

NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

T H E

# bulletin

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2009-11 NLTA  
Provincial Executive

# *Up Front* from the President



As teachers in this province we are all aware that we are members of the Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF), but perhaps we

are not aware of the "good works" that our Federation is involved in on our behalf, and of the many benefits and services that the CTF does provide to our Association on a continual basis. Having been on the Board of Directors of the Federation for the past two years and as one of the Vice-Presidents of the CTF this past year, I can personally attest to the value and support that this organization provides.

The broad mission of the CTF is to be the unifying voice of teacher organizations in Canada, while advancing the cause of public education, the status of the teaching profession and the freedom to learn. Such a mission while daunting at times, especially when we extend beyond our borders to the developing world, has been quite successful when one considers the many facets of the Federation and the services it provides on behalf of teachers.

In the area of collective bargaining for example, the CTF provides information and strategies on the latest trends, updates and challenges that permeate negotiations throughout the country. This valuable data is provided to all teacher affiliates in Canada. During our most recent round of bargaining, the NLTA made extensive use of Pan-Canadian comparative research that had been conducted on teacher salaries, benefits and working conditions by the CTF. The NLTA has also made use of CTF-developed statistical data for in-depth comparative analysis of economic indicators, including government income and expenditures, government debt load, the Consumer Price Index and other indices. The CTF has co-hosted, with other mem-

ber organizations, special conferences on teacher collective bargaining which are very valuable as well.

The CTF has ensured that teacher organizations have a united voice on such topics as copyright legislation, employment insurance, child poverty, youth criminal justice issues and aboriginal and French language education. The CTF has lobbied the Federal government on such topics as the impact of federal pension legislation on teachers, including RRSP limits, pension splitting, the CPP and severance rollover room. As organized by the CTF, all Teacher Association Provincial Presidents and Executive Directors (all members of the Board of Directors of the Federation) will be meeting this spring with dozens of Parliamentarians, Federal Chairs of Committees and Senators to lobby for the elimination of child poverty, improvements to employment insurance legislation that would further protect teachers and legislative changes to the Criminal Code related to Section 43, among other issues. Recently, the CTF intervened in the Supreme Court of Canada case where a coalition of groups unsuccessfully tried to strike down Section 43 which protects teachers from frivolous legal action. Without the collective voice of the CTF, the NLTA and our partner teacher affiliates would have little impact on these and other issues affecting teachers at the national level.

In the area of accountability, the CTF has developed and is promoting alternatives to standardized testing. The Federation has, for example, developed two brochures on learning and assessment – *Ask the Teacher about Learning and Assessment* and *Teachers Know About Learning and Assessment*. Both these publications provide information for parents and the public about how learning is best assessed – and that, of course, is carried out by the classroom teacher, also known as authentic assessment.

Through the CTF's International Programs Division, teacher organizations

can make a valuable contribution to education and social development beyond our national borders. Project Overseas, the John Thompson Leadership Program and the Teachers' Action for Girls (Uganda) Project are just some of the examples where teachers have played an international role through the efforts of the Federation. As President of the NLTA and a Vice-President of the CTF, I have written the political leaders of such countries as Zimbabwe and Ethiopia condemning the criminal practices of violence targeted at teachers who have merely taught about the principles of peace, freedom and democracy in their classrooms. They have been beaten, robbed and unjustly accused of associating with illegal organizations. On your behalf, I have vehemently condemned such actions of violence and terror against our valiant colleagues. It has been the CTF that has kept us apprised of such attacks against teachers around the globe and has provided us with the means to communicate our views as expeditiously as possible.

In the final analysis, if the CTF did not exist we would have reason to create it. The Canadian Teachers' Federation provides representatives of provincial and territorial teacher organizations with regular opportunities to exchange views and strategies, share relevant information and cultivate alliances in the interests of improving teachers' professional lives and working conditions. The CTF represents the interests of teachers and the value of public education on the national and international scene. It is a necessary and vital link for the NLTA and all other teacher organizations in Canada.

My very best to you all for a successful and rewarding spring term.

Sean



# THE bulletin

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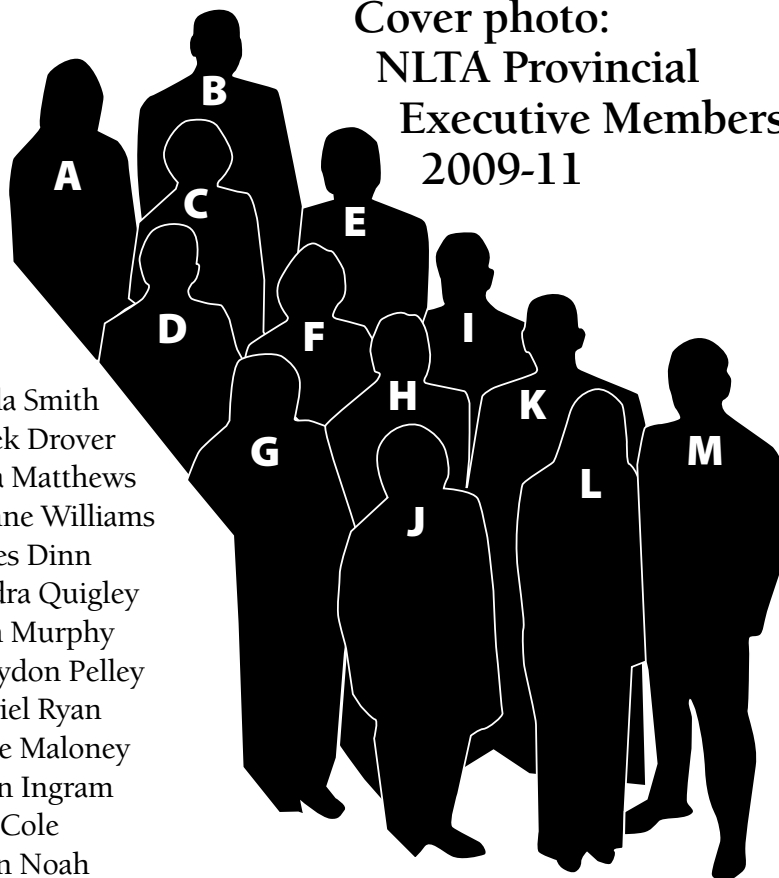
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PROVINCIAL/NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL

# NEWS

## POINT LEAMINGTON

### Story World Heroes

On March 6, as part of Education Week activities at Point Leamington Academy, the school had the pleasure of hosting its first Story World Reading Forum, which included a focus on this year's theme: Heroes.

In order to captivate the students' attention, a number of story-world displays and sets were created. First, the architectural aspect consisted of five reading tents representing five different heroes while at the same time encompassing world and cultural literature at the K-3 level. The five tents included a Newfoundland tent where the hero was a Newfoundland dog from the book *Sailor The Hangashore Newfoundland Dog* and read by Point Leamington Academy's 'Newfie' Holly Parmiter. The Munschville tent introduced a well-known storyteller, Robert Munsch, where the hero is a young girl or "The Paperback Princess", and starred Chris Moore as Robert Munsch. A third tent included Seussville, which featured Megan Thompson as the "Cat in the Hat" reading about the hero, Horton, in *Horton Hears a Who*. Along with these was a teepee constructed by the local fire department where Victoria Haggett, dressed as Shanawdithit, read the story entitled *The Winter of the Black Weasel*, and lastly, a story from Africa called *Anansi the Spider* whose heroic sons rescue him and was read by Anthony Rowsell. To round out the sets and displays they included mythological gods (Dylan Hancock as Orpheus and Theodore (Tedcules) Haggett, Anthony Rowsell as Zeus), Whoville characters (Tiffany Thompson and Karen Parsons), Cameron Peddle as Chief Seattle, mummies (Dylan Curlew and Nathan Ward), the boil-up boys (Shadow Saunders and Ryan Peddle), and Heather Marie Haggett as The Paperbag Princess.

