

bulletin

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Up Front from the President



On January 12, 2010 the world was informed that there had been an earthquake in Haiti and hundreds of thou-

sands of people had died. It was a moment that took our breaths away. Few people can understand the abject poverty of the country let alone the concept of many people dying in one tragic act of nature. The days that followed saw the world respond in an outpouring of financial and military support from governments. Through the speed of television and the Internet we saw graphic pictures of the devastation. At times I could not bear to watch the horrific images of the death and destruction. How would a country such as Canada or even our province cope with such adversity? That question resonates with me still and I don't have the answer. We live in a province where we have had major catastrophes but nothing that has affected so many. The entire province would be eliminated altogether if we had to face what happened in Haiti.

We are very fortunate to live in a province where the culture is to help everyone who is having a difficult time. That culture of caring and nurturing of all people is one that grew out of the many years of hardship that our ancestors endured as they came to this province and eked out a living on the land and on the sea. I am very proud to live in a province where, when the chips are down, we reach into our hearts and pockets and do whatever we can for those who are less fortunate than ourselves.

I have listened intently to all the activities that were being planned for relief efforts for Haiti and it is clear that the teachers and the students of this province are contributing significantly to supporting

these activities. It is through our education system that our students learn the concept of helping others and social justice issues. It is the teachers that brought the horror of the tragedy to the students in ways that they could accept and challenged the students to help. Teachers have helped organize many functions to raise money for the victims of Haiti. There have been hats for Haiti, hearts for Haiti, hot dogs for Haiti, shoes for Haiti, to name a few. We have reported on some of these initiatives in this issue of *The Bulletin* but we know there are numerous others.

A CBC interview with three Grade 3 students from A.P. Low Primary in Labrador City summed up how many feel. The interviewer asked the students why they were giving money to the people of Haiti. One little boy responded that they have nothing because of the earthquake – no toys to play with or food – and then he interjected and said that his friend put in \$10 of his own money to help. The interviewer asked the students who told them about the earthquake and they all responded that their teacher had told them. He also asked if their parents had talked to them about the earthquake and they said, “no”, it was their teacher. The commentator continued to ask them what would they say to the people of Haiti and one little boy said “tell them not to fight and get angry with each other, that help was on its way and they would soon have enough food and water.”

This interview once again demonstrated to me the power of being a teacher. Teachers across this province are ensuring that their students understand the magnitude of the devastation and the altruism of helping a country that many students had to be shown on a map. I am confident that even in the horrors of explaining the devastation to students is was again a teachable moment of great value. Most, if not all of the students, will remember this earth-

quake, its devastation and how they helped raise funds for the people of Haiti.

On March 8, 2010 Education Week will be proclaimed at Templeton Academy in Meadows. The theme this year is *My Place • Ma place*. This is so fitting after experiencing the work that teachers and students across this province have demonstrated in helping the victims of the earthquake in Haiti. We are very proud of our place in the world and our ability to help others when the need arises. We live in communities where teachers are the focal point of ensuring that their students develop the skills necessary to be citizens of the world and to understand that even though we are a small place, geographically, in this world we have big hearts and a culture that fosters community and kindness and the ability to share whatever we have with others. That is the kind of *My Place • Ma place*, I want to live in and share with others that have the same values.

I want to thank the teachers of this province for all that you gave to ensure that the students of Newfoundland and Labrador understood the devastation and the need to help others in difficult times. Thank you once again for going above and beyond to raise money, organize events, give of yourselves and for being true role models in your communities in helping others in need. *My Place • Ma place* is much better for having you in it.

Lily B.

THE bulletin

Lesley-Ann Browne
Editor

Michelle Lamarche
Editorial Assistant

Linda Babstock, John Bishop,
Elliott Green, Louise King
Design • Printing • Distribution

Linda Farrell
Online Services

The Bulletin is published eight times a year during the school year by the Nfld. and Labrador Teachers' Assn., 3 Kenmount Road, St. John's, Newfoundland, Canada, A1B 1W1. Tel: 709-726-3223; 1-800-563-3599 Fax: 709-726-4302; 1-877-711-6582 labrowne@nlta.nl.ca www.nlta.nl.ca

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Cover: Map Source: United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), 2010



Lily B. Cole
NLTA President

Education Week 2010 La semaine de l'éducation



As we celebrate Education Week, March 7-13, the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association would like to acknowledge all our teachers, students, support staff and other educational partners for the outstanding work carried out in our schools.

Our theme this year, "My Place • Ma place", encourages students to look at their place within home, community, province, country and world, as well as tie the theme to Newfoundland and Labrador heritage and culture.

The purpose of Education Week is to celebrate education and encourage parents, community members and other educational stakeholders to become more involved with education along with students and teachers.

The NLTA sponsors and organizes Education Week in this province.



Sponsored by the NLTA since 1936.

PROVINCIAL/NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL

NEWS

SPANIARD'S BAY

Holy Redeemer Boys and Girls Junior Volleyball teams win gold

Congratulations to the junior boys and girls volleyball team of Holy Redeemer Elementary in Spaniard's Bay who both won the gold medal in the zone tournaments.

The boys' tournament was held at St. Peter's Elementary on January 26. Four schools including Baccalieu Collegiate, Amalgamated Academy, St. Peter's Elementary, and Holy Redeemer Elementary participated in the tournament. The girls' zone tournament was held on January 26 at Amalgamated Academy. All teams played exceptionally and displayed great team spirit.



Holy Redeemer Boys Volleyball Team.



Holy Redeemer Girls Volleyball Team.

POUCH COVE

School raises funds for Terry Fox Run

Cape St. Francis Elementary School in Pouch Cove held its annual Terry Fox Run on September 25, 2009. All students from Kindergarten to grade 6, along with staff and parents, assembled in the gymnasium at 1:30 p.m. to listen to Terry's brother, Fred, make a presentation. He discussed various aspects relating to Terry's life as well as his journey. "His inspirational speech provided the motivation needed for students as they waited for the Run to begin," said Margaret Dunphy, a teacher at Cape St. Francis Elementary.

Following the presentation everyone went outside to walk/run a distance between 2 and 6 kilometres. Upon their return, participants were provided with water and a nutritious snack.

This year's run had a special incentive. If the students were able to raise more than \$1,000 they would have the opportunity to tape their Principal to the wall. They responded by collecting over \$4,000.



Cape St. Francis Principal Sean Noah is duct-taped to the wall by students during the school's annual Terry Fox Run.

On October 16, 2009, Heather Strong of the NL Terry Fox Association was invited to the school for the cheque presentation. In addition, she had the pleasure of witnessing the Principal, Mr. Sean Noah, fulfilling his promise of allowing students to suspend him from the wall using duct tape. Students were ecstatic and cheered enthusiastically as they each took turns participating in the taping ceremony.

"Many thanks are extended to Mr. Noah for being such a good sport and a willing participant. Also, congratulations to the staff, parents and students at Cape St. Francis. It is due to your involvement and cooperation that the Run has been a success and continues to grow each year," concluded Ms. Dunphy.

GLOVERTOWN

School receives \$25,000 donation for Skilled Trades program

The Skilled Trades program at Glovertown Academy received a major financial contribution during the Christmas assembly on December 23. Glovertown Home Hardware, which is owned by The Oram Group of Companies, announced they would be donating \$25,000 towards the Oram's Home Hardware Skilled Trades Training Center. This facility will greatly increase the available floor space for students participating in Skilled Trades courses offered at Glovertown Academy. A portion of this generous donation will also be used to purchase tools and materials.



Pictured (l-r): Lindahl Butt (Skilled Trades Teacher), Paul Oram and Juan Gill

Glovertown Academy would like to acknowledge and thank The Oram Group of Companies and Glovertown Home Hardware for playing a big part in further developing the Skilled Trades program at Glovertown Academy.

