest at St. Luke's Anglican Cemetery, Frenchman's Cove, on August 30, 2016, being assisted by some of who were former students honored to be pallbearers on her final day in the school of life. With fond and pleasant memories, she is sadly missed by her family, her community and those who knew and respected her.

“To teach is to touch a life forever.”

(Submitted by her daughter, Judith E. Hapgood)

SANDRA DIANE WHIFFEN, 1952–2016

"She was a very special person to many and in particular to me as I remember her as a teacher very fondly. She certainly had a lasting impact on me throughout school and into my career. Her support definitely helped me and I look back on her and our grade two class with great memories." (former student).

It is difficult to write a memoriam that is worthy of a woman who has touched so many lives in so many ways. A wife, mother, grandmother, teacher and friend. Sandy had many different roles in her short 63 years, and she held each one with great pride.

In 1972, Sandy was a proud new graduate of Memorial University and began her teaching career at Middle Brook Primary in Gambo. She would often laugh when reflecting on those times as she recalled herself being "fresh and naïve". Two years later, full of fun and adventure, the young, beautiful primary teacher accepted an opportunity at a portable classroom known as Port Rexton Elementary (later upgraded to Bishop White All Grade School) where she taught special education. In 1978, Sandy landed a permanent position in Bonavista, just 10 minutes from her hometown of Upper Amherst Cove. With her husband of 37 years, Fred, together they built a home for their children, Mark and Stephanie. Sandy had finally found the life she had dreamed of. She taught special education at Matthew Elementary, and then grade two, until she retired in 2002. For many years later, she continued to care for children, shaping their little minds and guiding their big hearts.

Sandy lived life to the fullest and loved with all her heart. She loved to laugh and joke, and to make others laugh, even if it was at her own expense! She had the most beautiful smile and a special way with words that always brought comfort to those around her. She loved all the simple things that life had to offer – cooking, baking, shopping, talking on the phone, watching television, late night snacks and bedtime. She loved her home and everything it represented. She loved Christmas, warm summer days and cool fall evenings. She loved walking, backyard fires and lobster boil-ups on the beach. But most of all, she loved her family. Her family defined her, and everything she did was for them. She was happy and content as long as she was with her husband, her children and her grandchildren. Madden, Ella, Freddy and Sadie were her heart and her life. She lived selfishly for them and simply wanted nothing more but for them to be happy and healthy. She would always say that their hugs were worth a million dollars and that they took every one of her aches and pains away.

Her life was beautiful, and meaningful, and although it was much too short, it was cherished. She will be missed every single day and she will be loved forever. Her words and guidance will live on in her students and her love will always be felt and painfully missed by her large circle of friends and family.

She will always be with us. For where your treasure lies, there will your heart be also.

(Submitted by Stephanie Lodge)



Sandra Diane Whiffen

In Memoriam

Submission Guidelines

Submissions to In Memoriam should be a **maximum of 250 to 300 words** and may contain a photo of the deceased. In Memoriams should be submitted within a timely manner – normally within the same school year (if possible) of the death of the teacher. Information may be included on where the deceased lived and taught, their education, accomplishments, community involvement and family information.

It is preferred that all submissions be e-mailed to Lesley-Ann Browne, Editor of *The Bulletin*, at labrowne@nlta.nl.ca. If submitting by mail, please address to: Editor, *The Bulletin*, Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association, 3 Kenmount Road, St. John's, NL, A1B 1W1. Submissions may also be faxed to 709-726-4302 or 1-877-711-6582 (toll-free in province). Please be sure to include a contact name, school or business name, mailing address, telephone number and e-mail address.



Overview of a Recent Arbitration Ruling

by STEFANIE TUFF

The Association recently received the Arbitrator's decision regarding two grievances that were referred to arbitration. Both cases involved the same facts and the parties, NLTA and the school district, therefore consented to have them heard together. The case involved grievances filed by a teacher in relation to the manner in which the District handled harassment complaints the teacher had filed, in accordance with District policy, against other school board employees. The District delayed the investigation of the complaints to pursue a workplace review conducted by a third party. Based on recommendations flowing from this review, the District referred the teacher and one other individual for psychological assessments. The teacher was placed on paid leave pending the outcome of the psychological assessment and any counselling/coaching recommended from this, the expense of which was to be borne by the District. Two of the teacher's complaints were subsequently dismissed without investigation. The other complaints were investigated but no harassment was found; however, the District relied on Article 13 to transfer the teacher, first temporarily and then permanently, to a different school in the same community, purportedly to "mitigate" the workplace conflicts the teacher had experienced. After a period of time, the District unilaterally terminated paid leave for the teacher and financial support for counselling, which was still ongoing, following which the teacher accessed paid and then unpaid sick leave as the teacher was, at this point, unable to return to work for health reasons. The teacher's first grievance alleged that the District acted in bad faith and in excess of management rights in terminating paid leave and support for counselling, and in imposing a permanent transfer.

In the course of appealing the District's decisions in the harassment complaints, the teacher made a number of requests for disclosure of information under the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (ATIPPA). Information disclosed in response to the ATIPPA requests (which included notes of meetings/conversations, emails, and correspondence) revealed

that individuals in positions of authority over the teacher, who were involved in making decisions in relation to the teacher and the complaints, had acted based upon assumptions regarding the state of the teacher's mental health. Therefore, the second grievance alleged that District decisions, including those referenced in the first grievance, along with a number of others that had an impact on the teacher (engaging the workplace review; not investigating two of the harassment complaints and the outcome of two others; referring the teacher for a psychological assessment; and, denying the teacher's request for a change in teaching assignment), constituted discrimination under Article 57 of the Collective Agreement and provincial human rights legislation.

The teacher's grievances were denied by the District and the Association referred the matters to arbitration. The arbitration involved 24 days of hearings over the course of just over one year. This was a complex case and the evidence submitted to the arbitration panel through witness testimony and documents was extensive.

Arbitrator James Oakley allowed both grievances, finding that: *The District acted in a manner that was arbitrary and unreasonable and violated Article 39 [Management Rights] when it terminated the Grievor's paid leave and support for counselling ... The District's decision to transfer the Grievor was made in an arbitrary manner and violated Article 13.01. ... The District violated the Human Rights Act, 2010 and acted in a discriminatory manner when District officials and school administrators made decisions that affected the Grievor, including the workplace review, the referral for psychological assessment and counselling and the decision to place [the Grievor] on and later terminate paid leave.*

This is a significant and favourable decision, both for this teacher and NLTA members in general for a number of reasons. It stands for the principle that, in making decisions that impact upon the basic terms of employment for teachers – in this case, the receipt of salary and benefits and the assignment of teaching duties, which were recognized as "fundamental

terms of the Collective Agreement” – the employer has, ... *an obligation to properly exercise its management rights under Article 39 ... an obligation to act in a manner that was reasonable and not arbitrary, discriminatory, or in bad faith.*