"The idea for this activity originated from my hope that these story-worlds and their stories would engage the students' imaginations and thereby facilitate a greater appreciation for stories and books," says Tony Lambe, a teacher at Point Leamington Academy. "By using tents, props, actors, and student readers and

creating a visual and architectural representation of those story-worlds we sought to facilitate a deeper impact, engagement, and motivation that would translate into making them read more". Mr. Lambe says that the idea came to life when Gwen Burt, Bev Warford (librarian with the public library who they partnered with), Nancy Ball and Heather Ball injected their creative genius and made it a project. "What Gwen Burt can do in a few hours of artistic fiat is quite interesting to say the least. Bev, being a veteran in the area of young readers, along with Gwen, were able to table lots of good ideas to flesh out the bones of the original idea I had and add those concrete suggestions that connected with such a young group of readers. Sisters Ball were able to contribute a lot of the ideas and props associated with the Aboriginal aspect of our theme. All in all, with the help of the Theatre Arts 2200 class, and our selected readers from Grade 12, a soul was given to an idea and brought to life in the title of our reading forum: Story World Heros."



Megan Thompson reads about the hero, Horton, in *Horton Hears a Who*.

How did it work? Three groups of K-3 students wound their way through these story-worlds while the designated readers read the above-mentioned works. They viewed the sets and displays that were created, took part in side activities, and then had some snacks that Nancy had prepared (bannock, jam-jams, Purity syrup). Parents and the student body were invited to come after the readings, and as a special treat, Principal Darren Woolridge cut a cake featuring Horton the elephant. Students and staff sang Happy Birthday

for Dr. Seuss whose birthday happened to be during Education Week and ended the afternoon by drawing names for prizes: books, of course. Mr. Lambe says an example that might measure this endeavor's success was that while he was getting ready to draw the prizes with over 100 people in the gym anxiously waiting, Ms. Hounsell noticed that Airk Noseworthy, their youngest Kindergartner, was inside the teepee, next to the lantern, by himself, reading a book. "Ironically, his was the first name that I drew, then a pause. In a few minutes, after repeating his name, I could hear the patter of his footsteps running to get his prize."

#### SPANIARD'S BAY

## Remembrance Day celebrations

As part of their Remembrance Day celebrations, the students of Holy Redeemer School in Spaniard's Bay participated in a poster, poem and essay contest sponsored by the Royal Canadian Legion, Branch 9 in Spaniard's Bay. A winner from each category was selected from each grade level (K-9) and displayed at the annual Remembrance Day Dinner held at the Royal Canadian Legion, Branch 9. During this dinner, the first and second place essay winners from Grade 9 (centered around the theme of Remembrance) read their winning essays.

The winning entries of the poster (primary), poem and essay (elementary and intermediate) were then sent to Provincial Command of the Royal Canadian Legion to be judged on a provincial basis. "We are very pleased that two of our students are provincial winners. Grade 6 student Katrina Fillmore placed second in the poetry section and Grade 9 student Kyleigh Mercer, placed first in the essay section," said Paul Sheppard, Language Arts teacher at Holy Redeemer. "Congratulations to both Kyleigh and Katrina from the students and staff of Holy Redeemer."



**L-r: Dave Thistle, Katrina Fillmore, Absalom Sheppard (Legion President, Branch 9), Kyleigh Mercer, and Dan Churchill**

## Exploring and discovering at Holy Redeemer Heritage Fair

On March 5 all students in grades 4, 5, and 6 from Holy Redeemer School in Spaniard's Bay participated in the school's annual Heritage Fair. Students were given an information package in January and asked to create an individual project around the Provincial theme, *Exploring and Discovering*. Ron Fagan, a teacher at Holy Redeemer, said that this year's Fair was a huge success.

Mr. Robert Bishop, Heritage Fair Coordinator, stated that the students' projects far surpassed even their teachers' expectations. Each project, though on a universal theme, was very unique as it represented each child's individual background. Every student provided a visual and oral presentation for judging.

The teachers at Holy Redeemer would like to thank all family members who supported their children's efforts and helped them to rise to the occasion and to Mr. E. Neil, Vice Chairman of the Spaniard's Bay-Tilton Heritage Committee, and the three adjudicators who gave up their morning to help with this event: Mr. Paul Gosse, Ms. Jennie Sheppard, and Ms. Mary Sullivan.

A thank you is also extended to parent volunteers Shelley Healey and Jodi Hutchings who helped prepare a Newfoundland lunch for the Heritage Fair.

Grade 4 student Mackenzie Crane, Grade 5 student Melanie Vokey and Grade 6 student Matthew Mercer were selected to represent Holy Redeemer at the Regional Heritage Fair to be held at the Bay Arena in Bay Roberts on May 2 and 3, 2009.



**Principal Doug Adams, Paul Gosse, Jennie Sheppard, Mary Sullivan, Ed Neil, and Vice-Principal Lisa King. Winners: Melanie Vokey (Grade 5), Mackenzie Crane and Matthew Mercer**

## WITLESS BAY

## Students learn about true meaning of beauty

St. Bernard's Elementary in Witless Bay is known for its kind and caring students. As an official member of Peaceful Schools International, the staff and students of St. Bernard's place great emphasis on treating each other with respect and dignity.

The Grade 2 teachers embrace the thinking that the person most deserving of your love is "you"!

"When you love and respect yourself first, you are filled with a positive energy that just reaches out and touches others", state Lori Jackman and Joan Dicks, both teachers at St. Bernard's Elementary.

To explore this concept in even more detail, the Grade 2 students read *The Paper Bag Princess* and viewed the film *The Tale of Despereaux*.

"The students learned a great deal about the inner qualities that truly make a person beautiful...inside and out!"

## LABRADOR CITY

## Celebrating a Hero

"Our students frequently hear the term *hero* and usually associate it with somebody very old from the past, who made a difference in our lives, like Terry Fox or Captain William Jackman," says Sharon Brown, a teacher at Menihek High in Labrador City. "Unfortunately these legends have long passed away and students can only imagine their experiences and what they endured."

On March 5, 2009, students at Menihek High School had the opportunity to recognize a live hero. Lisa Murphy, a graduate of Menihek in 2001, returned home from a tour of duty, having served 10 months in war torn Afghanistan with the Canadian Armed Forces. This past November, Lisa had sent the school a video message from her base there and gave students and staff a first hand look at what Afghanistan was like.

To coincide with Education Week and the theme, "Celebrate Our Heroes", the Student Council organized a welcome home for Lisa at the Wabush Airport to celebrate her safe return and to demonstrate the school's pride. Plans for the celebration were communicated to the media, local newspapers, the Recreation Department, the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary, Town Councils, Legionnaires, Army Cadets, Sea Cadets, and the community at large.

Students tied large yellow ribbons to the street poles and busses. Yellow balloons and colorful banners decorated the terminal. A sea of flags from our province and country waved proudly. At 1:30, the entire Menihek High population was bussed to the airport for the big event. An honor guard of cadets and Legionnaires stood at attention as Lisa entered the terminal, dressed in full uniform. Student Council members as well as family and close friends completed the archway for Labrador City's finest hero!

Outside, Corporal Lisa Murphy was welcomed by more people and nearly 500 students chanting her name and applauding their hero. For the majority it was the first time they had actually seen a real soldier. Lisa and her mom and dad walked through the avenue of students, shaking hands, sharing hugs and wiping tears. In addition, Lisa spoke to the crowd about how happy she was to be home.

A motorcade led the way back to town where Lisa stopped at A. P. Low Primary School. There all of the students were outside on the parking lot waving red and yellow ribbons. Lisa was totally amazed by the reception of everyone.

Ms. Brown says Lisa has continued to be a role model for everyone at Menihek High School, not only because of her military experiences, but because she is a person who always thinks positive thoughts. "Positive energy just radiates to those around her. Lisa has always shown the importance of never giving up and always trying your best."

Lisa was presented with a bouquet of beautiful yellow roses, one for each of the months she risked her life to improve the lives of others. "What better way to *Celebrate Our Heroes* than with a true visual. There is no greater hero than one who risks her life to serve her country and its people," says Ms. Brown. "We are very proud of Corporal Lisa Murphy!"



Corporal Lisa Murphy is given a hero's welcome upon her return home from her tour of duty in Afghanistan.



## Celebrating Education Week in style

During Education Week 2009, March 1-7, A. P. Low Primary in Labrador West celebrated in style! The week's events were in keeping with this year's theme, *Celebrate Our Heroes*. On Tuesday, March 3, Olympic Curling Gold Medalist Mike Adam, originally from Wabush, spoke to students about accomplishing your dreams and working hard. On Thursday, March 5, A. P. Low students gathered in front of the school to welcome home local resident Lisa Murphy from a ten-month stint in Afghanistan, and on Friday, March 6, students and staff recognized a superhero among them, Grade 2 student Camron Farrell, who has been receiving treatment for leukemia but who faces it all cheerfully and bravely. Also during the week, children wrote about their heroes as part of a writing contest, and on Friday, March 6, dressed as their favorite superhero.