ST. JOHN'S

Rice Day 2010 at MDJH

Rice Day was a great success at Macdonald Drive Junior High in St. John's. On January 13, the Random Acts of Kindness Committee planned and organized this event. Students and staff were encouraged to eat a simple bowl of white rice for lunch and donate their

lunch money or any money to help the young people in Timor Leste. "We are proud to say that we raised \$300 for the 'Young Farmers Scouts' of Timor Leste," said Joan McCue, School Counsellor at Macdonald Drive Junior High. The "Young Farmers Scouts" are helping young people in six villages in this tiny, remote Asian country build their agricultural and leadership skills, while feeding their community.



Students at Macdonald Drive Junior High participate in Rice Day 2010.

NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR

Body Image Network releases curriculum resource

The Body Image Network has developed and released a curriculum resource for all primary/elementary schools in Newfoundland and Labrador. The toolkit has modules for grades 2 and 4 on body diversity, body image, self concept and social esteem. All activities have been approved by the Department of Education and are curriculum indexed to help teachers meet specific outcomes. The resource contains:

- Public education campaign – Posters for distribution: "Every Body is Different - Be Friends with Everybody".
- Grade 2 intervention – Based on the children's book *Percy Pinhorn*, the theme is to show that different sizes and shapes are desirable. In addition, activities that are indexed to the Grade 2 curriculum are included.
- Grade 4 intervention – Activities to promote positive body image and size acceptance are indexed with the Grade 4 curriculum.
- Parent Pamphlets – As students learn many attitudes at home, parent information about body image and self-esteem are sent home to parents to accompany school activities.
- A section of the toolkit is targeted towards the school environment as a whole to reduce body-based harassment in the school system.

This project was funded by a Provincial Wellness Grant, Government of NL. For more information, please go to www.bodyimagenetwork.ca.

Schools Give Generously to Help Haiti Earthquake Victims

CARMANVILLE

Students and staff at Phoenix Academy raise funds for Haiti

Students and staff at Phoenix Academy in Carmanville had a very successful Pajama Day on January 22. Ms. Hayter's Grade One class raised a whopping \$96 to add to the total of \$478 raised to help the survivors of the earthquake in Haiti.



Grade One students at Phoenix Academy raise money for the Haiti earthquake disaster during Pajama Day.

KELLIGREWS

Haitian relief effort a huge success at St. Edward's School

"In my years as principal at St. Edward's School I have been privileged to witness the generosity and giving spirit of our school community," said Rick Gagnon, Principal of St. Edward's School in Kelligrews. Over the years students, parents and teachers have generously donated to worthy causes such as the Badger Flooding Crisis, Tsunami Relief as well as needy families in their school community.

When St. Edward's received word of the Haitian earthquake disaster the staff quickly decided that students and staff needed to play their part in the world-

wide response to this disaster. On Monday, January 18, they conducted a school-wide assembly. "In discussing with our students we reflected on our own good fortune," said Principal Gagnon. This was especially brought to light when one of the teachers at St. Edward's shared her recent experiences as a humanitarian worker in the Dominican Republic. During the assembly the staff communicated to the students that as citizens of the world it is imperative that we lend our assistance to those in need. Students, parents and teachers were appealed to contribute in the following ways:

- Throughout the week students were encouraged to bring a few pennies from home to donate to the cause. Initially the school had hoped to fill one large container, but as the week went on the students not only donated pennies, but they contributed nickels, dimes, loonies, toonies and even paper money.
- "Chores for Charity" – Students volunteered at home to perform a chore(s) and parents paid them for their work.
- Weekly recycling. On average, St. Edward's collect approximately 2,400 to 2,500 items per week. During the week of January 18, they gathered approximately 8,000 recycling items.
- Friday – Hat Day for Haiti. Students and teachers were permitted to wear their favorite hat at a cost of 50 cents.
- Friday – Hot Dog Haiti Lunch – students and staff purchased hot dogs for \$1 each.



Students at St. Edward's School collect money for Haitian relief effort.

- Teachers paid \$10 each to wear jeans.
- Tim Horton's donated coffee and it was placed in the staff room for teachers to purchase.

"The amount of money that was raised in four days was truly spectacular," commented Principal Gagnon. "Just as remarkable was the response by those in our community. Not only did students, parents and teachers respond to this cause, but we had assistance from members of the local Kiwanis Club, many of which are grandparents of students at our school." This group of dedicated volunteers arrived at 10:30 a.m. and assisted with the school's Friday Hot Dog Lunch through to 1:30 p.m. The school community of St. Edward's School raised \$8,037.10 for the people of Haiti.

CORNER BROOK

Hearts for Haiti at St. Gerard's Elementary

Graydon Pelley, a Grade Five teacher at St. Gerard's Elementary in Corner Brook, was overjoyed as he posted heart after heart on the wall of the gymnasium of St. Gerard's Elementary. This was the result of an idea to raise money to help the children who were devastated by the terrible earthquake in Haiti. Students, staff, parents, family members and friends were challenged to purchase hearts for one dollar and each heart was posted throughout the school with the contributor's name on it. Momentum grew each day as the hearts were being purchased.

On Friday, February 5, the school held an assembly to reveal the total amount that had been raised. With lots of media coverage present Mr. Pelley announced that by the end of the assembly a total of 1,600 hearts, (which meant \$1,600), had been

posted on the wall. The gymnasium went up in a roar as the people cheered and celebrated the success of the campaign. The funds were donated to "Hands Across the Sea" (HATS), an organization run by Karen Huxter from nearby Steady Brook. The hearts are still being posted on the wall of the gymnasium. As of Monday, February 8, the total heart count had reached 1,800. Mr. Pelley would like to thank every person who helped in the campaign and challenges people to continue giving from their hearts to help those affected by the earthquake.



St. Gerard's Elementary post hearts on the wall of the gymnasium during their "Hearts for Haiti" fundraising campaign.

Helping Hands for Haiti at Corner Brook Regional High

Students at Corner Brook Regional High recently held a "Helping Hands for Haiti" fundraiser. This fundraiser, which was organized by Level III student Bethany Hoffe, raised over \$4,000 for relief efforts. The funds were divided between the following organizations: Free the Children; Hands Across the Sea; UNICEF; and the Salvation Army.



Corner Brook Regional High students raise their arms in a symbolic gesture for their "Helping Hands for Haiti" fundraiser.

ST. JOHN'S

NLTA provides support to Haiti

At its Provincial Executive meeting on Friday, January 22 the Provincial Executive Council of the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association joined with other teacher organizations as well as the Canadian Teachers' Federation and Education International to contribute to the Haiti Earthquake Solidarity Fund.

Education International, concerned about the humanitarian impact of the devastating earthquake which struck Haiti has launched a Special Fund to help the families of teachers who have been affected and to support the teachers' organization of Haiti to re-establish its work of caring for teachers and promoting education.

"Education is at the core of Haiti's recovery and is the key to Haiti's development," said Lily B. Cole, President of the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association. "The NLTA will be contributing the amount of \$5,600, the equivalent of \$1.00 per member to the Haiti Earthquake Solidarity Fund."

Though currently focused on the immediate aid operation, the United Nations has already said how important reviving the education system is for the country's long-term prospects.

"We have been informed that about half the nation's 15,000 primary schools and 1,500 secondary schools were destroyed or badly damaged in the earthquake creating an enormous challenge for the Western hemisphere's poorest nation", said Cole. "But classes are resuming even in tents to help the children of Haiti overcome the trauma."

Throughout Newfoundland and Labrador students and teachers are also fund-raising at local levels to help the relief efforts in Haiti.



Recent events following the earthquake on January 12, 2010 have generated an outpouring of support and aid from all sectors of the Canadian population to be directed to emergency relief efforts in Port-au-Prince, Haiti.

Despite the situation, CODE continues to work with our partners in Haiti to roll out our reading and writing program. Today, more than any time before, children and teachers in Haiti need our full support. We truly believe that the love of reading will help the children in Haiti cope with this tragedy.