The arbitration board's decision as it relates to Article 13.01 is also significant in that it places some clear parameters around the reasons for which a teacher “may be transferred to a comparable position within the same community when it is deemed necessary” by the school board. In this case, the teacher did not object to the initial transfer as it was temporary in nature. However, the District's decision to make the move permanent was grieved. The rationale provided by the District at the time in question was to mitigate the workplace conflicts and that the removal from problematic work relationships would provide the teacher with a “fresh start”. Arbitrator Oakley ruled that a transfer without consent under Article 13.01 must be made for “sound educational reasons, ... not arbitrary, made in bad faith or discriminatory.” In this case, the teacher was not looking to start anew in a different school and the relationship which had been the primary source of conflict was no longer an issue as the other person had left the school. It was found that, *The implication of transferring the Grievor because persons against whom [the Grievor] had filed harassment complaints remained in the school, is that the Grievor was transferred as a consequence of filing the complaints. The continued presence of [these individuals] in the school was an arbitrary reason to transfer the Grievor. The Board finds that the transfer of the Grievor to another school ... was arbitrary and in violation of Article 13.*

With respect to the allegations of discrimination in the second grievance, the evidence disclosed that individuals who made decisions regarding the teacher following the filing of the harassment complaints were “influenced by a belief that the Grievor had a mental disability”. In the initial contact with the psychologist retained to conduct a psychological assessment of the teacher, a District official indicated the teacher had “paranoia” and that there was concern for the teacher's mental stability. At arbitration, the psychologist testified that, after her first meeting with the teacher, she informed the District that there was no need to be concerned and that the teacher did not have paranoia. The evidence showed that the teacher was not diagnosed with any mental illness between the time the harassment complaints were filed and the termination of the teacher's paid leave. The arbitration board found that the decisions in question, “were influenced in part by a belief that the Grievor had a mental disability. Therefore, the District vio-

lated the Human Rights Act, 2010.”

Arbitrator Oakley ordered that:

- the District reinstate the provision of paid leave and support for counselling effective as of the date of termination;
- the District return the teacher to her/his former position;
- the District compensate the teacher for the Collective Agreement violations found in both grievances.

A negotiated settlement was reached between the teacher and the District in relation to the arbitration board's order.

This decision sends a clear message regarding the employer's exercise of its management rights. In particular, decisions regarding the conduct, process and outcomes of harassment complaints, and indeed all matters that engage the Collective Agreement and the fundamental terms of teachers' employment must be handled in an appropriate manner. Teachers have the right to be treated reasonably in this regard, in a good faith and non-arbitrary manner, free from discrimination.

Stefanie Tuff is Assistant Executive Director of the NLTA.

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Financing a Year of Deferred Salary Leave

The Deferred Salary Leave Plan (DSLP) is available to any tenured teacher in a permanent position covered by the NLTA Collective Agreement. The terms of reference and other details of the DSLP are set out in Article 51 of the provincial contract (Article 57 of the Labrador West Collective Agreement). Many teachers find the DSLP an excellent means of financing a year of leave to pursue travel, family time, other employment, further studies, or any interest(s) one might have. Leave under the DSLP 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 DSLP beginning in September is April 30 of the previous school year.** So, a teacher wanting to start paying in to a DSLP in September 2017 would have to submit his/her application to the school district by the end of April 2017. The Deferred Salary Leave application and other information can be found under “Forms” on the NLTA website at www.nlta.nl.ca.

While the DSLP provides an excellent opportunity for personal and professional rejuvenation, it is important to understand the economic realities of taking a deferred leave. NLTA Administrative Officers in Programs and Services are often asked what the “difference” is in take-home pay while participating in the DSLP. We cannot provide specific financial details or advice

to members because each individual's situation is different and all financial matters, such as salary levels, income tax rates, CPP and EI contribution rates, etc. are subject to change. Accordingly, the information provided herein contains rough estimates only.

The following comparisons of net salary for a teacher on full salary versus the various DSLP 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 2016, as per the collective agreements that are currently in effect. 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 2017 formulae. All estimated figures are rounded to the nearest dollar. Teachers participating in the DSLP continue to pay pension premiums based on the full, unreduced salary. EI premiums are paid on the full salary, but are not paid during the year of leave. Therefore, 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 NLTA Administrative Officer in Programs and Services at 726-3223 or 1-800-563-3599. Email inquiries sent to mail@nlta.nl.ca will be directed to appropriate Programs and Services staff for a response.

Full Salary			
	Top of V Salary Scale	Top of VI Salary Scale	Top of VII Salary Scale
Salary	70,391	81,531	92,234
Estimated Tax	13,720	17,327	20,879
Estimated EI	836	836	836
Estimated CPP	2,564	2,564	2,564
NLTA Fees	880	1,019	1,153
Pension Deduction	7,989	9,254	10,469
Estimated Net*	44,402	50,531	56,333

2/3 Deferred Salary			
	Top of V Salary Scale	Top of VI Salary Scale	Top of VII Salary Scale
Salary	46,927	54,354	61,489
Estimated Tax	5,841	7,528	9,500
Estimated EI	765	836	836
Estimated CPP	2,150	2,517	2,564
NLTA Fees	587	679	769
Pension Deduction	7,989	9,254	10,469
Estimated Net*	29,595	33,540	37,351

3/4 Deferred Salary			
	Top of V Salary Scale	Top of VI Salary Scale	Top of VII Salary Scale
Salary	52,793	61,148	69,176
Estimated Tax	7,464	9,883	12,332
Estimated EI	836	836	836
Estimated CPP	2,440	2,564	2,564
NLTA Fees	660	764	865
Pension Deduction	7,989	9,254	10,469
Estimated Net*	33,404	37,847	42,110

4/5 Deferred Salary			
	Top of V Salary Scale	Top of VI Salary Scale	Top of VII Salary Scale
Salary	56,313	65,225	73,787
Estimated Tax	8,554	11,307	14,026
Estimated EI	836	836	836
Estimated CPP	2,564	2,564	2,564
NLTA Fees	704	815	922
Pension Deduction	7,989	9,254	10,469
Estimated Net*	35,666	40,449	44,970

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

NLTA Infosheets

Are you aware that the following Infosheets are available from the NLTA website at www.nlta.nl.ca? These infosheets are intended to provide information to teachers of a general nature only. Documents such as the collective agreements, legislation and policies referenced in Infosheets will govern the specific rights and benefits of teachers.