"Thanks to the Town of Labrador City for the Education Week cake that we enjoyed!," said Ramona Noseworthy, Principal of A.P. Low Primary. "We hope that the children and staff found Education Week very memorable and educational."



Olympic Gold Medalist Mike Adam displays his medal for A. P. Low students.

### LAKE MELVILLE

## Lake Melville schools support the Janeway

A host of events were carried out in schools in the Lake Melville Branch of the NLTA to support this year's Janeway Day in the Schools. Mealy Mountain Collegiate held their annual "Cake Auction" where students and staff bid on a number of beautifully decorated cakes – all donated by members of their school community. Peenamin McKenzie School also used the donation of cakes to hold a fun "Cake

Walk" to raise money for the Janeway. Cakes also figured prominently in Queen of Peace Middle School's Penny Princess Fundraiser which gave 60% of its proceeds to the Janeway. Peacock Primary School donated loonies, toonies and other spare change to support the children's hospital. Together, students and staff in these schools raised a whopping \$6,964.18 for the Janeway Children's Hospital! "Congratulations to everyone on their efforts," said Sandra Quigley, President of the Lake Melville Branch of the NLTA. "This generous donation really takes the cake!"



Students from Queen of Peace Middle School display a donated cake during their Penny Princess Fundraiser.

### CAMPBELLTON

## Math Rocks at Greenwood

The Elementary Division at Greenwood Academy in Campbellton decided to send a math proposal to the District to help fund a Math Day at their school. The Elementary Committee consisting of Vice-Principal Debbie Spurrell and teachers Jody Curlew and Maria Jensen planned a day of activities for students to share with their peers and their parents/grandparents, etc.

"This day focused on the significance of math games within the curriculum, the need for students to make connections with everyday math activities and the importance of communicating their math knowledge effectively through pictures, numbers and words," said Ms. Spurrell.

Math shirts were given to each elementary student and math teacher. Imprinted on the front of the shirts was "Math Rocks at Greenwood". This logo was chosen because it is a common phrase that elementary students frequently use. Imprinted on the back of the shirt was "World Math Day" as it was decided to use this day to highlight the importance of math.

Parents also participated in an information session with Mrs. Florence-Cahill Bursey, Numeracy Support Teacher, and later the parents visited the Math

Stations with their children and watched them solve numerous math problems.

"Students reacted overwhelmingly to this day, showing enthusiasm for math, especially Mathletics, the game of combining math questioning with basketball," said Ms. Spurrell. "Every student went home at the end of the day with their t-shirt, a participation certificate and high scorer certificates for basketball and an overall consensus was that Math Rocks at Greenwood!"

The school would like to thank Ms. Krista Freaque, Senior Education Officer with the Nova Central School District, for coming out to witness and participate in the event and a thank you as well to Mrs. Bursey and all parents for their continued support at the school!



Students proudly wear their "Math Rocks at Greenwood" t-shirts.

## BURIN

### Special Education Week Breakfast

The Jamieson Academy Breakfast Program Committee in Salt Pond, Burin celebrated Education Week by preparing a special breakfast for the students and staff. On Wednesday, March 4, students and staff were served waffles, a variety of homemade muffins, and a variety of fruit with yogurt, along with the regular breakfast menu of toast, cereal, juice, milk, and water.



Students and staff at Jamieson Academy enjoy their Education Week breakfast.

The event was a tremendous success, with help from volunteers of the Garnish Lions Club and Mona and Marilyn of the Marystown Dominion Store. The Lions Club prepared the usual breakfast menu and the waffles, while the Dominion staff set up and served an impressive arrangement of various fruit with yogurt.

"In keeping with the theme for Education Week, *Celebrate Our Heroes*, we celebrate our heroes – our volunteers and local sponsors," said Ruby Whiffen-Tilley, Chairperson of the Breakfast Program Committee. "The Breakfast Program is successful because of their loyalty and support. Our HEROES aid the CHILDREN in their quest for academic success."

## NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR

### Historica Fairs program

The Historica Fairs program is dedicated to engaging children in the exploration of our past. By involving children and their communities in a celebration of our heritage, we can help build a more vibrant and responsible citizenry.

Every year a different community in Canada hosts the National Fair in mid-July. This year the host is Ottawa. Students whose history projects are selected at the Regional Fairs gather together from all Canadian provinces and territories and attend a weeklong history camp. This camp includes exploration of a part of the country they might otherwise never have a chance to visit. The National Fair inspires lasting memories, new friendships, and experiences. Fifteen students from our province had the opportunity last July to attend the National Fair in Victoria, British Columbia.

Students represented all provinces and territories and had the opportunity to take part in a special week of sightseeing, historic tours, hands-on workshops, and special events. It was a unique opportunity for students to learn about the history and heritage of a specific region of Canada and interact with young people from a diversity of backgrounds. It strengthened participating students' connections to the history of Canada.

Participants of past National Fairs joined the adventure and captured the boundless energy of our young historians by sharing their adventures and discoveries. Newfoundland's head of delegation for July 2008 was teacher Chesley West from MacDonald Drive Junior High, assisted by four other chaperones. All worked hard to keep the fifteen students from Newfoundland and Labrador occupied for the week.

Additional information on Heritage Fairs can be found at [www.heritage.k12.nf.ca](http://www.heritage.k12.nf.ca) and [www.histori.ca](http://www.histori.ca).



# A Tribute to Ernest E. Warren



Ernest E. Warren

Sometimes in life you are fortunate enough to run into an individual who seems taller than most ... someone who makes a lasting impression and makes you feel like you have met (and known) someone special; a person whose character is beyond reproach, who silently commands everyone's respect. For us, Ernest Warren was one of those people.

Mr. Warren came to the NLTA in 1973, having previously worked at Bishop Feild School, Bishop's College and Booth Memorial. Their loss was most certainly NLTA's gain. He didn't just take care of the NLTA building. He treated it like it was his own personal property. He was meticulous in his work and was extraordinarily proud of his association with the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association.

He was well liked by all the staff, by teachers, by Executive members (past and present) and individuals he came in contact with through his involvement with the NLTA. The teachers in this province were well served to have had someone of Mr. Warren's work ethic and character in their employ. Mr. Warren's energy was boundless, his smile infectious, his willingness to carry out any task, either menial or of the utmost importance, without question.

Mr. Warren believed strongly in hard work, family, church and volunteer service. He and his wife Joan (who also worked at the NLTA for 15 years)

were married for more than 51 years. They had a strong and loving relationship and were blessed with six children and 13 grandchildren to whom he was devoted.

He was a faithful member of St. Mary the Virgin Anglican Church as well as an active member of the Orange Lodge, participating at local, national, and international events. It was through his association with the Orange Lodge that he and Joan developed and indulged their love of traveling.

Mr. Warren worked at the NLTA for 25 years, retiring in December 1998. While it was a retirement well deserved, we could not entirely share in his enthusiasm as we knew it meant Mr. Warren was leaving us ... leaving the NLTA.

Mr. Warren passed away on Tuesday, February 3, 2009 at the age of 78 after a brief illness. Our lives have been enriched for having known him and our hearts heavier for having lost him.

The following quote by Wayne Russell, a former Executive Director of the NLTA, sums up best how we all felt about Mr. Warren:

*Ern, there never was, there is not now and there is unlikely to ever be another better than you.*

Truer words were never spoken.

Mr. Warren, we will miss you!



# Should I Retire or Should I Stay?

by PERRY DOWNEY

During weeks following the ratification vote of the new Provincial Collective Agreement, several teachers who qualify to retire at the end of this school year contacted our office and asked the question: should I retire or should I stay? The financial circumstances facing each individual teacher is unique and thus a “one answer fits all” scenario is not possible.

Other questions teachers ask about their retirement include: How can I find out the value of my pension when I retire?; How does the amount that I am entitled to receive as a pension compare to what I am earning on salary?; What impact will staying for an extra year or more have on my pension and my severance pay? These questions, and many other related questions, are factual in nature and we often attempt to assist individuals in finding the answers in order for them to make informed decisions. The Pensions Division at the Department of Finance mails a pension benefit statement to teachers in the fall of each year. These statements can be used to project the value of one's pension by considering the pension accrual and five year average salary.