In the meanwhile, CODE wishes to encourage you to continue to support Project Love, which you may wish to complement by getting involved with other agencies assisting with the relief effort. Schools hope to reopen in September or October so we will target that time to have the kits arrive in Haiti, a welcome back-to-school gift.

According to the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE):

During emergencies, education...

- ...is a necessity that can be both life-sustaining and life-saving, providing physical, psychosocial and cognitive protection...
- ...sustains life by offering physical safe space for learning as well as the ability for providing support to and screening those affected, particularly children and adolescents...
- ...mitigates the psychosocial impact of conflict and disasters by giving a sense of normalcy, stability, structure and hope for the future during a time of crisis...
- ...provides the knowledge and skills to survive in a crisis through the dissemination of lifesaving information...

It is too early to predict the educational response in Haiti as communities struggle to assess the full impact of the earthquake. However, the learning supplies that your school will assemble will be more needed than ever as Haitians begin the rebuilding process. CODE will ensure they get to the children who need them.

For more information about education during emergencies, please go to:
www.ineesite.org or www.codecan.org

NLTA Membership Cards Expire June 2010

In order to receive your new NLTA membership card you must do one of the following:

If you have an NLTA user name and password, log on to the Members-Only section of the NLTA website:

- go to **MY PERSONAL INFO** (left hand side of page)
- click **GO TO MY PERSONAL INFORMATION** (the image of a membership card will appear on right hand side)
- click **HERE TO REQUEST A MEMBERSHIP CARD**
- complete **ALL** information that is requested
- remember to click **SEND REQUEST**

New membership cards will be mailed to your home address so please provide complete mailing address (including postal code).

If you cannot recall your user name and password:

- click **MEMBER LOGIN**
- click **FORGOT PASSWORD**
- type your user name or email address (*your user name is usually your email address*)
- click **EMAIL NEW PASSWORD**

Further instructions will be sent within minutes to your email address. The email subject line will say "Replacement Login Information" and the email will be sent from administrator@nlta.nl.ca. (You may want to check your spam/junk mail folder, depending on your computer security settings.)

If you have not as yet registered for the NLTA Members-Only section:

- go to www.nlta.nl.ca
- click **FIRST TIME REGISTRATION**
- please complete **ALL** requested information
- click **SUBMIT** on the bottom of the page

Once we receive your registration a user name and password will be emailed to you. Please be patient as this may take a few days due to the volume of requests.

Once you receive your user name and password you can then proceed to the **MEMBER LOGIN** where you can request an **NLTA** membership card.

Note:

- Please allow 4-6 weeks for delivery of your new NLTA membership card.
- Requests cannot be processed with incomplete information.
- ALL members of the NLTA are entitled to an NLTA membership card.

For further information contact:

Lesley-Ann Browne, NLTA Communications Officer
726-3223 or 1-800-563-3599, ext. 228
labrowne@nlta.nl.ca



The Redundancy/Reassignment and Layoff Process

by DON ASH

As the May 7th deadline approaches (last day for teachers to be notified of layoff), teachers are reminded to review Article 9: Layoff in the Provincial Collective Agreement, especially the change that has been introduced in the new Provincial Collective Agreement, namely, Clause 9.03(c). Article 9 outlines the process that each School Board is required to follow as it prepares and finalizes its staffing plans for the 2010-11 school year.

During any year in which there is a reduction or a realignment of teaching units, a position(s) in a school may be designated as redundant and removed from the school. The actual removal of a position(s) can occur through one of two means: i) through the natural attrition process, created through teacher retirements or resignations and the School Board's decision not to refill the vacancies that have been created; or ii) through the redundancy-reassignment layoff process, as outlined in Article 9. In certain instances, even when the number of retirements and resignations are equal to or greater than the number of teaching units that are scheduled to be removed because of redundancies, there still exists the possibility that further reductions of positions on staffs will be necessary in order to maintain or implement certain programs and/or services. As a result, several individual teachers on a staff and in neighbouring schools may be affected by this process and thus declared redundant and reassigned to another position within another school within the District, or declared redundant and not reassigned, but rather laid off once the process has been exhausted and no comparable position is available within the District that the individual is capable of filling.

Because this process can have significant implications on individual teachers, it is very important that all teachers become thoroughly familiar with the redundancy/reassignment and layoff processes and with their rights during these processes, as provided in the Provincial Collective Agreement. To briefly review the process that should occur when a position(s) is lost on a staff, i.e., a position(s) is redundant, all teach-

ers should be familiar with the following process:

Step I:

Clause 9.01: Teachers must ensure that their placement on the School Board's seniority list accurately reflects their entire teaching service in the Kindergarten to Level III public school system in the Province, i.e., every day should be recorded as seniority. Time taught outside the province or outside of the Kindergarten to Level III school system cannot be credited as seniority. If there are discrepancies between your calculation of seniority and the School Board records, it is the teacher's responsibility to notify their School Board official as soon as it is discovered.

Step II:

Clause 9.02: Senior teachers shall be reassigned to the remaining positions within the school that they are capable of filling. Subject to capability, the reassignment process shall be as follows:

- (a) tenured teachers;
- (b) teachers on a one-year probationary contract;
- (c) teachers on a two-year probationary contract;
- (d) teachers on probationary contracts in accordance with Clause 7.05.

Step III:

Clause 9.03(a): A teacher who is not reassigned in accordance with Clause 9.02, shall have priority, based upon seniority, subject to capability, to vacant teaching positions or positions held by junior teachers, in the following order of priority:

- (i) within the community;
- (ii) within the nearest community, within the school district, where such a position exists.

Step IV: NEW

Clause 9.03(c): notwithstanding Clause 9.09, any teacher who refuses reassignment in accordance with Clause 9.03(a) in any particular year shall not be entitled to further consideration for reassignment in that year.

Note: A teacher who refuses reassignment in accordance with 9.03(c) can apply for transfer to vacant positions during the remainder of the school year and will be considered with all other teachers who have applied for transfer to the same position. If the individual is unsuccessful in obtaining a transfer before the end of the school year, the teacher will be placed in recall and subject to Clause 9.10. (See Step V below).

Note: With respect to Clauses 9.02 and 9.03, in determining capability to fulfill the requirements of the job function, the School Board shall consider the overall ability of the teacher to perform the functions of the position in accordance with the currently modern standards required for the position.

Step V:

Any teacher who is declared redundant and not re-assigned, in accordance with Clauses 9.02 and/or 9.03, is deemed to have been “laid-off” and thus placed on recall. Any teacher placed on recall has rights to vacant comparable positions during the subsequent three (3) years following the layoff (Clause 9.10).

To paraphrase Clause 9.07(b), a teacher who is reassigned and notified in writing in accordance with Article 9, has ten (10) calendar days to notify the

School Board of his/her acceptance or rejection of the reassignment. Also, as stated in Clause 9.09: “A School Board will not advertise any positions or hire any teachers until it has made every effort to place those teachers who have been laid off or who have been notified in writing that they are to be laid off.”

Any teacher who has been notified by his/her school administrator and/or School Board Office personnel that their position is redundant and that they will be reassigned or laid off for the following school year should consult with the designated Administrative Officers in the Benefits and Economic Services Division (BES) responsible for that Board. (The NLTA toll free number: 1-800-563-3599 or 726-3223.) The School Board designations for each Administrative Officer listed below.

If you have any questions regarding this process, please contact an Administrative Officer in the BES Division.

.....
Don Ash is Assistant Executive Director of the NLTA.