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. NLTA Programs and Services | 15. Redundancy, Reassignment and Layoff |
| 2. Sick and Can't Work – What Then? | 16. Probation, Tenure, Evaluation and Contract Termination |
| 3. The Teachers' Pension Plan | 17. Legal Assistance for Teachers |
| 4. In the Event of the Death of a Member of the NLTA | 18. Teacher Liability |
| 5. Teachers and Employment Insurance | 19. Transportation and Teacher Liability |
| 6. Benefit Changes Upon Marriage, Common Law Relationships, or Acquiring Dependents | 20. Employee Assistance Program for Teachers |
| 7. NLTA Group Insurance – Teachers' Benefits/Responsibilities | 21. Injury on Duty and Workers' Compensation |
| 8. Teachers and Parenthood Leave | 22. Administration of Medication and Health Support Procedures |
| 9. Deferred Salary Leave Plan | 23. Seniority and the Collective Agreement |
| 10. Returning To University – Membership and Benefits | 24. Professional Relations Disputes |
| 11. Planning To Retire | 25. NLTA Disciplinary Procedure |
| 12. Pre-Retirement Planning Seminars and Financial Information Seminars | 26. Cyberconduct and Electronic Communications – Important Information and Guidelines for Teachers |
| 13. Substitute Teacher Membership and Benefits | |
| 14. Substitute Teachers and Group Insurance | |

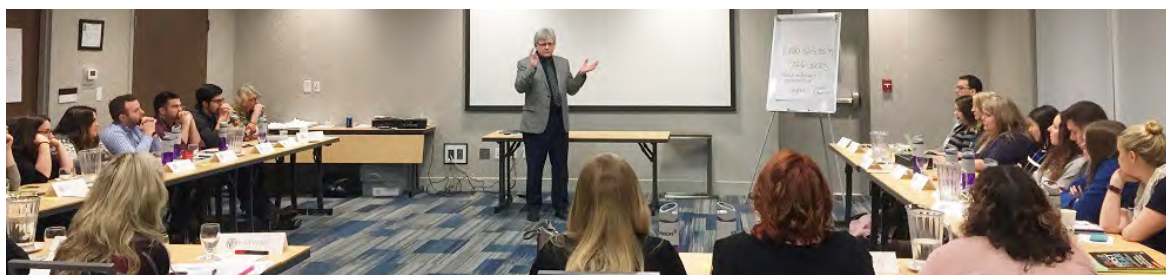
For further information please contact an administrative officer in Programs and Services at 726-3223 or 1-800-563-3599 or mail@nlta.nl.ca

Beginning Teachers Conference

On December 8 and 9, 2016, twenty-three beginning teachers from all areas of Newfoundland and Labrador attended a conference tailor-made for them. The event was organized by the NLTA in partnership with both the Newfoundland and Labrador English School District and the Conseil Scolaire Francophone Provincial and Memorial University's Faculty of Education. A look at the photos reveals the many aspects of the conference – information sharing, reflection, networking – in short, learning from one another. Its success will be seen in the classrooms across the province this year and beyond!



“I liked many things: meeting teachers who are in a similar professional situation as myself.”



“I had no idea the NLTA did this kind of workshop. I can't wait to attend others!”



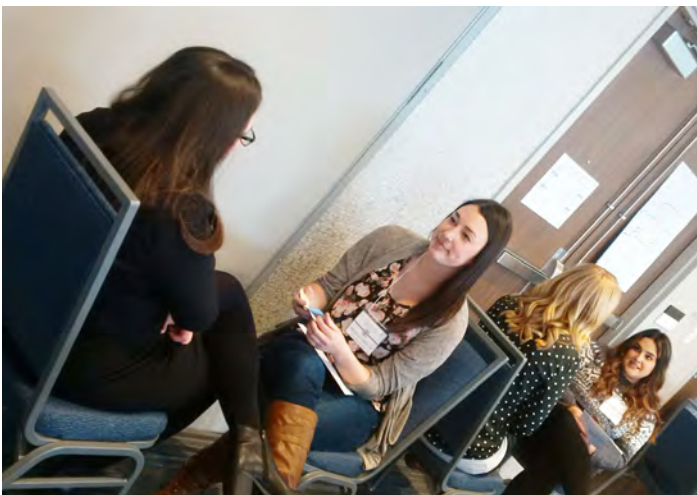


"I liked doing all of the different activities that we could actually take back and use in our classrooms."

"I loved the fact that we were able to talk to people who understand the challenges I face every day and who can offer solutions and techniques."



"I liked the variety of sessions and all the collaborative activities."



"I liked meeting various leaders from the NLTA and School District – it was a great way to feel connected and valued!"



"It was interactive, fun, relevant and full of information."



Resilience: The Bounce that Counts

by JUDY BERANGER

Psychiatrist Scott Peck in his classic, best-selling book, *The Road Less Travelled*, maintained that life was hard and that courage was the product of facing and working through whatever challenges life brings your way. It is my conviction that the development of a resilient self is the key to such courage and healthy self-esteem. To grow resilience is something we can choose to spend effort on developing, with the likely result of improving the quality of our relationships and our life. Learning how to hone our reframing abilities, to be proud instead of ashamed, to work through our biases, judgements and filters, and to embrace every moment of this precious life while loving with passion are goals that can assist in developing the best we can be. Growing our potential and heightening our abilities to be creative, to give respect, care, patience and consideration, particularly in times of diversity and when we do not feel respected, are resilient skills often quoted in the resilience literature.

Resilience Defined

Most definitions of “resilience” refer to our ability to “bounce back”. The American Psychological Association says: *Resiliency is the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, stress, threats, trauma and tragedy*. It can be complex, as life can change in a heartbeat. Unexpected health issues, general issues that trigger loss, the ending of relationships, death and loss of precious ones, any despairing or traumatic events unexpected and unwanted, can all create that curve in our lives. Even worse, it can bang the door shut to that which we may have previously taken for granted. Action, attitude, effort, perseverance, energy and commitment to insight and initiative will speed up the bounce back. The literature agrees that resilience can be learned, developed and cultivated by anyone who is willing to commit to self-care, maintain a flexible, optimistic attitude and keep life balance. Some say it is an art and many describe resilient people as having been “bent but not broken”. Psychologist George Vaillant says a resilient

person resembles “a twig with a fresh, green living core. When twisted out of shape, such a twig bends, but it does not break; instead, it springs back and continues growing.” It does not mean we do not suffer; it just means we will find ways to crawl, and maybe bounce back into a different life, say good-bye to what was, and come to accept a new way of being.

We are also learning more on resilience from one of the world’s longest running studies on living a long, fulfilling and happy life. The 75-year long *Harvard Study of Adult Development* research demonstrated that one of the best predictors of longevity is determined by the lifestyle choices we make in midlife. Not surprisingly, the study found that older adults with a positive outlook, process emotional information differently from those with more negative views. Resilience is apparent in the emerging findings. The power of social connections was one of the most significant outcomes with emphasis not on the number of “friends”, but rather on the depth of true, quality friendships. What is important are close relationships that matter, whether biological or otherwise, people we trust with our nearest and dearest intimacies, people who are consistently loyal. They have our back, even when we don’t agree with each other. It is those strong relationships that the study found protects our bodies but equally safeguards our brains. The study also reported that family feuds resulting in long-term grudges take a terrible toll. Like much of the resilience literature this study upholds that “the good life” is built with good relationships – there is no other way. Resilience is strengthened when we have caring, trusting, loving and supportive relationships within and outside the family.