Periodically, teachers will request a breakdown or a comparison of the “take-home” pay they can expect to receive as a pensioner compared with that they are receiving as an active teacher. The NLTA and Pensions Division will not calculate individual take-home pay because individual personal circumstances, financial decisions, and optional deductions impact one's take-home pay. As well, tax rates and group insurance premiums are subject to change and thus it is impossible to provide an accurate calculation. The following calculations, however, are offered for illustrative purposes *only* and are not estimates or guarantees of individual take-home pay.

The tables that follow are based on a teacher salary at the top of Certificate V, Certificate VI and Certificate VII retiring in June 2009 with a total of 33.8 years of pensionable service (e.g. 29.8 worked years plus four years of university buy-back).

It is also important to note that these tables do not represent a guarantee of the level of net retirement income a teacher will receive, but are generated based on a number of assumptions, including the following:

1. The teacher is retiring with 33.8 years of pensionable service.
2. The pension calculation assumes the full accrual for all years (2.22% prior to January 1, 1991 and 2% since January 1, 1991 except the 1993-94 fiscal year). In 1993-94, a teacher's accrual will be 0.75% less as a result of government's reduced contribution to the pension during the 1993-94 fiscal year (unless the teacher 'topped up' government's reduced contribution).
3. The estimated group insurance deductions include the Basic/Dependent Life, Basic Accidental Death & Dismemberment (AD&D), Health (Family Coverage), Dental (Family Coverage), and Long Term Disability premiums at April 1, 2009 premium rates. A teacher's other coverages and premium increases would change that estimated deduction.

It is also important to note that Pension Payroll is based on 24 pay periods per annum, whereas Teacher Payroll is based on 26 pay periods.

As the tables indicate, deductions for Canada Pension Plan premiums, Employment Insurance premiums, Teachers' Pension Plan contributions, and NLTA fees *are not* applied to pension income. The only two deductions applied to the illustrated pension income are income tax and group insurance premiums (excluding LTD coverage).

For the 2009 taxation year, the maximum annual Canada Pension Plan (CPP) premium contribution is \$2,118.60 and the maximum annual Employment Insurance (EI) premium contribution is \$731.79. Active teachers will no longer have a CPP or an EI premium deducted after the maximum amounts have been reached during the taxation year.

Individual teachers should consult directly with a tax planner or investment advisor if they are looking for a definitive statement concerning income figures applicable to their own circumstances upon retirement.

Table 1

<b>TEACHER - TOP OF CERTIFICATE V (RETIRING JUNE 2009)</b>			
Annual Salary			\$59,563
Per Pay Period (26)			\$2,291
Deductions	CPP*	\$106.74	
	EI*	\$39.63	
	TPP	\$214.21	
	Income Tax	\$427.07	
	NLTA Fees	\$28.64	
	Insurance	\$161.01	
Net Pay (26 periods)			\$1,313.70
<b>Annual Net Pay</b>		<b>\$1,314 X 26</b>	<b>\$34,164</b>
* Maximum annual CPP and EI premiums are approximately paid by the 20th pay period. No CPP or EI premiums are paid on the remaining 5 or 6 pay periods, which will increase annual net pay.			
Accrued pension percentage			70.22%
Average Salary (5 years)			\$54,446
Annual Pension		.7022 X \$54,446	\$38,232
Per Pay Period (24)			\$1,593
Deductions	Income Tax	\$280.53	
	Insurance	\$141.16	
Net Pay (24 periods)			\$1,171.31
<b>Annual Net Pension</b>		<b>\$1,171 X 24</b>	<b>\$28,104</b>
<b>Annual Net Difference*</b>		<b>\$34,164 - \$28,104 = \$6,060</b>	
*The annual net difference does not reflect the higher net pay for an active teacher after maximum annual CPP and EI premiums have been paid.			

(continued on page 12)



Table 2

TEACHER - TOP OF CERTIFICATE VI (RETIRING JUNE 2009)			
Annual Salary			\$68,989
Per Pay Period			\$2,653
Deductions	CPP*	\$124.68	
	EI*	\$45.90	
	TPP	\$248.09	
	Income Tax	\$539.87	
	NLTA Fees	\$33.17	
	Insurance	\$165.13	
Net Pay (26 periods)			\$1,496.16
Annual Net Pay		\$1,496 X 26	\$38,896
*Maximum annual CPP and EI premiums paid by the 17th pay period. No CPP or EI premiums are paid on the remaining 8 or 9 pay periods, which will increase annual net pay.			
Accrued pension percentage			70.22%
Average Salary (5 years)			\$63,062
Annual Pension		.7022 X \$63,062	\$44,282
Per Pay Period (24)			\$1,845
Deductions	Income Tax	\$359.57	
	Insurance	\$142.13	
Net Pay (24 periods)			\$1,343.30
Annual Net Pension		\$1,343 X 24	\$32,232
Annual Net Difference*		\$38,896 - \$32,232 =	\$6,664
*The annual net difference does not reflect the higher net pay for an active teacher after maximum annual CPP and EI premiums have been paid.			

Table 3

TEACHER - TOP OF CERTIFICATE VII (RETIRING JUNE 2009)			
Annual Salary			\$78,046
Per Pay Period			\$3,002
Deductions	CPP*	\$141.94	
	EI*	\$51.93	
	TPP	\$280.69	
	Income Tax	\$656.28	
	NLTA Fees	\$37.53	
	Insurance	\$169.07	
Net Pay (26 periods)			\$1,664.58
Annual Net Pay		\$1,665 X 26	\$43,290
*Maximum annual CPP and EI premiums paid by the 15th pay period. No CPP or EI premiums are paid on the remaining 11 or 12 pay periods, which will increase annual net pay.			
Accrued pension percentage			70.22%
Average Salary (5 years)			\$71,341
Annual Pension		.7022 X \$71,341	\$50,096
Per Pay Period (24)			\$2,087
Deductions	Income Tax	\$443.78	
	Insurance	\$143.05	
Net Pay (24 periods)			\$1,500.17
Annual Net Pension		\$1,500 X 24	\$36,000
Annual Net Difference*		\$43,290 - \$36,000 =	\$7,290
*The annual net difference does not reflect the higher net pay for an active teacher after maximum annual CPP and EI premiums have been paid.			

**Note:**

- These numbers represent estimates only and are not intended as a specific calculation of any teacher's net pension income (see earlier comments).
- Teachers retiring with fewer than 33.8 pensionable years are cautioned that the pension income will be lower and therefore these net difference figures will be more substantial in their cases.

In addition to the above, teachers sometimes inquire about the effect on their pension income, should they decide to continue teaching for another year or two. There are two factors which impact the pension calculation if a teacher decides to continue working beyond their "30 years": i) a teacher's pension accrual rate will increase by 2% for each additional year worked; and ii) the 5 year average salary applied to the accrual will usually be higher because of the higher salary in the last year(s) worked when compared to salary earned five years earlier.

Table 4 outlines the "best 5 year average salary" for each certificate level based on the new Provincial Collective Agreement salary increases and the esti-

mated "annual gross pension" based on a teacher retiring at the end of each of the next four years, assuming that the teacher would have had 33.8 years of pensionable service (29.8 years of work service plus four years of university service) at the end of the 2008-09 school year. Given the tables above, 33.8 years of pensionable service at the end of the 2008-09 school year translates into a pension accrual rate of 70.22%. Each additional year of service will add 2% to the pension accrual. Teachers are also encouraged to visit the Virtual Teacher Centre at [www.virtualteachercentre.ca](http://www.virtualteachercentre.ca) or the NLTA website ([www.nlta.nl.ca](http://www.nlta.nl.ca)) and use the pension estimator to help in this calculation.

Also, the calculation of severance pay is completed below based on the assumption that the teacher will receive the maximum 40% severance pay entitlement at the end of the school years indicated. In general, severance pay is calculated based on the conditions that: i) the teacher has nine or more “continuous years of service”; and ii) that the teacher receives 2% per year for each year of service, to a maximum percentage of 40%.