District 1	Labrador	Perry Downey	ext. 226
District 2	Western School District	Steve Brooks	ext. 230
District 3	Nova Central School District	Stefanie Tuff	ext. 232
District 4	Eastern School District		
	Burin Region	Perry Downey	ext. 226
	Vista Region	Don Ash	ext. 231
	Avalon West Region	Perry Downey	ext. 226
	Avalon East Region	Don Ash	ext. 231
District 5	Conseil Scolaire Francophone Provincial de Terre-Neuve et du Labrador	Stefanie Tuff	ext. 232
Other	NL School for the Deaf	Don Ash	ext. 231
	NL Youth Centre	Don Ash	ext. 231



Important Notice re: Pension Service

by PERRY DOWNEY

If you answer “YES” to any of the following questions, please continue reading because the action that you take can have a profound impact on your pension in the future.

1. Have you recently returned to your teaching position after a period of approved unpaid leave of absence such as maternity leave, educational leave, unpaid leave in general, or unpaid sick leave?
2. Have you ever taken an approved unpaid leave of absence in the past from your teaching position?
3. Did you ever work for another Department of Government and contribute to one of the following pension plans: the Public Service Pension Plan (PSPP); the Uniform Services Pension Plan (USPP); Memorial University of Newfoundland Pension Plan (MUNPP); or the Members of the House of Assembly Pension Plan (MHAPP)?
4. Did you ever teach elsewhere in Canada and have not withdrawn your pension premiums from the applicable pension plan?
5. Were you ever a substitute teacher or do you currently receive quarterly statements from Great West Life (Group Retirement Services) regarding contributions that you made to a Government Money Purchase Pension Plan (GMPP)?

Many teachers are not aware of the different service purchase provisions available under the Teachers’ Pension Plan (TPP). For example, all approved unpaid leaves of absence from teaching in Newfoundland and Labrador can be credited towards your pension once the applicable premiums or actuarial costs are determined and paid. However, in order to complete the transactions required and receive the applicable pension credit in the TPP, it is *very important* that you initiate the process as early as possible after returning to work in order to receive

the applicable pension credit at the most favorable rates. It is also important to note that, if you initiate the purchase process within the first six months of returning to work, the cost to purchase the service will be considerably less than if you initiate the process beyond the six-month period. However, even if you are beyond the six-month period, you may still wish to consider the option of purchasing any approved unpaid leaves of absence or other eligible service and receive credit towards your pension.

In accordance with Schedule D – Memorandum of Understanding Re: Pensions in the Provincial Collective Agreement (Schedule F – Labrador West Collective Agreement), teachers who initiate the appropriate action will be provided the opportunity to purchase different types of past service as credit towards their pension. Clauses: 7(a) Section 12 – Purchase of Refunded Service (PSPP, USPP, MUNPP, MHAPP); 7(b) Section 13 – Purchase and Recognition as Worked Service Periods of Approved Leaves Without Pay; 7(c) Section 14 and 16 – Purchase of Other Service and Reciprocity; and 7(d) Section 11 and 15 – Purchase of Service and Payment Arrangements, all outline the conditions and cost considerations associated with each of the various types of pensionable service credits that are available under the TPP. However, the process will only start if you take the necessary action!

The process recommended for those who wish to inquire or purchase any approved unpaid leaves of absence, or other forms of service that might be applicable to your personal work history, is to mail (or fax) a written request to the Department of Finance, Pensions Division, requesting that a costing be completed on the approved unpaid leave of absence, or other applicable service, in order to determine the premiums required to be paid in order to purchase such leave or service credit towards your pension. Include in your request your SIN, your mailing address, and any pertinent information regarding your leave or service, such as the year(s) that you wish to have considered. If you are inquir-

ing about a period of approved unpaid leave from the past, it is also advisable to include a letter of proof from the school board confirming that you were on an approved leave during a particular year or portion thereof. Once the calculations are completed, you will receive written correspondence from Pensions Division officials outlining the cost, as well as a contract to purchase the leave or service. You will then have 30 days to complete and return the contract in order for the transaction to be honored. Failure to return the contract within the 30-day period will require you to make a new request to the Pensions Division and a new cost will be determined.

The mailing address for the Pensions Division is:
 Department of Finance
 Teachers' Pensions
 Government of Newfoundland & Labrador
 P.O. Box 8700
 St. John's, NL
 A1B 4J6
 Fax Number: (709) 729-6790

If you have any questions regarding your pension, please contact a Pensions Specialist at the Pensions Division at (709) 729-3931 or 3932, or an Administrative Officer in the Benefits and Economic Services Division of the NLTA at 1-800-563-3599 or (709) 726-3223.

Perry Downey is an Administrative Officer in the Benefits and Economic Services Division of the NLTA.



Teachers as Colleagues and the NLTA Code of Ethics

by STEVE BROOKS

“The underlying premise of the Code of Ethics is that members of the Association do not take actions that are detrimental to colleagues, the profession or the Association.”

The Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association Code of Ethics applies to all members of the Association: teachers, substitute teachers, administrators, program specialists, guidance counsellors, itinerant teachers, speech language pathologists and educational psychologists. It serves as a guide to what is considered acceptable professional practice for teachers. The Code recognizes that individual and collective actions taken by members of any professional group may either enhance or detract from the status of that profession. As such, teachers are expected to be aware of, and observe, the principles of professional practice as outlined in the Code. The Code of Ethics addresses six general areas of teacher professional practice: Teacher-Pupils, Teacher-Employer, Teacher-Colleagues, Teacher-Professional Growth, Teacher-Professional Organization and Teacher-Parents. While teachers are encouraged to make themselves aware of all aspects of the Code, this article will deal specifically about the Teacher-Colleagues expectations.

The underling premise of the Code of Ethics is that members of the Association do not take actions that are detrimental to colleagues, the profession or the Association. This does not mean that teachers are prevented from bringing forward concerns. It simply means that concerns must be addressed in such a way that they respect the chain of authority that exists and the individual involved. The following examples of situations that would fall within the context of the Code of Ethics will better illustrate this point.

A School Administrator with concerns regarding a teacher's performance in the classroom would first present those concerns to the teacher in question

prior to making any report to the school district office. This expectation exists regardless if the teacher is on formal evaluation or not. If after informing a teacher of his/her concerns the administrator chooses to forward concerns to the School District, they do so in writing allowing the opportunity for the teacher to include their own comments with the written report.

A teacher with concerns regarding the conduct of another teacher, including administrators, would first present the concerns to the teacher in question. In cases of professional relations disputes, if the issue were not resolved it would be expected that the teachers submit the dispute to the Association in an effort to achieve a resolution.

A teacher with concerns regarding the performance of a colleague, including substitute teachers, will present those concerns to the teacher in question. Should the teacher make a report on the professional competence of a colleague, they will do so in writing with the opportunity provided to the colleague to provide a written report as well.

Teachers should not bypass the proper channel of authority or communication. Teachers should not undermine the confidence of students in other teachers. Teachers who tutor other teachers' students must notify those teachers.

Oftentimes questions will arise concerning information reported about a teacher through references provided during a job competition process. It is important to keep in mind that through the reference checking process, the employer will be asking teachers and past administrators their opinion of a candidate's performance for the purpose of determining the most suitable candidate for a vacant

position. This is not the same as a colleague taking the initiative to report concerns about the work of a fellow teacher which might affect their current employment situation. By participating in a job competition process an applicant should expect that their past administrators and noted references will be asked questions that speak to job performance. It is advised to make contact with these individuals and determine if they have concerns that could impact on the applicant's competitiveness in a job competition. Having said this, it would not be acceptable for an administrator or teacher to provide information through a reference which could have negative repercussions for a teacher in his/her current position, without first discussing the matter with the teacher as per the example above.

Likewise, teachers are often asked their opinion on who might be the most suitable substitute teacher to replace them when they are absent from school. This would not be considered a report on a teacher's abilities. However, if a teacher provided a negative report to his/her administration regarding the performance of a substitute teacher, it would be expected that the teacher follow the process as outlined in the example above.

It is important to note that the Code of Ethics shall not apply in the case of a teacher who, in good faith, provides statements or evidence to a Court of Law, an Arbitration Board, the NLTA Professional Relations Commission, the NLTA Disciplinary Committee, or any body or official duly authorized by the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association.