Resilient People

The research abounds with ideas of how to grow resilience and often refers to our perceptions and misunderstandings. Resilient people try to check things out and stay away from assumptions. How often do we proceed in our interactions, passing on second hand information? Whole cultures use stories that may have

originated from misinformation. The myth of ostriches burying their heads in the sand, for example, has been used so much that there are some who believe this inaccuracy. Ostriches do dig holes to lay their eggs but never to bury their heads! Passing on misinformation, especially when it could be damaging, can cause considerable pain and anxiety to people who are on the receiving end. At a recent workshop a teacher shared an example of a lady meeting her visiting cousin and giving him a huge hug before going into the restaurant. A passerby noticed the interaction and by evening there was gossip in the small town that she was cheating on her partner.

Resilient people have wounds and suffer like everyone else but the difference is they continue to move to higher ground as they heal. They struggle, but keep breathing and functioning anyway. Resilience does not ensure freedom from trauma, diseases and general misery but it does ensure more focused action and better lived days. Confucius said: *Our greatest glory is not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall.*

Resilient people are strong examples of modelling gratitude. A teacher told me a story about her neighbor's friend. The friend's adult daughter had been living with her parents, rent free, since she started a good job five years earlier. Her parents decided to charge a little rent along with expecting her to help out with house cleaning. The daughter was incensed and told her friends and colleagues that her parents were uncaring and mean! On hearing this, two of her colleagues challenged her as they too, were living with parents and were proud they were paying rent. Clearly the ungrateful daughter had not yet learned that practicing daily gratitude is a resilience skill. Teachers tend to be great models to students for demonstrating the gratitude skill and the research suggests that gratitude is a protective factor that supports teacher resilience.

In his research, psychiatrist Steven Wolin found in some workplaces there are those who concentrate on being a victim by encouraging a focus on illness or life traumas rather than on building a capacity for strength. Presenting as a victim by drawing attention to self, to illness, to blaming others can reduce any commitment to move towards resilience. The victim's typical stance – "...expecting me to act resilient means you don't appreciate how much I have been through" – ensures that no bounce back is likely to follow. At times like this, resilient models can be quite helpful. Author Hara Estroff Marano says we are complex enough psychologically to be hurt and resilient at the same time. It is not unusual to hear examples from teachers who wish they had more

preparation time, less demands and more resources, who see students who lack motivation and respect, but despite it all, these same teachers can show empathy and compassion at every turn. They demonstrate a strong sense of self efficacy, knowing and believing they can determine what happens in their sphere of influence. They are resilient and know the value of their contributions and the power of modelling to their students.

Another finding in the resilience research is that some who had felt unloved, devalued and unappreciated as children reported becoming resilient by modelling a trusted adult(s). Teachers were often cited as the most helpful and inspiring models. As those children became adults they reported that their partners and spouses also were influential role models. They felt valued, could trust, could grieve and thus moved beyond the pain of knowing they lost so much in the younger years. They were now more able to feel and act optimistically and embrace their adult years.

Coping Strategies

In their book, *Resilience*, physicians Southwick and Charney outline their findings regarding the coping strategies exhibited by resilient people to deal with stress and trauma. These included:

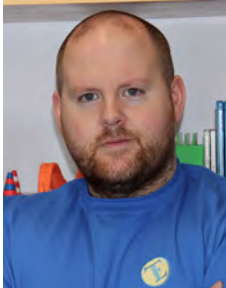
- confronting their fears;
- maintaining an optimistic, realistic outlook;
- seeking and accepting social support;
- imitating positive role models;
- relying upon their own inner moral compass;
- turning to spiritual practices and finding ways to accept that which they could not change;
- attending to their health and well-being;
- training intensively to stay physically fit, mentally sharp, and emotionally strong;
- looking for meaning and opportunity during adversity and sometimes even finding humor in the darkness;
- wholeheartedly accepting responsibility for their own emotional well-being.

Consider developing a list of actions that might further enhance your own resilience. When did you exhibit strength and perseverance in the past during challenging times? What helped keep you strong? Who are the most influential resilience models for you? Replicate. Who can you depend on? Thank them!

EAP can connect you with a variety of resources that can support your efforts to remain resilient.

.....
Judy Beranger is a Coordinator with the Employee Assistance Program for Teachers. For confidential assistance contact Judy (ext. 265), jmberanger@nlta.nl.ca or Gail Carroll (ext. 242), gmc Carroll@nlta.nl.ca.

“...one of the best predictors of longevity is determined by the lifestyle choices we make in midlife.”



Test 'Drive'ing G Suite for Education

by TOM KENNEDY

Google Apps for Education (GAFE) has great potential for teaching and learning for classrooms across the province. While some schools have prior experience with local or regional GAFE infrastructures, all schools are now brought to the table with a District-wide implementation this past fall. As a suite of several applications, the capabilities of GAFE should not be reduced to just another email client. Just as First Class had added potential through its web publishing, podcasting and shared conferences, teachers will find that the Google package effectively replaces these add-ons and much more.

To provide a timeline of sorts, many of us were already familiar with Google mail (Gmail) services, which began in 2006. In 2012, Google Drive (GD) was released as an added service offering file storage and was linked to all Google accounts. Unfortunately, at that time, many were already using Dropbox (2007) for this same purpose, slowing the shift to Drive. Even this past September, GAFE underwent a rebranding and became G Suite for Education. However, while the name may have changed, it remains functional. But where do we begin with this suite of applications? For the purpose of this issue, we will jump right into Google Drive.

Google Drive as File Storage

In my opinion, Google Drive will become the most commonly used Google tool across the District. With Drive, teachers can do away with their multiple flash drives, often forgotten in the USB port of a shared computer terminal (we can all relate – the “where is my flash drive?” panic attack). Files become accessible across devices and platforms, always within reach online. However, there are still those of us who prefer to have our files offline, available on our computers rather than in cloud storage. No problem, there is always Google Drive Desktop, software that can be installed on your computer and offer you the best of both worlds.

Google Drive as Desktop Software

Drive Desktop is free and can be installed on any personal computer. Once installed and logged in, the software creates a Google Drive folder on your computer that syncs automatically with your online storage. You have the option to sync a single folder or your entire Drive. Files are then accessible offline. For example, I have the software installed on my home iMac, my MacBook and work PC. As a result, my files automatically sync between all three computers while still being available through the web-based login (drive.google.com). As we accumulate more and more files each year, this service keeps those files within reach at all times. While storage is great, what else does Drive offer? A means to collaborate.

Google Drive for Collaboration

Drive allows teachers to not only store their files but enables them to share files across multiple users. All files within Google Drive are ready to share with access permissions able to be set with a simple click of a button. Therefore, a single file can be linked between multiple users. This share can give permission to edit or simply view the document. From within Drive, a user also has the ability to generate a document or slide show from scratch. So, instead of simply uploading files, Drive is a word processing suite where students can start and finish an entire assignment without the fear of it getting lost in the digital wasteland of their network share. It auto saves any edits and is automatically pinned to Drive.