**Table 4**

		Certificate V		Certificate VI		Certificate VII	
If retiring at the end of (year)	% of Pension	Best 5 Year Avg. Salary \$	Annual Gross Pension \$	Best 5 Year Avg. Salary \$	Annual Gross Pension \$	Best 5 Year Avg. Salary \$	Annual Gross Pension \$
2008-09	70.22	54,446	38,232	63,062	44,282	71,341	50,096
2009-10	72.22	56,438	40,760	65,369	47,209	73,951	53,407
2010-11	74.22	58,926	43,735	68,251	50,656	77,211	57,306
2011-12	76.22	61,617	46,964	71,368	54,397	80,737	61,578
SEVERANCE PAY CALCULATIONS							
If applying for severance pay at the end of (year)	Certificate V		Certificate VI		Certificate VII		
	Salary	40%	Salary	40%	Salary	40%	
2008-09	59,563	23,825	68,989	27,596	78,046	31,218	
2009-10	61,946	24,778	71,749	28,700	81,168	32,467	
2010-11	64,424	25,770	74,619	29,848	84,415	33,766	
2011-12	67,001	26,800	77,604	31,042	87,792	35,117	

Inquiries on any of the above information should be directed to an Administrative Officer in the Benefits and Economic Services Division or to personnel in the Pension Division at the Department of Finance.

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



# Pre-Retirement Seminars 2009

Teachers within two years of retirement eligibility should register for one of the NLTA's seven Pre-Retirement Seminars scheduled to be held in the fall of 2009 in Stephenville, Corner Brook, Gander, Grand Falls-Windsor, and three in St. John's. (Please note: consideration will be given to combining seminars if registration numbers are sufficiently low in a particular seminar.) These seminars are held in accordance with Association policy as part of its overall program of pre-retirement counselling. Clause 18.12 of the Provincial Collective Agreement and Clause 29.12 of the Labrador West Collective Agreement provide two days paid leave to attend these seminars.

Information sessions will deal with topics such as the Teachers' Pension Plan, Severance Pay, Employment Insurance, NLTA Group Insurance, Financial and Estate Planning and the Canada Pension Plan. As well, time is available for individual counselling of prospective retirees by the various consultants.

## Things You Should Know About Attending

- Potential participants must register with the NLTA for a particular seminar and apply to their Board office for leave.
- Only those teachers eligible to retire during or before June 2012 will be eligible to attend.
- Registration must be received at the NLTA Office at least four weeks in advance to ensure approval of attendance.
- The Association reserves the right to refuse acceptance of registration at any particular seminar if the registration forms have not been received at the NLTA office in accordance with Association policy.
- It is the responsibility of the individual participant to make arrangements and pay for hotel accommodations, should any be required. Please reference that you are attending an NLTA function and the hotel should provide a reduced rate which is available to the NLTA.
- Travel expenses shall be reimbursed in accordance with the following provisions:
  - i) participants shall be reimbursed the lesser of travel by private vehicle or public transportation to the seminar closest to the place of residence. In the event that a teacher requests and is accepted to attend a seminar other than the closest seminar, the participant shall only be reimbursed the amount applicable for travel to the closest seminar.
  - ii) payment for private vehicle shall be at the rate which is 15% of the average cost of self-serve regular gasoline as determined on the first day of each fiscal quarter for the return trip from residence to seminar site.
  - iii) travel via public conveyance shall be reimbursed at the rate of 80 percent of ferry, taxi, or economy airfare; in the case of airfare, the lesser of excursion (seat sale) or 80 percent of economy airfare will be paid, where excursion (seat sale) fares can be arranged. Receipts shall be required for all reimbursement.
  - iv) no expenses will be paid to participants living or teaching in the community where the seminar is held.
  - v) a spouse is welcome to accompany the participating teacher to the pre-retirement seminar, but no expenses will be covered.
- All other expenses, such as meals, accommodation and child care, are the responsibility of the participating teacher.
- Expenses will be provided for one pre-retirement seminar only and a teacher participant shall be permitted to attend one seminar only. (Notwithstanding this, a teacher may attend a second seminar as a spouse.)
- Teachers must attend the seminar location closest to their place of residence, except in cases where the mode, cost or availability of transportation necessitates otherwise.
- Directors and Assistant Directors, and spouses, are welcome to attend one pre-retirement seminar, but no expenses will be paid in accordance with this policy.

Given the large number of teachers eligible to retire, we reserve the right to limit the number of people who will be granted access, depending on the physical facilities available at each site. Consequently, it is imperative that teachers plan ahead and register early in the event that registrations have to be taken on a first-come, first-served basis.

**NOTE:** The full text of the NLTA Policy on Pre-Retirement Seminars and the registration form can also be found on the NLTA website ([www.nlta.nl.ca](http://www.nlta.nl.ca)). Click on "Recent Info" on the main page or "Online Forms" on the members only website. The NLTA policy will also be mailed to teachers with confirmation of registration.



# 2009 PRE-RETIREMENT SEMINAR

## R E G I S T R A T I O N F O R M

Name .....

Home Address .....

Postal Code .....

Home Telephone .....

Social Insurance Number .....

School Name .....

School Telephone .....

Email .....

Please check which session you will be attending:

☐ **Oct. 15-16** – Hotel Gander, Gander

☐ ~~**Oct. 22-23** – Holiday Inn, Stephenville~~ **CANCELLED**

☐ **Oct. 29-30** – Mt. Peyton, Grand Falls-Windsor

☐ ~~**Nov. 5-6** – Greenwood Inn & Suites, Corner Brook~~

☐ ~~**Nov. 12-13** – Holiday Inn, St. John's~~ **CANCELLED**

☐ **Dec. 3-4** – Capital Hotel, St. John's **FULL**

☐ **Dec. 10-11** – Holiday Inn, St. John's

Will your spouse be attending? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Name of spouse (if attending) .....

Earliest eligibility date for pension .....

Have you attended a previous pre-retirement seminar?

☐ Yes ☐ No

- Note:**
- Teachers within two years of retirement (on or before June 2012) are eligible to attend.
  - All participants must pre-register.
  - You will receive confirmation prior to seminar.
  - Travel costs will be paid according to policy and only to the nearest seminar.
  - Teachers are advised to bring a calculator.

Please submit registration form to:  
Melanie Jaster  
Benefits and Economic Services Division  
Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association  
3 Kenmount Road, St. John's, NL A1B 1W1  
Fax: 709-726-4302; 1-877-711-6582 (toll free)

**NOTE: As space is limited, registrations will be taken on a first-come, first-served basis.**

### FOR NLTA OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received	Confirmation Sent	Information Package Sent

## *It's A Different World*

# A Coastal Labrador North Experience

by PERRY DOWNEY

As I fly over the partially completed Trans Labrador Highway on my flight from Happy Valley-Goose Bay back to St. John's on a beautiful Friday afternoon, I could not help but to reflect back on the last few days that I have spent in some of the most friendliest schools and picturesque communities located on the North Coast of Labrador. I had been invited by the Director of the Labrador School Board, Dr. Bruce Vey, and the Assistant Director of Education (Human Resources), Mr. Gary Gallop, to travel with them to three schools on the North Coast to explain the redundancy-reassignment-layoff process, as outlined in the Provincial Collective Agreement and to meet with the teachers so affected face-to-face. These meetings were necessary because in recent months, the Labrador School Board had been informed by the Provincial Department of Education that the Innu Education Authorities in the communities of Natuashish and Sheshatshiu were in the process of formally being granted permission by Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) to take over the governance of the education system. As a result, the teachers who are currently employed by the Labrador School Board would no longer be employed in the schools in these communities and thus be declared redundant and reassigned, or laid off because the Labrador School Board would no longer be responsible for the delivery of education. The devolution of the Innu education system is an issue that has been discussed for more than 30 years, but as of July 1st, 2009, it will become a reality.

When leaving Happy Valley-Goose Bay at 7:30 a.m. on a sunny, cool and crisp Tuesday morning on Provincial Airlines Twin Otter flight PAL961, I could not even imagine what to expect over the next few days. We were scheduled to land in Natuashish at 9:45 a.m., but before doing so, we would have to touch down in the coastal communities of Makkovik, Postville, and Hopedale. Many coastal travelers

referred to this type of travel by plane as "hopping up the coast" because the distance between each community is only a 10 to 20 minute hop in the Twin Otter. Flying just a couple of hundred feet above the snow capped mountains and deep valleys of the Labrador land mass, it was a sight to behold. The barren land, the massive frozen lakes, and the winding, oxbow rivers that dotted the snow white landscape caused me to wonder how the early aboriginal peoples of Labrador, the Innu and Inuit, could have traveled over such a vast landscape in search of food and shelter, without having the modern day luxuries of a snowmobile, a Global Positioning System (GPS), and a hard packed groomed trail, or the conveniences of the Twin Otter plane. It is simply amazing to imagine the trials and hardships that these people must have experienced, but equally as amazing to imagine the freedom and lifestyles that these nomadic people must have experienced as they trekked across the "Big Land".