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 (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 that an individual 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.

While the DSLP provides an excellent opportunity for personal and professional rejuvenation, there are economic realities which must be faced. 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 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 will be in effect as of September 2010. 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 2010 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 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	64,424	74,619	84,415
Estimated Tax	12,600	15,889	19,164
Estimated EI	747	747	747
Estimated CPP	2,163	2,163	2,163
NLTA Fees	805	933	1,055
Pension Deduction	6,024	6,977	7,893
Estimated Net*	42,085	47,910	53,393

* 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	42,949	49,746	56,277
Estimated Tax	5,587	7,225	9,152
Estimated EI	747	747	747
Estimated CPP	1,953	2,163	2,163
NLTA Fees	537	622	703
Pension Deduction	6,024	6,977	7,893
Estimated Net*	28,101	32,012	35,619

* 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	48,318	55,964	63,311
Estimated Tax	7,062	9,360	11,568
Estimated EI	747	747	747
Estimated CPP	2,163	2,163	2,163
NLTA Fees	604	700	791
Pension Deduction	6,024	6,977	7,893
Estimated Net*	31,718	36,017	40,149

* 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	51,539	59,695	67,532
Estimated Tax	8,166	10,645	13,016
Estimated EI	747	747	747
Estimated CPP	2,163	2,163	2,163
NLTA Fees	644	746	844
Pension Deduction	6,024	6,977	7,893
Estimated Net*	33,795	38,417	42,869

* 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.



Mental Health Issues

Return-To-Work from Long-Term Injury or Illness

by ROSS FLOOD

There are many definitions of what constitutes a Return-To-Work (RTW) plan. One definition centers on a rehabilitation (or return-to-work) program being based on the principle that the employer can, at a minimum, partner with the worker to enable a coordinated return to work. The program is delivered consistent with medical advice and, where necessary, the use of a rehabilitation provider (Return-to-Work Planning). The focus of this article is the role mental health issues play in teachers' long-term illness or injury and its influence on a return to work.

Two primary sources for this article are major studies, one from the United Kingdom titled *Returning to Work: The Role of Depression* (Loughborough University – Mental Health Foundation, 2006) and one from Canada titled *Business and Economic Roundtable On Mental Health. The Unheralded Business Crisis in Canada – Depression at Work, 2005*. Two secondary articles used were: *Principles of Return to Work* from the Workers Compensation Program in Nova Scotia and *Return to Work Planning* from the government of Australia.

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for Teachers focuses on the mental health and well-being of an individual. Among its counseling services, EAP for Teachers can provide support both during an extended sick leave or long-term-disability period and in supporting a return to work. Mental health problems may be the primary reason for a teacher's absence, or may be secondary symptoms a person displays stemming from the uncertainty of recovery and a return to work, their ability to perform in his/her previous position and how he/she will be accepted by the administration and other teachers upon their return to work.

Communication

In *Principles of Return to Work*, for the Return-To-Work Program to be successful, there must be ongoing communication and consultation amongst all team members. Only then can each person support and participate in both the planning and the implementation of the plan. If administrators/principals are not aware of the symptoms or effects of the illness and/or injury, then his/her ability to foster a positive environment is severely restricted, often leaving the returning teacher with conflicting and unresolved feelings.

In the UK study many of these emotional feelings arise because managers or administrators don't talk to returning employees about their health and well-being. "For some participants, in this study, the lack of communication made it difficult for them to access support most needed to have a successful outcome for their return-to-work." (*Returning to Work: The Role of Depression*)

Good return-to-work management is facilitated by good communication between administrators, occupational health, union representatives and the employee, through holding case conferences, planning individual return-to-work packages, and developing a positive employee attitude towards the workplace. The organization that provided health and well-being supports to their employees (i.e., physiotherapy and cognitive behavior therapy) noted an increase in early return to work.

Role of General Practitioner (GP) in Long-Term Sick Leave

As noted in the article *Returning to Work*, when illness is the reason for the absence from work, often it is the GP who plays an important role in the teacher's treatment and the return-to-work decision-making process. GPs are usually the initial contact for teachers in their illness and often the GP signs off on sick leave. Teachers often see the GP as the most sup-

portive during their sick leave and returned to work when their GP agreed they were fit enough to do so. The GP is often the medical case manager for the employee, providing primary treatment for physical or mental health problems, and referring to other medical and mental health providers as required. Administrators should be aware that teachers will follow the advice of their GP and it means the GP should be part of the collaborative effort of helping the employee return to work. If mental health concerns develop after a return to work, the GP is usually the first contact for the teacher.

Role of Principals and Colleagues

Colleagues have possibly the most important role in the employee returning to school, with their behavior determining the atmosphere for the teacher. Workplace support post return-to-work affects how employees feel about their work, their health and well-being. Where principals and teachers were supportive in phased returns and work adjustments, participants felt positive about their workplace. Employees who returned with no long-term plan or supports were left feeling isolated, stressed and anxious in dealing with their illness and their work (*Returning to Work*). Mental health issues often exist long after the teacher has returned to work. Identifying and providing appropriate supports for a teacher's well-being is critical in achieving a successful outcome.

The study *Roundtable on Mental Health in the Workplace*, contends that many administrators may not be aware that depression is the primary cause of long-term sick leave. As early as the year 2000, depressive disorders accounted for more than half of all medical plan dollars paid for mental health problems in the U.S. and represent 30-40% of all mental illness claims in Canada. By 2012, depression and anxiety disorders, at just over 40%, will be the main cause of long-term disability due to illness – surpassing cardiac disease.

Information on a teacher's mental health is often shared informally and passed to colleagues either from the teacher's friends or from the administrator when the teaching load has to be readjusted. Often colleagues are not clear on the reason for the illness/injury and how they can prepare to welcome a teacher back to the workplace. Clarifying the reason for the teacher's leave and informing other teachers about symptoms can go a long way in facilitating a positive outcome for the returning teacher.

(cont'd.)

Role of Workplace Attitude

Sharing information about the returning worker could be handled better in many cases, as often there is no explanation of what depression or anxiety disorders are, how debilitating they can be, and how they can continue to affect the employee after a return to work. This lack of information means that many co-workers held misconceptions about depression and this was often sensed by employees when they returned to work. The attitude about a colleague returning to work is often based on limited factual information, especially when mental health is the reason for the absence. It is beneficial for the symptoms of depression and anxiety and the impact on an individual to be shared with co-workers. This requires the consent of the returning employee and how to do this becomes part of the RTW plan.

Administrators and teachers both need to be aware that employees with a serious physical illness may also experience anxiety or depression during sick leave, which hinders their timely return to work. For those who are on sick leave or LTD primarily for depression, it contributes strongly to the belief/feeling that they feel unable to cope. As well, teachers on extended sick leave or long-term-disability may bring with them symptoms of depression and/or anxiety and continue to need support throughout their return to work.

Role of Improving Post Return-to-Work Management

The UK study states that one of the most important concerns raised by participants related to a manager's lack of knowledge and understanding of their illness and, in particular, of depression and anxiety and their symptoms. From the *Returning to Work* article, "most workers indicated the need for better training for leaders, not only understanding of certain illnesses and depression better for the returning employee, but also in supporting employees returning to work following sick leave so that both illness and sick leave relapses are minimized".

This is a critical role for the administrator to understand and undertake. Teachers returning from an episode of depression may find it more difficult to adjust back to work than those recovering from other illnesses. This can be overcome by strong support from administrators and colleagues. Results from *Returning to Work* also suggest that "upon returning to work, three quarters of participants recovering from cancer developed symptoms of depression they believe was related to both their cancer and adjusting back to work. Surprisingly, individuals recovering from cancer were more worried telling the employer about their depression than they were in sharing information about their cancer". Teachers returning to work may be more comfortable discussing their physical injury or illness and more reluctant to discuss secondary symptoms of depression that may have developed because of the injury or illness and especially if a mental health issue was the reason for the leave.