Working in Google Doc /Slides

As you can imagine, shared editing permissions on a single document across many users has great collaborative potential. Students can all edit a document or compile an assignment in real time while you watch at your terminal. With a click of the “revision history” button, a teacher can track all contributions/changes to document by date and by user, eliminating the sometimes difficult task of deciphering who contributed what in a group setting.

Practical Nature of Google Drive

While all the information provided in this article may sound good, what does it look like in an average day? To begin, I wrote this article offline while flying from Labrador to the Island – anybody who has flown the route can agree that there is certainly enough time. Given the context of the article, it seems only fitting to share with you that it was written on a smartphone using Google Docs, saved as an offline file, and synced with my Google Drive once I hit a WIFI network. It has even been submitted using a shareable link, a means of sharing files to those who do not use the Drive.

As I am away from my class, all assigned theory work in Skilled Trades has been pre-shared with my students, a process that has been running seamlessly as a paper-free course for the past two years. Once the routine is set, it becomes second nature to students to access their Drive and continue on. Similarly, my Occupational Health and Safety class is currently working on a collaborative assignment using a single shared Google Doc. As they are working, I am also working with the file, helping them with formatting and editing as they go. Personally, I have had great success using GD over the years. Now, all we need is an opportunity to share our successes with each other in a professional development context.

TESIC BGM 2017

Dates have been set for the upcoming 2017 TESIC BGM and conference. Join the Executive and membership for a professional learning event hosted at the Holiday Inn, November 16-17, 2017. The theme for BGM will be *G Suite for Education* with the majority of slated sessions to focus on its practical use in the NL classroom. The event will offer professional learning for both beginner and advanced users, from checking your mail to scripting Google Webapps. TESIC will continue its standing tradition of offering educators quality professional learning. Look for more information in the coming months or get in touch with me directly – tom@tesic.org. Don't miss out on the information by signing up for a free TESIC membership account at TESIC.org. Membership is only a click away.

Tom Kennedy (B.A., B.Ed., Dip. Tech Ed, M.A. & Ed. (E.F.L.C.)) is a teacher at Eric G. Lambert and President of the Technology Education Special Interest Council (TESIC).

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Supporting Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder

by KENDRA LANE

A recent study suggests there are approximately 500,000 adults in Canada who have intellectual disabilities or Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD); just one in four participate in the workforce. A number of factors contribute to this statistic, but the fact remains that persons with disabilities are unemployed and underemployed at much higher rates than their peers. Research suggests 'career exploration and preparation' for students on the spectrum should begin early. Both parents and educators can help set realistic goals and plan for the challenges associated with students with ASD transitioning into adulthood and becoming active members in their communities.

Any change can be challenging for students on the spectrum. Whether transitioning between physical locations, subjects, or teachers, changing the environment and expectations can create considerable stress daily for students with ASD. Extrapolating these challenges to one of the biggest transitions in anyone's life, leaving high school and entering adulthood, means we have to put much more effort into understanding how we best prepare those with ASD for a successful journey.

We all know that 'routines' are excellent coping mechanisms for students on the spectrum; we help students use routines and predictability to be successful throughout their day. But what happens when routines create rigidity? Students with ASD, and even those who support them, can get comfortable with "the way things are" and without the same impact of social pressure from peers, students with ASD may resist taking on greater independence and more responsibilities with age. Students spend over a decade following a very similar routine throughout the structure of school and then, suddenly, everything changes. This drastic shift in expectations can

be very overwhelming and prevent capable students from moving onward to post-secondary opportunities or labour participation.

Current research trends are showing the need to introduce work-related structure, ideas, and concepts earlier for individuals with ASD, allowing them to learn about different styles of expectations and use this familiarity to overcome the challenges associated with the transition out of school. Volunteer opportunities, job shadowing and other types of 'experiential work learning' are invaluable for students on the spectrum who have difficulty generalizing the concept of what working really means and determining the type of work that is a good fit.

"...educators can help set realistic goals and plan for the challenges associated with students with ASD transitioning into adulthood and becoming active members in their communities."

Another value of experiential work learning for students on the spectrum is discovering job suitability outside of the typical skills, strengths, and interests. Every job has a description indicating the duties and skills

required for the position; but, every job also has a list of hidden expectations that are often taken for granted, relating to social understanding and communication. Persons with autism, and those supporting them, can find these hidden expectations difficult to understand until they experience particular work environments. For example, preparing food may be someone's passion. They may have the necessary skills mastered, but the fast-paced team dynamic and multi-tasking required, combined with the sensory overload of restaurant kitchens, may easily prevent someone with ASD from being successful in that setting. Students who experience the 'day to day' of a job are better prepared to make career decisions. While this is true for all students, it is much more difficult for those on the spectrum to shift subjects, career paths, and ambitions when things do not work out.

The most important consideration for students on the spectrum is that preparation occurs in the years leading up to the completion of high school and that the transition is directly from high school into their designated individual plans. When there is no transition, or when the transition is not facilitated by a professional, young adults with ASD often create a new routine at home that may become the most difficult challenge to overcome.

Career exploration and preparation programs designed specifically for persons on the spectrum target these challenging areas so students and young adults can work on the hidden expectations of the work environment and increase their confidence in setting and achieving their goals. With a focus on self-knowledge, experiential learning, and the social expectations of a work environment, students are much better prepared to be successful in their chosen field. Autism Society NL offers a number of provincially and federally funded career preparation programs at its headquarters, the Elaine Dobbin Centre for Autism, in St. John's. They are specifically designed to prepare young persons with ASD for the workforce. For more information on any of these programs below, please contact info@autism.nf.net.

STEP (Students Transitioning into Employment Program)

The STEP Program engages high school students with an Intellectual Disability or Autism Spectrum Disorder to participate in targeted career development activities and exploration. With an individualized approach, students build self-awareness and skills through structured learning sessions and community mentorship placements under the support of an ASD career counsellor. This opportunity enhances the transition planning process for students in order to identify strengths and experience contextual learning before leaving high school, and helps identify appropriate employment or post-secondary choices. Referrals for the STEP Program are routed through Guidance Counsellors at participating schools, presently in the St. John's Metro area.

Ages 16-21; Suitable for those who have the ability to work independently, or with minimal supports, and are motivated to obtain work placements and/or attend a post-secondary institution; registration ongoing. STEP is a partnership between the Newfoundland and Labrador Association for Community Living and Autism Society, Newfoundland Labrador, and is funded by the Government of Canada through the Ready, Willing and Able initiative.

EmploymentWorks (Worktopia™)

EmploymentWorks Canada (EWC) is a new and federally funded program that offers 12 weeks of employment readiness training for young adults on the spectrum who are no longer in school and are seeking opportunities to build employability. Through self-awareness activities and understanding employment expectations, participants engage in peer mentor learning and community workplace immersion to build confidence and capability. Groups meet twice a week for the duration of the program.