**Gary Gallop (Assistant Director of Education - Human Resources) and Perry Downey about to board the Twin Otter to begin their travels to the North Coast of Labrador. Taking the photo was Dr. Bruce Vey (Director of Education) who also made the trip with them.**

Soon after landing in the Innu community of Natuashish, and after picking up our luggage at the cargo door of the Twin Otter (no baggage handlers or conveyer belts to worry about here), we were greeted

by a teacher from the school who had driven to the airstrip in the school's 1992 Volkswagen Eurovan. Yes, the roads in Natuashish are plowed and maintained during the winter months. After a short 10 minute drive to the school, we were greeted by the remainder of the staff at Mushuau Innu Natuashish School. From the indentation of the wolf and caribou heads that were set in the flooring tile near the entrance to the building, I could not help but get the feeling that I was about to experience a different, but interesting culture and way of life. It was also very obvious from the first introduction to members of the staff that this very young looking, almost "teenager-like", group of female dominated teachers were very energetic, enthusiastic, vibrant, and dedicated to their chosen profession. Of the 27 teachers on staff, 22 were either in their first or second year of a two-year probationary period. From the student work and projects that were posted throughout the school, to the projects that were assembled in the Industrial Arts area, it was obvious that these teachers truly enjoyed their jobs and were themselves, having a cultural experience.

After a brief introduction to the staff, our meeting began and I explained the application of Article 9: Layoffs and how the teachers would possibly be affected with the expected change. For teachers at Mushuau Innu Natuashish School, if the devolution proceeded as planned, they would all be declared redundant and reassigned, based on their seniority and their capabilities, to vacant teaching positions or positions held by junior teachers in the nearest, or next nearest, communities of Hopedale and Nain. For many, they would have welcomed the opportunity to stay at this school, but understood the process and were apprehensive as to where they might be reassigned for the next school year. After the meeting ended, I had an opportunity to talk to a number of teachers in their classrooms and heard many positive comments about the school and the students.

However, we had to cut our visit short since we were expected back at the airstrip by 2:30 p.m. for the second leg of our journey. After a short 20-minute hop onboard another Twin Otter, we arrived in Hopedale. While flying just meters above the frozen harbor ice as we approached the airstrip, it soon became apparent that I was about to have a totally different cultural experience in this community. Hopedale, named the Capital of Nunatsiavut, is dominantly an Inuit community. When we landed, the Principal of Amos Comenius Memorial School, Mr. Dean Coombs, was waiting at the airstrip with his "coastal limousine service"; a 14 foot long komatik, towed behind a 2007 550F Bombardier snowmobile. While piling our luggage in the front section of the komatik, Mr. Coombs

informed us that the last thing to be put in the sled were eight caribou from his most recent hunting trip a few days earlier. Mr. Gallop and I jumped in the back of the komatik, while Mr. Vey traveled as a passenger with Mr. Coombs. From the airstrip to the hotel, I soon realized that komatiks are not equipped with shock absorbers because it wasn't two minutes into the short trek across the harbor ice when both Mr. Gallop and I were partially standing, allowing our legs to act as the suspension, as we held on "for dear life".



**"Taxi ride" from Amos Comenius Memorial School to hotel. Seated in taxi are Perry, Mel Harris (Itinerant Teacher for Deaf and Hard of Hearing), and Faron Sheppard (Program Specialist for Student Support Services).**

From the trek across the harbor, the view of the community nestled amongst the bare granite hills and valleys was stunning in the evening sunlight. The sight and smell of wood smoke billowing from chimneys, men towing sled loads of wood across the harbor by snowmobile, the sound of chainsaws cutting up firewood, and children playing games in the snow all brought back many childhood memories for me of growing up in Winterton, Trinity Bay. At first glance, one would conclude that this is a simple, but very rewarding lifestyle. From my room at the Amaguk Inn, overlooking a frozen Hopedale harbor, I could see the Marine Atlantic shipping terminal where a winter's supply of goods and supplies had been delivered during the previous summer months; the towering storage tanks of gasoline and diesel that are used to heat the homes, the school, to run generators, and to operate the snowmobiles; boats, with their outboard engines still attached, buried in the shoulder deep snow drifts; individuals of all ages driving snowmobiles around the well-traveled paths in the community; and several individuals walking; all were reminders of a "different world" then what many of us have become accustomed to. One of the most striking differences that I quickly noticed was the slow, but constant pace by which individuals traveled by snowmobile or walked around the community; no one seemed to be in any rush whatsoever. Everyone seemed to be very relaxed, stress-free, and



enjoying every minute of solitude in their peaceful surroundings. The hustle and bustle of city life was non-existent in this community. Given my enjoyment of the outdoors, I quickly “fell in love” with this lifestyle. The people, the hunting, the fishing, the boating, and the sightseeing opportunities, as well as the peacefulness and tranquility that the community and the surrounding countryside had to offer, was something that would tempt any outdoor lover to stay. All I kept thinking was, “If only I would have known this 24 years earlier when I began my teaching career, I would have loved to come to coastal Labrador.” For me, it would have been an opportunity of a lifetime.

After a great dinner and a quiet night in my hotel room writing an article for *The Bulletin*, I awoke to a beautiful, clear, -24°C morning. After breakfast, we packed our briefcases into the limousine service once more for the short run “up the hill” to Amos Comenius Memorial School. When we arrived, the “parking lot” was filled with the popular brand names of snowmobiles, many of which were owned by the teaching staff. Even before entering the building, the beautiful green structure radiated a welcoming and inviting feeling. Just inside the main entrance, stretched out on the floor, was a big beautiful polar bear rug that I learned later was presented to the school by a former student who had shot the bear some years earlier; a detailed model of an Inuit komatik and boat; and a large collage of Inuit art painted high above the main office area, depicting many scenes of the traditional ways of life of the Inuit people. It was evident from the spotless floors and walls that everyone here took great pride in their school. Mr. Coombs explained that the school is often the place for many community gatherings and everyone who enters the building respects the school, what it has to offer, and the work of the teachers and support staff. During just a short 15 minute tour through the artistically designed building, I soon recognized and appreciated the artistic abilities and skills of the Inuit people. The detailed wooden caribou carvings that were in a display case in the corridor, the rock carvings of a native Inuit and polar bear at the front entrance, the Inuit patterns embroidered on mittens and a jacket that were on display on a wall, and the many paintings that were proudly displayed throughout the building were all evidence of the artistic skills and pride that these people had for their traditional way of life and their culture.

As we entered the staff lounge, we were greeted by several staff members who had gathered for recess. Some of the discussions centered on student achievement and progress, while others centered on the upcoming Easter vacation and individual teacher

plans. All the teachers seemed to be happy at the school and the Principal seemed to set a tone of caring and comfort in knowing that “his” teachers were a “happy bunch”. The camaraderie and professional respect was self-evident as all the teachers went about their daily routine. During our visit, the school was involved in a Professional Development day, but we infringed on their time to explain Article 9 and the possible impact that the school closure in Natuashish could have on their staff.

After our meeting had concluded, I had the opportunity to drive around the community on the Principal’s snowmobile. During my hour or so drive, I quickly discovered that this lifestyle was indeed rewarding. I stopped to take pictures of children playing hockey on an outdoor rink; a search and rescue winter vehicle that was located adjacent to the medical clinic; the Moravian Missionary buildings; and seven sled dogs chained equidistance apart awaiting the return of their owner. I also stopped to chat to an Inuit hunter who had just returned from a caribou hunting trip. He had successfully returned with ten caribou and eight ptarmigan. While off-loading only two caribou next to his home, he informed me that the remainder would be delivered to some of the elders in the community who could no longer hunt. He commented that when he gets too old to hunt the land that he hopes that someone will return the same favor to him. Respect for the land, the wildlife, and the elders in the community was obviously present in this gentleman.