There is a great deal of pressure on teachers returning to work after a lengthy injury or illness. Attempting to re-integrate a teacher into the workplace without a structured plan and supports from both administrators and colleagues reduces the chances for a successful outcome and provides a setting where depression and anxiety symptoms can hinder the employee. The longer the employee has been absent from the workplace, the longer the re-integration may take. The RTW plan should be based on the needs of the individual.

For teachers returning to work after a lengthy period of leave, the Employee Assistance Program for Teachers can provide assistance during your illness/injury and return to work with respect to your emotional and psychosocial needs. For questions and answers pertaining to your income support, sick leave benefits and a Return-to-Work Plan, a Benefits and Economic Services administrative officer of the NLTA can provide you with the advice and information to make informed decisions.

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

Information for this article was taken from:

- *Business and Economic Roundtable on Mental Health. The Unheralded Business Crisis in Canada - Depression at Work*, 2005. Toronto: GPC Canada.
- *Principles of Return to Work* (www.wcb.ns.ca/return-to-work/principles.html)
- *Returning to Work: The Role of Depression: Loughborough University – Mental Health Foundation* (www.mentalhealth.org.uk/publications/?entryid5=67533)
- *Return to Work Planning* (www.comcare.gov.au/injury_management)

Other sites:

- www.worksafebc.com/claims/rehab_and_rtw/default.asp
- www.mentalhealth.org.uk/return-to-work
- www.whscc.nf.ca

Two Locations –
May 10, Corner Brook & May 12, St. John's
10th Annual Provincial
Teacher Recruitment Fair

The Fair will profile job opportunities and related information for students, teachers or others interested in entry into the profession.

Are you looking for a job in education?
Are you an Education graduate?
Substitute teacher?
Or looking for a career change?

Come by to see the displays, talk to prospective employers, and collect information. It's a chance to discover what's available for teachers in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Monday, May 10, 2010

4:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

**Atrium of the
Fine Arts Building
Sir Wilfred Grenfell College
Corner Brook**

Wednesday, May 12, 2010

2:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

**Atrium of the
Inco Innovation Centre
Memorial University
St. John's**

The Provincial Teacher Recruitment Fair is organized in partnership with:

- Department of Education, Government of Newfoundland and Labrador;
- Memorial University;
- Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association;
- Newfoundland and Labrador School Districts.

Information booths will be set up by:

- Department of Education
Teacher Certification Division
- Faculty of Education
- Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association
- School Districts
- Mamu Tshishkutamashutau/
Innu Education

and other Educational Partners



Developing Successful Schools 2010

Fostering Assessment Literacy: Guidelines for School Administrators

by GEORGE TUCKER

Once again this year, the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association will be partnering with the New Brunswick Department of Education, the New Brunswick Teachers' Association, the Prince Edward Island Teachers' Federation and the Nova Scotia Teachers Union to sponsor the Developing Successful Schools 2010 Institute. The event will take place at Mount Allison University in Sackville, New Brunswick on July 5-8, 2010. All educators who are members of the sponsoring organizations are eligible to attend. The Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association provides funding to 12 of its members to cover the onsite expenses (i.e., accommodations, meals and registration). Expenses related to travelling to and from Mount Allison is the responsibility of the participant. A DSS 2010 application form may be downloaded from the NLTA website at www.nlta.nl.ca. The deadline for applying is Friday, April 30, 2010.

DSS 2010 Program Overview

During this institute, participants will be introduced to the eight Big Ideas of Assessment that provide the foundation for Damian Cooper's latest resource, *Fostering Assessment Literacy in Our School: Guidelines for School Administrators*.

As teachers plan classroom assessment, they feel torn between the competing demands for increased accountability and the knowledge, now supported by research, that the most effective assessment strategies provide feedback in words, not scores, and are characterized by responsiveness to students.

This session will help participants implement a balance of assessment for learning (to promote learning) and assessment of learning (for grading and reporting).

This institute is an opportunity for participants to explore strategies for implementing school-wide assessment reform. Delegates will have opportunities to consider four conditions that maximize sustainable improvement in teacher practice:

1. A clear focus for improvement
2. Support and accountability
3. Collaborative structures
4. Staying the course

You will also have an opportunity to consider the applicability of an improvement model for your own school.

Throughout the institute, using a combination of presentation, discussion, video-clips and activities, participants will improve their own assessment literacy, as well as learn how to work with other educators to improve their practice.

Institute Resource Person

Damian Cooper is an independent education consultant who specializes in helping schools and school districts improve their instructional and assessment skills. In his varied career, Damian has been a secondary English, Special Education, and Drama teacher, a department head, a librarian, a school consultant and a curriculum developer. He has specialized in student assessment more than twenty years. Damian served as assessment consultant to the School Division of Nelson Education where he worked on the development of assessment principles and strategies for a wide variety of K-12 resources. Prior to that appointment, he was Co-ordinator of Assessment and Evaluation for the Halton District School Board in Burlington, Ontario.



Damian Cooper

His current work focuses on helping teachers and administrators connect curriculum, instruction, and assessment in ways that improve learning for all students. In 1997, Damian was a member of the Canadian delegation invited by Nelson Mandela's government to establish a national curriculum and assess-

ment framework for South Africa. Recently, Damian has been working with schools and school districts in India, Wisconsin, Georgia, British Columbia, Alberta, and Manitoba, to help improve assessment practices in their elementary and secondary schools.

In Ontario, Damian was co-developer of the Ontario Assessment Instrument Pool (OAIP) for students in vocational programs, an initiative that introduced the concept of visual targets to educators in this province. After studying with Rick Stiggins and Grant Wiggins, Damian was instrumental in introducing qualitative and performance-based assessment to Ontario educators.

Damian and his partner, Nanci Wakeman, co-authored *Getting Assessment Right: Language and Getting Assessment Right: Mathematics for Data-Based Directions*. Damian's latest project is *Talk About Assessment: Strategies and Tools to Improve Learning*.

A Few Observations from Delegates at DSS 2009

DSS 2009 was a successful initiative in all areas as the following quotes from the event evaluation forms attest:

- "This is a wonderful opportunity for educators to come together to both learn and network with and from others."
- "My first time at DSS. This has been a marvelous session. Very informative and applicable. I am already planning how to use this information in the fall. Well-organized!! Well Done!! Thank you."
- "The opportunity to meet and learn from educators from within and beyond our province has been great. Those conversations are invaluable to reflecting on the what, why and how of what we are doing as a system. Bruce has both the style and substance to make this investment of time worthwhile for participants. He is a strong coach and model."
- "This was an amazing institute!! Bruce embeds the content in his presentation so you have a model to follow. This manner is engaging and approachable; I found it easy to be in learning situation all day with him. Beautiful campus and great facilities – good accommodations – wonderful food – and very well organized. Thank you for this opportunity!! I'm excited to be able to put this to work!"

If you require additional information re the DSS 2010 institute, please contact George Tucker, Staff Officer in the PD Division (NLTA) at gtucker@nlta.nl.ca.



NL ENVIROTHON



May 14-16, 2010

Max Simms Camp, Bishop's Falls

Open to all High Schools across the province
Teams made up of 5 students and one teacher/coach
Learn about NL's natural resources. Win great prizes.

Meet new people. Develop team work.

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Ph. (709) 637-7300 kmccarthy@mfnl.ca





A Checklist for Technology Integration

by JIM MURPHY

Not quite ready to take on the Internet and Web 2.0 by storm in your classroom? Not quite ready to integrate technology into your teaching and professional learning? Then you may want to consider the following checklist to guide you in the area of technology integration. This has been adapted from: www.educationworld.com/a_tech/tech/tech039.shtml. (All links were verified and working at time of printing.)

Gain Perspective – Put last year into perspective. Reflect on your teaching practices.