Ages 15-29; Suitable for those motivated to gain employment skills and comfortable learning in a variety of community environments with limited supervision. Registration required per session offering. The EmploymentWorks Canada program is sponsored by the Sinneave Family Foundation and Autism Speaks Canada, and is funded in part by the Government of Canada's Opportunities Fund for Persons with Disabilities Program. For more information visit www.worktopia.ca.

Transitions

The Transitions Program aims to identify the strengths and interests of individual participants to better prepare them for employment and meaningful community involvement beyond high school. This program provides a full year of classroom learning, enriching community volunteerism, job shadowing, and onsite summer work experience to build the confidence and skill sets of young adults on the spectrum. The Transitions Program is heavily involved with the operations of the Shamrock Garden Centre and includes gardening (onsite and in the community) and greenhouse work.

Ages 18+; Suitable for those motivated to gain employment skills, comfortable learning in a variety of community environments with varying levels of supervision, and for a minimum of three consecutive hours. Annual registration occurs in August. This program is funded through the Department of Advanced Education and Skills, Government of NL.

Kendra Lane is Manager, Programs & Services, with the Autism Society, NL. She is a certified TEACCH Practitioner and is completing her graduate work in providing training and education around Autism Spectrum Disorders. Kendra can be contacted at 709-722-2803 or klane@autism.nf.net.



What Enhanced ICT Capabilities Mean for Rural Success

by DR. WILSON D. WARREN

The topic of rural student success in post-secondary studies and ensuring that rural students successfully complete their secondary schooling and reach their post-secondary goals has been a research topic of interest for me my whole life. What was observed most prevalently in our area of the province was rural students were departing from their post-secondary studies within their first year of study without finishing any program. We have seen dramatic improvements with rural student success in post-secondary studies within the past five years and I believe strongly that it can be attributed to a number of tangible factors: specifically, the advancement in Information and Communications Technology (ICT) capabilities within the rural communities and the subsequent skills learned in taking high school courses via distance education offered through CDLI (Centre for Distance Learning and Innovation). Both of those factors have allowed rural students to finish their high school programs at home while at the same time providing the necessary study and work skills to be successful in post-secondary studies.

The unifying theme of research into student departure from post-secondary studies has been the idea that a student's involvement in the social environment is critical to success in their new academic surroundings (McLaughlin & Brozovsky, 1998). Tinto (1993) argues that a rural student's sense of academic and social belonging impacts on their persistence and subsequent graduation. These underlying themes have guided the many research studies that have been conducted over the last two decades.

Transition to the academic and social aspects of university can be a hard event for many rural students. Those that experience problems adjusting to their new surroundings tend to be of greater risk of departing (Tinto, 1987). Tinto argues that a rural student may find it difficult to integrate into their environment because they may find themselves unable to separate themselves from past associations (especially those from high school and rural communities) or because they feel at odds with the institution (experi-

ence a lack of fit with academic and/or social environment of the institution and the community of study). The inability of the student to find an individual (peer, professor or staff member) to identify with at the institution, is argued by Tinto as a major reason for departure of students. If a student is unable to establish a membership in a group on campus the more likely they are of separating themselves with the institution (this is especially true if they find membership in a group that has no connection to the institution).

Models of student persistence have consistently highlighted the importance of students' past academic achievements to their post-secondary persistence and success (Bean & Metzner, 1985; Cabrera, Nora, & Casteñeda, 1993; Tinto, 1987). Astin (1993) suggested that "the most 'dropout prone' freshmen are those with poor academic records in high school, low aspirations [and] poor study habits" (p. 45). Ramist (1981) argued that student motivation should be considered the sine qua non of persistence in post-secondary and, therefore, the most important factor in persistence research.

Even though, I could find no current studies that report significant difference between distance and non-distance students with regard to their high school achievement, it is possible that the students who complete high school distance education courses are more motivated to achieve and persist at university. This is consistent with earlier research which suggests that high school students who participate in on-line courses are often more highly motivated, self-disciplined and independent (Barbour & Reeves, 2009). It may also be possible that the experience of completing on-line distance education courses in high school prepared rural students for a more independent approach to learning. This aspect of the distance education course experience – asynchronous, independently motivated study – is consistent with the study skills that many students need to succeed in the university environment (Dodd et al., 2009).

One need not look any further than Grey River, an isolated community on the south west coast por-

tion of the island, as living proof of the benefits of advanced communication and technology and the positive impact of the Centre for Distance Learning and Innovation (CDLI). The school has progressed from offering one distance course through telemedicine communication via a dial up connection to high speed Internet connection through the Burgeo Broadcasting Corporation offering its entire high school curriculum through CDLI. All the rural students who attended post-secondary within the past five years have graduated with success (either received a degree or diploma). Tinto (1987) noted that many students face difficulty in making the transition from high school to the post-secondary setting when they must move away from their families and established social networks to attend a post-secondary institution. This separation from their home community, which can be both psychological and physical, cuts students off from their established social support networks and norms, culture, practices and habits. Tinto suggested that the degree of difficulty experienced in making the transition is highly dependent on an individual's ability to adjust to a new life in a new environment, and to integrate into the culture of a new group (Dodd et. al., 2009).

We found in Grey River that rural students' use of communications technology in their first year of post-secondary studies allowed them to maintain a connection between their place of study and their home life. These rural students were more comfortable with using computer technology and other communication tools through the experience gained in taking all their high school courses through CDLI, which allowed them to more easily keep in touch with their friends and family. The sustained social and family connections provided these students with enhanced social support, eased the difficulties of separation, and made the transition to and continuation in post-secondary studies less difficult. These rural students cited the use of modern technologies such as Facetime, Skype and Messenger as important tools to keep them connected to loved ones and friends from a distance.

The high speed Internet connection that exists today through Burgeo Broadcasting System allows both rural students and even adults alike to stay within the community for advanced learning through distance education. I am not only speaking as principal, teacher and community resident, but also as living proof of what opportunities it provides for rural communities and its residents. I attended All Saints All Grade School as a student when there was no Internet in the community or computers in

the school to having advanced to the point where I was able to remain home and work while completing a Masters and Doctoral degree via distance education. Within the past three years, I have been able to continue to work in the community while teaching both undergraduate and graduate courses via distance education for both the University of Prince Edward Island and Memorial University. These advances have provided rural communities with the capabilities to stay virtually connected while offering its residents the opportunity for advanced skills and training. This was unheard of even ten years ago as rural communities had no access to Internet connection. Today we have high speed Internet and because of the ICT capabilities it is providing, we are seeing it generate rural student success in post-secondary studies both on site and through distance education through the enhanced social networks and connections with home that it provides.

Dr. Warren is principal at Whitbourne Elementary School. He can be reached at wilsondwarren@yahoo.com.

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CLASSROOM CONNECTIONS



Woodchips to Microchips

Makerspace sessions hearken back to shop class — plus 3D printers

by MARCIA PORTER

Miss the scent of sawdust and woodchips from your days in junior and senior high school industrial arts labs? Want to create something cool with a 3D printer? Then the Faculty of Education's makerspace sessions are just for you.