**Inuit hunter returning from a successful caribou and ptarmigan hunt in Hopedale. Caring for the elders in the community is a tradition for these people.**

The next morning at 9:00 a.m., it was “hop in the komatik” again and we were off to the airstrip for the last leg of our coastal trip to Nain. As we boarded the Provincial Airlines Twin Otter, there were only seven seats in the rear of the plane since the front section of the plane was carefully packed with supplies covered in tarpaulins and securely strapped. I soon realized that the Twin Otter not only serviced the coast as a passenger plane, but it often doubled as a “tractor trailer” for delivering supplies to the iso-

lated communities during the winter months. While enroute to Nain, we had to once again touch down in Natuashish. While taxiing into the small terminal building, our Twin Otter passed neatly piled boxes of supplies and other items on the ground. Once landed, the co-pilot opened the passenger door at the rear and asked that everyone step outside in order to remove the cargo. With the six passengers standing around the plane (no airport security issues here), it was obvious that another “tractor trailer” had been here earlier because the pile of boxes that we had just passed contained fresh produce for the local store. There were boxes of fruit and vegetables, sacks of carrots, turnips, cabbages, potatoes, and onions, and other supplies awaiting pick-up. Our co-pilot proceeded to offload six large boxes, each containing a 40 gallon hot water tank, boxes of pampers, skidoo parts, and several large air filters for the heavy equipment that is used in the community. Once offloaded, it was amazing to see just how much supplies these small planes could carry. It wasn't long before we were on our way once again for the 20 minute hop to Nain.

As with Hopedale, we were greeted at the airstrip in Nain by the Principal of Jens Haven Memorial School, Mr. Jake Larkins. Mr. Larkins had our limousine ride to the hotel in tow behind his snowmobile. We again piled in our luggage and I volunteered to ride in the komatik again. It wasn't long into the trek that I realized that Mr. Larkins' komatik was also not equipped with shock absorbers. As the sled jumped across the hundreds of “yes mams” as he drove down “main street”, that teeth-chattering feeling soon returned. I was very relieved when he finally stopped outside the Atsanik Inn, our hotel for the night. Soon after checking in, we were off to the school for a visit. The weather was just beautiful: sunny, no clouds, no wind, and -3°C. It was another beautiful Labrador day in this peaceful community that was nestled in the northern coastal mountains. As with the other schools that we had visited during our travels, we were very welcome at Jens Haven by the staff. After a brief introduction and conversation with some of the staff, we walked next door to Jens Haven Memorial to meet the remaining teachers in the community. Interestingly located between the two schools was a beautiful six-unit teacher residence. This apartment building is owned and operated by the Labrador School Board to house teachers who are hired. The availability of adequate housing has been a major issue for many years in the coastal communities of Labrador and thus the school board has had to build such accommodations in order to attract and retain teachers to such locations. Teachers who move into these apartments are often expected to share the

accommodations with other teachers who have been hired and thus it was common to talk to teachers who had attended university together now teaching together in these communities.

Like most teachers living in coastal communities of Labrador, young teachers who accept positions soon realize that snowmobiles are a necessary way of life during the winter. Everywhere you travel, you have to go by snowmobile or Twin Otter. Many of the teachers with whom I chatted talked about the need to tell other teachers who might be considering accepting positions in coastal Labrador that before they travel to these communities, that they ensure they ship an adequate supply of food and other necessities by coastal boat during the summer months if they are going to sustain themselves over the long winter months. If you run out of something, you sometimes cannot run to the store and pick it up. Even when that may be possible, the cost of buying groceries and other supplies is very expensive. For example, while visiting one of the community general stores, I noticed that a large 950g box of Fruit Loops cost \$12.99. Other teachers talked about having shipped too much food and how they trade or sell items to other teachers. Some talked about selling or donating their extra food to people in the community before they leave in June. While in Hopedale, a staff member went to the airstrip to receive and transport the weekly shipment of milk for the teachers at the school. When the order arrived, a couple of staff members sorted and labeled each one liter plastic bottle by teacher name for pick-up. It was obvious that this process was well organized and each teacher who arrived to pick up their order expressed their appreciation for the efforts of their colleagues. These are just a few examples of what most of us who live and teach in other non-isolated, rural and urban communities throughout the province simply take for granted. But for the teachers living in coastal Labrador, it's their way of life and survival and definitely a “different world” than many of us are used to living in. This trip was certainly an eye opener for me, but if given the opportunity earlier in my career, I believe that I would have jumped at an offer to teach in either of these communities. If you are a new, early career, mid-career, late career or retired teacher who enjoys the outdoors and would appreciate learning about the traditional way of life of other aboriginal cultures, coastal Labrador would be the ideal place for you. It's certainly “a different world”, *but* a very rewarding world indeed.

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



## *When Facing Possible Disciplinary Action* When to Call the NLTA?

by STEVE BROOKS

Hopefully you will never need the answer to this question. Unfortunately, teachers do sometimes find themselves in situations in which they may be subject to discipline by their employer. Disciplinary action is dealt with under Article 10 of the Provincial Collective Agreement (Article 49 of the Labrador West Collective Agreement). Specifically, the agreements provide that, no teacher shall be suspended, dismissed, or otherwise disciplined except for just cause. A letter of reprimand is also considered a form of discipline. Generally speaking, a negative performance evaluation or a warning that is not documented in the teacher's personnel file would not be considered to be disciplinary in nature.

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**“Section 4 of the Teachers’ Association Act sets out the objectives of the Association, which include elevating and unifying the teaching profession by giving advice, assistance and legal protection to members in their professional duties and relationships.”**

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In Newfoundland and Labrador, the Association (NLTA) is the legally recognized representative of teachers. Section 4 of the Teachers’ Association Act sets out the objectives of the Association, which include elevating and unifying the teaching profession by giving advice, assistance and legal protection to members in their professional duties and relationships. In Article 2 of the Provincial Collective Agreement (Article 8 of the Labrador West Collective Agreement) the school boards recognize the Association as the exclusive bargaining agent for all teachers. This includes not only the collective bargaining process, but also all other situations in which teachers require

representation as it pertains to the administration of either the Collective Agreements or the Schools Act.

As a result of these statutory designations as the exclusive representative of teachers, the NLTA has a fundamental, substantive right to represent teachers during disciplinary meetings. Arbitrators have tended to interpret this to also include meetings at which there is a reasonable possibility of disciplinary action being taken. This however does not mean that the Association has an unfettered right to attend any and all meetings between a teacher and the employer. In fact, arbitrators have also ruled that representation rights are not automatic in cases where investigations are in the fact-finding stage.

If you find yourself in a situation in which disciplinary action may be warranted, the best advice is to contact an Administrative Officer in the Benefits and Economic Services (BES) division of the NLTA. If you feel that the employer, through questions or requests made to you, may believe that you have done something that could warrant disciplinary action, you should clarify this with the employer. This can be done by simply asking the school board to clarify its intent and the likely consequences. If the board responds by stating that there may be disciplinary consequences, then you are entitled to representation. You should notify the employer that you wish to speak with an NLTA representative before providing any more information.

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





# Gone to the Dogs

by KATHRYN COOPER

Dog assisted reading support programs are slowly gaining more and more attention. Programs like Paws to Read™ are helping reluctant readers find confidence and begin to relax and enjoy reading. Therapeutic Paws of Canada has developed a program where certified dogs and their handlers go to libraries or schools to help children who are struggling with reading. Often, struggling readers are disadvantaged in many ways. Then, when they do not become fluent readers, they become further disadvantaged because their success in school is greatly reduced since all subjects are so strongly literacy based.

Learning to read is crucial. Without it, most things we ask children to do in school are painfully difficult. Children with reading difficulties often face snickers and ridicule if they even try to read aloud in the classroom. Instead of improving, their confidence decreases and often they end up hating reading. They feel judged and self conscious. Their hearts beat faster and their blood pressure rises. Reading with a dog has been shown to greatly reduce these negative feelings. Children do not feel threatened or judged. Dogs do not discriminate and help us feel less lonely. Coming home to a dog that wags his tail despite my being sweaty from the gym or cranky over a rough day brings incredible joy to my life. Jersey simply delights in my being home. This complete acceptance of me and unconditional love is a lesson for humans.