- Did you integrate technology into your teaching practice?
- If you did, did the technology enhance the lessons? Did it engage the learner in a meaningful manner?
- If not, how can you better utilize technology during the remainder of the year to enhance and/or reinforce what you teach and to engage your learners?

Get Organized

- Go through old files on your system and delete those that are useless or outdated.
- Group remaining files in folders by subject and/or topic.
- Back up important and regularly used files. (Use an external drive or USB drive for this or back them up to the school's server)
- Check all bookmarked Internet sites, and delete those that are no longer valid or useful.
- Organize remaining bookmarks by subject, topic or unit.

Take a Course, Live or Online

- Take an online course to learn about teaching and learning with technology. There are tons of tutorials on the Internet on a variety of topics. (Check out Bob Bowman's *Guide to Free Educational Technology* (www.user.shentel.net/rbowman) for links to free online tutorials and how-to guides.)
- Attend local sessions, school-based or online sessions on software or hardware you might want to learn to use.

Network with Peers

- Join a networking group for teachers, such as MyVTC (www.myvtc.ca/), Ning (www.ning.com/), Classroom 2.0 (www.classroom20.com/), or the Google for Educators Discussion Group (<http://groups.google.com/group/google-for-educators>). Or, start your own group. (Visit <http://socialnetworking4teachers.wikispaces.com/> for more information.)
- Subscribe to a mailing list or newsletter, such as those offered at Surfing the Net with Kids (www.surfnetkids.com/) or Education World (www.educationworld.com/maillist.shtml).

Explore the Literature

- Subscribe to online or print publications, such as *Learning and Leading with Technology* (www.iste.org/Content/NavigationMenu/Publications/LL/L_L_L.htm), *Reading Today* (www.reading.org/General/Publications/ReadingToday.aspx), and *Instructor* (<http://teacher.scholastic.com/products/instructor.htm>), to learn more about integrating technology into your teaching and student learning! (Visit Educational Technology Journals at www.educational-software-directory.net/journals.html for a list of online educational technology publications.)

Experiment with Software

- Explore new software programs to use with your students. In particular, take the time to procure a copy of Notebook, the software that accompanies the SmartBoard technologies. You do not need a SmartBoard to use the product and it is great for building lessons. Most computers in the K-9 grades in the province also have Kidspiration or Inspiration installed, great software for creating graphic organizers, for brainstorming and for mind mapping.
- Choose the best programs and decide which lessons might fit best with each. Practice teaching a sample lesson. Trying new programs for the first time in front of students is probably not a good time to find out it doesn't work.

- Easy, short, step-by-step directions will allow students to use the software independently.

Install Time-Saving Technology

Locate, install, and practice using technology that can make your job easier. Consider programs such as electronic grade books to record student work, an electronic lesson planner, a word processor, presentation software, maybe a database or spreadsheet software to help organize simple things like money collection, homework tracking or your classroom budget!

Create a Classroom Climate

- Visualize the climate you want to establish and organize your classroom accordingly. Decide where to locate the learning centers, the writing center, and the computer center. (Be aware of the physical limitations of your classroom computers. Cords, for example, are only so long!)
- Set up a computer-learning center and create a launch page of curriculum-related sites for students. Provide technology-related activities for each unit of instruction you plan to teach.
- Decide how often and under what circumstances students will use technology. Post a list of rules and acceptable use.

Punch Up Existing Lessons

- Take a look at the previous year's lessons and decide which ones can use a technological boost. Many pencil and paper activities can easily be adapted to a word processing or drawing program. Another easy way to integrate technology into the curriculum is to give students several options when creating book reports. *Better Book Reports – 25 Ideas!* (www.educationworld.com/a_lesson/lesson109.shtml) and *More Ideas Than You'll Ever Use for Book Reports* (www.teachnet.com/lesson/langarts/reading/bookrepts1.html) are two Web links for book report ideas that can easily be adapted to the computer. Making slide shows, multimedia reports, and posters are other options students might choose to explore individual learning styles.
- Explore lesson plan archives to see what other teachers are doing. Visit such sites as Education World's Lesson Planning Archive (www.educationworld.com/a_lesson/archives/all.shtml), Awesome Library (www.awesomelibrary.org/lesson.html), Eduhound (www.eduhound.com/) to find technology ideas, lessons and activities that match your curriculum. Where possible, find activities and projects that incorporate more than one curriculum area.
- Search the Internet for Web sites that complement and extend your already successful lessons. Look

for interesting text, pictures, movies, and activities that convey the message you want to give students. (Educational search engines such as Education World (www.educationworld.com/) can help narrow the search and provide more efficient use of your time.)

- Create a book-marked list of the best sites or use delicious (www.delicious.com), a shared bookmarking site.

Prepare Something New

- Locate tools that will make learning more exciting, interesting and relevant for students: A multimedia encyclopedia adds sound and video clips to basic information and provides links to related topics. A word processing program can help students with the steps in the writing process. WebQuests (www.webquest.org/) can help students use the Internet to work toward curriculum goals. Telecollaborative projects, such as those found at Global Schoolhouse (www.gsn.org/) are a wonderful way to integrate curriculum while students work with their peers around the world.
- Learn to use technology that extends the power of the computer, such as a scanner, digital camera, video camera and projector or SmartBoard. Use your new tools with presentation software to create curriculum-related presentations for the computer learning center.
- Plan lessons to teach students to use those tools to enhance their own curriculum projects.
- Work with a partner to plan new curriculum units or lessons. It's lots more fun that way, and you and your partner can brainstorm ideas, share the planning and contribute your individual strengths.

So, as technologies become more and more prevalent in our students' worlds, it is incumbent on us to integrate, where possible and where feasible, these technologies into our classrooms and workflow. But, start small and look to champions in your school and in your district for ideas and solutions. Many of our districts are using technologies for professional learning and there are many opportunities to network and take advantage of a vast array of tools that can help engage learners in your classroom and help you to organize and deliver curriculum in new ways. The Virtual Teacher Centre (www.myvtc.ca) also offers an extension to your existing resources, a place to share your best practices and an opportunity to interact with peers beyond the confines of your school.

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Jim Murphy is Coordinator of the Virtual Teacher Centre.



Lessons from Our Children's Coaches

by MARY-LOU DONNELLY

Most minor league hockey coaches will tell you that knowing the results of last night's game will not indicate how well your child's team is performing. What coaches realize – but education bureaucrats tend to ignore – is that you assess your team's performance by watching them play over time. You note such things as how the players work together, the strategies they employ, the collective knowledge the team gains over successive practices and how individual players put this learning to use.

Like hockey, education accountability is about so much more than yesterday's score. Large-scale assessments offer, at most, a narrow snapshot of but a portion of learner outcomes in a few selected core academic subjects. The education system's increasing reliance on these narrowly defined indicators inevitably fails to address teachers' lived experiences, deprofessionalizes teaching and undermines confidence in public education. Even worse, narrowing our focus on a few subjects – or “teaching to the test” – results in the marginalization of students whose learning needs are not being addressed. Couple this with the re-emergence of fiscal restraint as a political mantra and one quickly concludes that what is counted is all that counts and what critical resources might remain – including teacher time and public money – are directed away from the classroom in order to support large-scale assessments.

As teachers, we understand that an individualized approach to assessment is far superior to standardized testing. Yet across Canada, increasing amounts of money are spent on standardized testing programs. It is nearly impossible to prove that testing, by itself, can improve student learning. What has been proven is that up to 70 per cent of the variation in student achievement as measured in standardized testing is not attributable to school factors but to student, family and community characteristics.

As teachers, we know our students' individual strengths, challenges, abilities and achievements, and we are keenly aware of the factors that influence those achievements – factors that include each student's interest in and attitude toward a subject, peer

pressure, class size and climate, family circumstances, school atmosphere and, perhaps most importantly, the advantages the community at large creates.