DIY Space

Faculty of Education members Dr. Gerald Galway and Professor David Gill are offering makerspace sessions in partnership with the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association, the Newfoundland and Labrador English School District (Eastern Region) and the College of the North Atlantic, with support from a Memorial public engagement grant.

Traditional Practice

In generations past, the process of making things used to be an everyday activity in both school and at home. The practice is enjoying a resurgence, and has led to the establishment of makerspaces across a range of public spaces from schools and libraries to colleges and universities.

By “making things,” Dr. Galway and Professor Gill mean pretty much anything that you can make in a modern day technology space with fabrication equipment such as 3D printers, electronics and wood-working tools.

Professor Gill, who teaches in the technology education program, sees the sessions as an excellent field experience for his students.

“We like to see our students engaging in experiential learning activities wherever we can create them,” he said.

Pre-service teachers will host and run the sessions following their first teaching internships in the faculty's Technology Education Centre.

During their pre-service education, future technology education teachers get plenty of hands-on learning, building objects like rocking horses and remote-controlled robots to creating digital animation. In their current project, the education students are working on electronic devices like small drones and solar chargers for USB devices.

“We’re a technology school, so we are fully on board with this,” said Howard Guy, an instructor

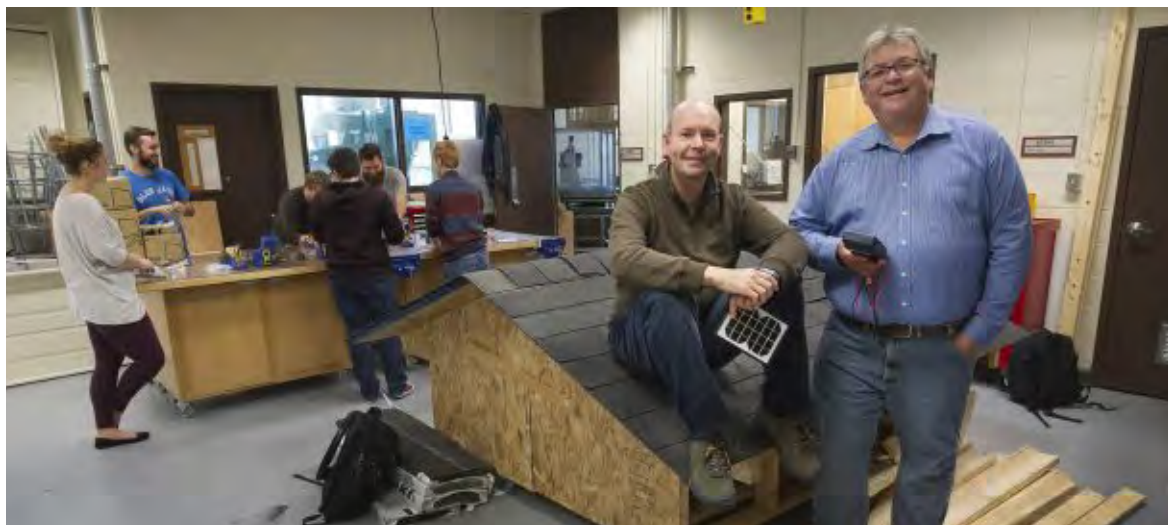


Photo: Chris Hammond

A makerspace is a collaborative work space, for making, learning, exploring and sharing that uses high tech to no-tech tools. From left, Professor David Gill and Dr. Gerald Galway in the Technology Education Centre.



Photo: Chris Hammond

Some education students making use of the makerspace in the Faculty of Education.

from the College of the North Atlantic who was instantly sold on the project. “Teachers will be using equipment with their students, and some students will be inspired to explore technology and careers in technology.”

Engage and Connect

Funded by the Office of Public Engagement at Memorial, the project is intended to engage and connect members of the public and selected partner organizations with Memorial through the makerspace sessions.

Makers are ordinary people, in this case, students, teachers and members of the general public, some of whom may never have been inside Memorial and might be surprised by what they find inside the centre.

“We like the idea of getting people to spend time with us on campus where they can get reacquainted with the university and the college communities,” said Dr. Galway. “With this project, our intention is to create greater access to Memorial for students and the public.”

If you would like additional information on the Faculty of Education’s Makerspace sessions, please contact Professor David Gill at dgill@mun.ca or Dr. Gerald Galway at ggalway@mun.ca.

This article has been reprinted with permission from Marcia Porter, a communications co-ordinator with the School of Nursing and the Faculty of Education at Memorial University. Marcia can be reached at mlporter@mun.ca.

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OF SPECIAL INTEREST...

Special Interest Councils are professional learning communities dedicated to life-long learning and the ongoing professional growth of NLTA members. Their mandate includes offering a range of professional development programs, including conferences, institutes, focus groups, teleconferences, and e-learning initiatives. Councils communicate with their membership using a variety of current technologies. As part of their mandate, the councils will respond to curriculum and program concerns, develop position papers on critical issues, work with government on curriculum development and advise the NLTA on matters of importance.

Currently there are 12 special interest councils as follows:

Council of Special Services (COSS)

Danielle Doyle, President
Carbonear Collegiate, Carbonear
Tel: 596-3911 (S)
danielledoyle@nlesd.ca

Health Education Council

Kellie Baker, President
St. Mathew's School, St. John's
Tel: 745-1513 (S)
kelliebaker@nlesd.ca
www.healthednl.com

Math/Science Council

Yvonne Dawe, President
CDLI – Brother Rice High Annex, St. John's
Tel: 729-1979 (O)
yvonedawe@nlesd.ca
yvonedawe@cdli.ca

Music Council (MSIC)

Ashley Beresford, President
Macdonald Drive Jr. High, St John's
Tel: 753-8240 (S)
ashleyberesford@nlesd.ca
nlmsic.com

NL Counsellors' & Psychologists' Association (NLCPA)

Boyd Perry, President
Holy Heart High, St. John's
Tel: 754-1600 (S)
boydperry@nlesd.ca
www.nlcpa.ca

Physical Education Council (PESIC)

Luke Neville, President
St. Joseph's All-Grade, Terrenceville
Tel: 662-2201 (S)
lukeneville@nlesd.ca
www.pesic.nl.com

School Administrators Council (SAC)

Kyran Dwyer, President
St. Teresa's School/École Ste-Thérèse, St. John's
Tel: 579-9111 (S)
kyrandwyer@nlesd.ca

Second Languages Council/ Le Council des langues secondes

Laun Shoemaker (Interim contact)
Beachy Cove Elementary, Portugal Cove
895-2241 (S)
launshoemaker@nlesd.ca

Small Schools Council

Natasha Aylward, President
St. Gabriel's All-Grade, St. Brendan's
Tel: 669-3331 (S)
natashapowell@nlesd.ca

Speech Language Pathologists' Council

Sandy Crowley, President
NLESD - Labrador Region
Tel: 896-2431 (S)
sandycrowley@nlesd.ca

Teacher Librarians Newfoundland & Labrador (TL-NL)

Heather Godden, President
Beachy Cove Elementary, Portugal Cove
Tel: 895-2241/2 (S)
heathergodden@nlesd.ca

Technology Education Council (TESIC)

Thomas Kennedy, President
Eric G. Lambert School, Churchill Falls
Tel: 925-3371(S)
tom@tesic.org
www.tesic.org

If you are working in one of these specialized areas, you may choose to join the appropriate council. By participating in Special Interest Council programming, you can avail of the latest information on methodologies, trends in particular disciplines, and changes in curriculum as they develop and emerge.