Some readers who struggle have the money to hire a private tutor or attend expensive after-school programs where they can get individual or small group support which might be helpful in their reading development. I have had some students who have experienced success with private tutors or other private, for profit programs. Yet, many students who struggle with reading cannot avail of services such as these. With dog assisted reading programs, the expensive barriers previously mentioned are greatly reduced. Dogs and handlers volunteer their time. Most often the program is offered through a school or library so access is more easily available to children and they are not for profit so there are no fees for children to attend.

Dog assisted reading programs not only improve self-esteem and reading fluency, there is an incredibly important ecological connection. With our world being destroyed by our actions, we need to think differently and reflect that importance in our schools. By encouraging bonds with dogs at an early age, children will develop stronger attachments to our earth and all the players that make it up.

In our classrooms, we need more love, acceptance, and hope. There is potential for dogs to fill a huge void. We need more space for laughter and smiles. Rick Kogan wrote an article called *Teachers' Pets* which was published in *The Chicago Tribune* and in it, there was a great quote made during an observation of a dog assisted reading program: "One of the dogs, a cute Bichon named Wrigley, gives each kid a hug after their reading session. Watching this, it is impossible not to feel happy and hopeful. The kids? They just giggle and keep on reading."



Kathryn Cooper with her dog, Jersey.

Myself and Ursula Kelly, a professor in the Faculty of Education at Memorial University, in cooperation with the St. John's Public Libraries, are hoping to establish a Paws To Read™ program in St. John's and surrounding areas. If you have a dog and are interested in this program, please contact me ([kcooper@mun.ca](mailto:kcooper@mun.ca)) or Ursula ([ukelly@mun.ca](mailto:ukelly@mun.ca)). You can read more about Paws To Read™ at [www.tpoc.ca](http://www.tpoc.ca).

Kathryn Cooper is a Grade 6 Teacher at Upper Gullies Elementary. She is currently working on a Masters of Education through Memorial University of Newfoundland.



# EAP ... What Does That Have To Do With Me?

by CLAUDETTE E. S. COOMBS

Everything! The Employee Assistance Program belongs to you. The **Wellness** and **Counselling** Programs are the two primary divisions of EAP services. They encompass any programs, initiatives or strategies which assist teachers in attaining, maintaining or enhancing their optimal health status.

We recognize that optimal health, or well-being, is achieved through a combination of personal and environmental factors. Some things we direct, like our lifestyles and choices. Even though our genetic complement and other external factors such as the weather and amount of sunshine are beyond our command, we can choose our response to them. However, there are many other external factors which we can either control or influence. We need to be aware of each of those factors, then manipulate our environment to ensure a positive impact on our lives. It is those controllable and malleable factors which the EAP attempts to influence.

## Wellness

The **Wellness Program** is designed to actively enhance the well-being of teachers. This proactive approach is used in many ways including: facilitating the development and support of individual health strategies; offering comprehensive skills training sessions to groups of teachers; assisting individual schools, NLTA Branches and School Boards in developing and implementing wellness programs and strategies; and, working within the educational system to link with all areas where teacher wellness is impacted. Respectful Workplace Programs, School Development Plans, Climate and Culture Committees, Safe and Caring Schools initiatives, Occupational Health and Safety Teams and, School Health Committees all have a connection to the EAP Wellness Program. The EAP Coordinators work with teachers, administrators, Board Office staff, community health resources, and service providers to ensure that the teacher wellness agenda is on everyone's radar. Coordinators also offer comments and sug-

gestions to NLTA staff when they are carrying out their work with, and for, teachers. Examples include information concerning: leave and working conditions to the Negotiating Committee staff; specific stressors and their impact to the BES staff in preparation for the New Teacher, School Representative, Pre-Retirement and Financial Wellness presentations. The EAP Wellness Program enthusiastically delivers its messages, each year reaching approximately 1000 teachers through workshops and thousands of others through print resources.

## Counselling

Most teachers are familiar with the **Counselling Program**. The ultimate goal of the EAP Counselling program is to reach teachers before issues negatively affect their overall health. Unfortunately however, teachers usually contact the EAP Coordinators only after issues have caused some significant complication in their lives. The EAP Counselling Program can be accessed for any reason which is causing emotional distress or internal conflict due to the effects of various stressors. Although we all go through challenges, the impact on us can vary dramatically from one person to another and from one issue to another. When we know that the effects are spilling over to our personal serenity, relationships and maybe even our workplace functioning, then it is definitely time to connect with EAP! Since 1989 more than 2700 teachers have used this component of EAP. Most contacts are made directly by the teacher; however, there are occasions when a concerned spouse, teacher friend, administrator or even Board Staff person will call to ask what they can do to help an anonymous colleague. Support and information are provided to the caller and s/he is told to encourage the teacher to make contact. A teacher will *not* be contacted just because a friend is concerned. The teacher must indicate a desire to be involved with the EAP before Coordinators can offer direct assistance. Unlike some other workplace EAPs, the EAP for Teachers only

offers services to current teachers. This means that retired teachers and family members are not eligible for support.

### **Why Do Teachers Know So Little About EAP Services?**

Daily we are bombarded with visual and auditory stimuli. Teaching is one of the professions where this is especially true. We constantly make decisions, conscious or otherwise, about which things legitimately require our attention or action. On a busy day, in the midst of a busy week, surrounded by a busy month, we decide that reading all the way through a magazine or checking an informational website is not at the top of our priority list. Often we tend to pay attention to the things that are relevant to us – *right now!* That could mean that, despite its history and regular promotion, many teachers are unaware of the realm of services offered through the Employee Assistance Program for Teachers.

### **The History**

The concept of developing an EAP for Teachers began in 1984 because the NTA believed that providing support to teachers would help them with their jobs and in their lives. Seeing a need, they began the planning. The Program was initially administered by the NTA until the Department of Education and the 'School Board Trustees' joined as official supporters in 1986 and eventually full partners when the NTA, School Trustees' Association and the Provincial Government signed a Collective Agreement which included an EAP policy and program. By 1988, demands for EAP counselling services were growing and a coordinator was hired in 1989 to manage the Program and coordinate the counselling services. With continued growth and a new emphasis on wellness, in 1995 the partners decided that the Program needed a wellness component and a second EAP Coordinator was hired to introduce a proactive Wellness Program to EAP. Over time, Program funding has changed from being the sole responsibility of the NTA to having salaries and most direct Program expenses funded by Government, while the Centennial Fund covers counselling-related expenses. The program is administered by and housed at the NLTA building in St. John's.

### **Current Program Status**

Achievements and ongoing activities since the Program's ratification by NTA members at the 1984 AGM include: further development of the Counselling Program; the evolution and directed development of the Wellness Program; production

of Wellness promotion print materials; workshops tailored to the needs of specific teacher groups; the inclusion of a Wellness article in every issue of *The Bulletin*; consultation with, and education of, Administrators and Board personnel on addressing teacher issues from a wellness perspective; information for NLTA staff and officials on wellness related items to be considered in contract negotiations or presented in their teacher sessions; expanding the Teacher Wellness agenda to other school and health groups; formalization of EAP program components and policies; expansion of the working relationships with school, NLTA and Board office staff, and surveys to determine teacher wellness needs and interests.

### **Future Ideas**

Amid the regular demands of the Program, Coordinators are setting aside time to review the efficiency of resource use and the effectiveness of current strategies. We are looking at creative ways of expanding Program capacity to meet the wellness needs of teachers, for both the needs we know and those we anticipate.

If you are interested in seeking personal assistance to get your life moving in the direction you want, don't delay. Contact your EAP Coordinators to start the confidential process. If you are interested in having your school or group of teachers embark on a journey to wellness together, contact your EAP Coordinators today! We can help with the design, planning, implementation and ongoing support of your strategy and initiatives.

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*Claudette Coombs is an EAP Coordinator with the Employee Assistance Program for teachers. For confidential assistance contact Claudette Coombs (ext. 242) or Judy Beranger (ext. 265).*





# Obama Shaves With Ockham's Razor

by BEVERLEY PARK

Anyone who knows me knows that I am a more-than-proud Canadian who likes to distinguish myself and my fellow Canadians from our neighbours to the south. But even I am not immune to the charms of Barack Obama. I, as much as anyone, got caught up in the positive thinking and charismatic character of the newly elected President. It wasn't just a natural tendency to support underdogs or the attraction of A-B-B (Anyone But