We understand the research that illustrates the limitations of large-scale assessment systems. Teacher organizations have long advocated for a change in testing and reporting schemes and have questioned the allocation of scarce educational funding on complicated assessment and reporting systems. As individual professional educators, we must speak with confidence about the authentic assessment practices we use in our classrooms and showcase for parents what students know and can do. We should listen to our kids' coaches.

Education Finance Issues Spur Global Action Week

Today, 75 million people around the world are denied the opportunity to go to school. Unable to read or write, they face a lifetime of poverty. This will be our focus when the Canadian Teachers' Federation joins national and regional groups around the world to mark Global Action Week, April 21-27, 2010.

The Global Campaign for Education traces its beginnings to the UNESCO World Education Forum held in Dakar, Senegal in April 2000. The forum developed six concrete goals to be achieved by 2015, including expanding early childhood care and education; free, compulsory primary education for all children; equality of access to learning; a 50 per cent improvement in literacy rates; gender equity; and improving the quality of education. In the decade that has followed, because government and people took action, 40 million more children now attend school.

But there is still much to be done if we are to achieve the goals of “Education for All”. Global Action Week calls on all governments to fulfill their Dakar commitments. Leaders of developing countries must spend 20 per cent on education, abolish school fees, provide professional teachers and ensure children are in school – not work. Developed countries – including Canada – must provide their fair share of funding, work together on a global response, invest in teachers and include countries with the greatest need.

CTF is currently organizing its fourth annual "Hill Day" for April 20. Hill Day provides a powerful opportunity for teacher leaders across Canada to discuss critical issues affecting education with federally elected officials and senior government advisors. Members of the CTF Board of Directors will be involved in meetings with MPs, Senators and senior government officials to voice their concerns about child poverty in Canada and discuss Canada's commitment to Education for All.

Hill Day will coincide with the launch of "1GOAL – Education for All" supported by FIFA, the governing body of soccer's 2010 World Cup. FIFA has agreed that a legacy of the 2010 World Cup will be getting 30 million people to sign up in support of the campaign. Already, hundreds of players have signed on and the list of international entertainers – including Bono, Kevin Spacey and Bob Geldof – lending support continues to grow.

As the 2010 World Cup gets underway during the second week of July, presidents of CTF Member organizations will gather in Edmonton for our annual President's Forum. This year's forum will focus on education funding and Canada's commitment – domestically and internationally – to the goals of the Global Campaign for Education.

If you would like ideas on how you and your students can take part in Global Action Week, visit us at www.ctf-fce.ca or the Canadian Global Campaign for Education www.cgce.ca where you will find a new curriculum section of the website which features lesson plans around the right to education.

Challenges and Victories Mark the Long Road to Equity

Whenever I consider the lives of my three adult daughters, I cannot help but feel both pride in the victories my generation has won and wonder at the many challenges women still face in achieving equity. It is at times such as this that I fully realize my responsibility to be a role model and mentor to a new generation.

For much of my adult life, I have worked within my union to provide protection, economic advances, improved working conditions and professional

growth for my colleagues in education. But young women are looking for more today – they want an acceptable balance between personal life and work and they want to be able to be a part of changing the world for better.

Their aspirations can significantly advance the cause of teacher unions, but only if we, the leaders in our organizations, can ensure the equality of access needed in order to fully benefit from the enthusiasm, skills and drive for social justice they bring to the table.

This year the Canadian Teachers' Federation held its Annual Women's Issues Symposium at the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO) office in Toronto on February 9 and 10. We focused on the importance of coalitions and partnerships as well as on ways of engaging young women in teacher organizations.

More than 72 per cent of Canadian teachers are women, yet we remain under-represented in leadership roles in our professional organizations. Despite this challenge, the CTF has established an international reputation as a leader in the fight for gender equity. CTF supports women's networks in Asia, Africa, the Caribbean and Latin America. The Girl Child Project in Uganda addresses the barriers many female students face, and our work with Latin American unions helps develop non-sexist curricula and teaching practices. These programs will be highlighted in our celebration of International Women's Day, March 8.

At the same time, Canadian teachers will be active participants in "Beijing+15," the 54th session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women called to review progress on gender equity 15 years after the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. This conference will take place at the UN headquarters from March 1 to 12.

From May 19 to 22, Education International will convene its first World Women's Conference "On the Move for Equity" in Bangkok, Thailand. More than 300 leaders of teachers' unions from around the globe will participate in this forum that seeks to create a joint understanding of the state of progress towards equality in unions, education and society.

As we approach International Women's Day, we should each take pride in our victories and recommit ourselves to the challenge of engaging our daughters in the fight for true equality, especially in our profession.

Mary-Lou Donnelly is President of the Canadian Teachers' Federation.



SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS COUNCIL CONFERENCE 2010

March 17-19, 2010

Glynmill Inn, Corner Brook. Theme: *Leading from Good to Great*. Join us in Corner Brook for a cool learning experience. Check out www.sac2010.net for registration and agenda information.

TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION SIC CONFERENCE

March 18-19, 2010

(rescheduled from November 12-13, 2009)
Albatross Hotel, Gander. Keynote: Amber MacArthur, co-founder of MGImedia.ca. To register visit www.nlva.net/tesic/. For more information contact Joe LaFitte, joelafitte@hotmail.com or Corey D'Entremont, coreydentremont@esdnl.ca.

PRIMARY/ELEMENTARY SIC CONFERENCE

April 28-29, 2010

Terra Nova Park Lodge. Presenting Dr. David Booth, "Differentiating Literacy Instruction". Registration information: www.matthewelementary.nl.ca/pesichome.htm

SYMPOSIUM ANNUEL FRANCOPHONE

6-7 mai 2010

Ottawa, ON. Enseigner à l'école de langue française en milieu minoritaire, c'est contribuer à un vaste projet de société. Devant

une francophonie qui se diversifie, le quotidien doit tenir compte des besoins variés des élèves qui dépassent largement le cadre pédagogique traditionnel. En plus d'apprendre, l'élève d'aujourd'hui qui se prépare à intégrer la francophonie doit construire son identité, souvent s'approprier la langue s'il provient d'un foyer exogame, ou trouver sa place s'il est nouvel arrivant. Ce symposium annuel de la FCE portera sur les outils qui appuient le personnel enseignant devant des responsabilités qui se complexifient.
www.ctf-fce.ca/symposium2010

ICED 2010: 21ST INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS ON THE EDUCATION OF THE DEAF

July 18-22, 2010

Vancouver, BC. Check the Congress website at www.ICED2010.com for updates on registration and hotel information, keynote and International Summit presenter biographies; social activities and post Congress Alaskan cruise.

EDGE CONFERENCE 2010

October 12-14, 2010

Delta Hotel & Suites, St. John's. *E-Learning: The Horizon and Beyond*. Contact www.mun.ca/educ

Dates to Remember

March 2010

- Mar 7-13 Education Week
- Mar 18 **Deadline:** PD Fund applications
- Mar 25 NLTA Executive Meeting
- Mar 26-27 Joint Council Meeting
- Mar 31 **Board Deadline:** Notice for retirement at end of school year
- Mar 31 **Deadline:** Centennial Study Award Applications
- Mar 31 **Deadline (on or before March 31):** International Conference Presenters Program Applications

April 2010

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

May 2010

- May 7 **Deadline:** Notification by Board of layoff
- May 9-15 Branch Election Week
- May 20 **Deadline:** PD Fund applications
- May 28-29 NLTA Executive Meeting

June 2010

- June 15 **Deadline:** Notification by board of acceptance/rejection of Deferred Salary Leave requests
- June 17 **Deadline:** PD Fund applications

July 2010

- July 31 **Deadline:** NLTA Scholarship Applications



School Administrators' Conference

March 17-19, 2010
Glynmill Inn, Corner Brook

Keynote Speaker: Cassandra Erkens
Guest Speaker: Connie Kamm

See conference website for information on registration, agenda, conference booklet, speakers, accommodations and sponsors.

www.sac2010.net