Special Interest Councils advertise their programs through *The Bulletin*, the NLTA website, school boards, schools and media.

If you are a member of a Special Interest Council, you will be automatically notified of professional development opportunities. Since helping our membership become more effective teachers is always an overriding goal of this Association, the activities of our Special Interest Councils are geared to improving classroom practice.

Please make every effort to be an active member of special interest councils that are of interest to you. If you wish to become a member of one of the existing councils, you have only to contact the president of that council, and you will be sent the necessary membership information. Opportunities also exist for you to become an executive member of one of the councils, thereby allowing you to take on a valuable leadership role within the Association. As a council member, you will be kept current on exciting new learning and discoveries in your field.

If you have any questions, concerns or ideas re the NLTA Special Interest Councils, contact:

Ian Crewe, Administrative Officer – Programs & Services, NLTA
icrewe@nlta.nl.ca; Tel: 726-3223 or toll-free at 1-800-563-3599, ext. 232

NEWS & EVENTS

PHYSICAL & HEALTH EDUCATION 2017 NATIONAL CONFERENCE – PHE CANADA & PESIC

May 4-6, 2017

Memorial University, St. John's. *Theme: Rock Solid Foundations... Energizing Futures.* The Conference provides an opportunity for delegates to network with colleagues and increase their knowledge and skills to foster healthy active living for children and youth in the school community. For more information visit: www.phecanada.ca/events/2017_national_conference.

CCPA CONFERENCE (CANADIAN COUNSELLING & PSYCHOTHERAPY ASSOC.)

May 16-19, 2017

Sheraton Hotel, St. John's. More information to follow.

DEVELOPING SUCCESSFUL SCHOOLS (DSS) INSTITUTE 2017

July 4-7, 2017

Mount Allison University, Sackville, New Brunswick. If you are interested in being a participant, contact George Tucker, Administrative Officer, Programs and Services, NLTA at 726-3223 or 1-800-563-3599, ext. 245 or gtucker@nlta.nl.ca.

CONTACT 2017 (CONFERENCE ON NEW TECHNIQUES AND CLASSROOM TEACHING)

August 8-11, 2017

University of Prince Edward Island, Charlottetown. For further information contact Beverley Park, Senior Administrative Officer, Programs and Services, NLTA at 726-3223 or 1-800-563-3599, ext. 244 or bpark@nlta.nl.ca.

TESIC BGM 2017

November 16-17, 2017

Holiday Inn, St. John's. The theme for TESIC's BGM 2017 will be *G Suite for Education* with the majority of slated sessions to focus on its practical use in the NL classroom. The event will offer professional learning for both beginner and advanced users, from checking your mail to scripting Google Webapps. Look for more information in the coming months or contact Tom Kennedy at tom@tesic.org.

CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF PRINCIPALS (CAP) 2018 CONFERENCE

May 15-18, 2018

Delta Hotel, St. John's. The NLTA School Administrators Council is hosting CAP 2018. *Theme: Navigating Uncharted Waters: Keeping An Even Keel.* Further information to follow.

2017 CONVENTION DEADLINES

February 19, 2017

- All nominations for Provincial Executive for publication in the 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 the NLTA Office for printing in the Convention issue of *The Bulletin*.
- Resolutions to Convention must be received at the NLTA Office.

March 19, 2017

Mailing of Convention issue of *The Bulletin*.

April 18-21, 2017

Biennial General Meeting.

April 20, 2017

Final deadline for receipt of nominations for Provincial Executive.

DATES TO REMEMBER

February 2017

Feb 12-18 Education Week
Feb 12-18 Teacher/Staff Appreciation Week
Feb 14 Janeway Day in the Schools
Feb 16 **Deadline:** PD Fund applications

March 2017

Mar 2 NLTA Provincial Executive Meeting
Mar 3-4 NLTA Joint Council Meeting
Mar 16 **Deadline:** PD Fund applications
Mar 31 **Board Deadline:** Notice for retirement at end of school year

April 2017

Apr 1 **Deadline:** Johnson Bursary Applications
Apr 15 **Deadline:** Notice of postponement of Deferred Salary Leave or withdrawal from DSLP
Apr 20 **Deadline:** PD Fund applications
Apr 30 **Deadline:** Deferred Salary Leave Applications
Apr 30 **Deadline:** Year-end resignation from contract

May 2017

May 7 **Deadline:** Notice by Board of layoff
May 18 **Deadline:** PD Fund applications

June 2017

June 9-10 NLTA Provincial Executive Meeting
June 15 **Deadline:** Notice by Board of acceptance/rejection of Deferred Salary Leave requests
June 15 **Deadline:** PD Fund applications

July 2017

July 31 **Deadline:** NLTA Scholarship Applications

INTRODUCING

Our New “Free” NLTA Mobile Device App

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For instance, users can quickly find the New Teacher information, EAP information or request a new NLTA Member Card.

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or use the QR code



IMPORTANT NOTICE FOR RETIRING TEACHERS

Teachers who are planning to retire at the end of June 2017 and who will be entitled to receive a pension benefit effective July 1 are reminded of the change that took effect last year regarding the timing of receipt of their summer holdback pay and their first pension benefit.

Teachers who submit their resignation to their District on or before March 31 and who complete and submit their “Application for Teachers’ Pension” to the Pensions Division on or before that date will receive their entire summer holdback pay as a lump-sum payment during the first pay period following the end of the school year. As a result, retiring teachers will then receive their first pension benefit payment on July 15 or July 31. Income tax for the summer holdback pay lump-sum payment will be calculated on a pro-rated basis as though the teacher had received four separate pay cheques over the summer months, which will avoid any additional taxation.

Therefore, it is important for those teachers considering retirement for the end of the school year to submit their

resignation to their District on or before March 31 and to complete and submit their pension application to the Pensions Division in a timely manner. Any teachers whose resignations or applications are submitted after March 31 cannot be guaranteed payment of pension on July 15 or July 31.

NOTE: The foregoing is only applicable to teachers who are retiring at the end of the school year and summer holdback payments for all other teachers will not be affected.

If you have any questions regarding this change, please contact an Administrative Officer in Programs and Services at the NLTA by calling **1-800-563-3599** or **726-3223** or **mail@nlta.nl.ca**.

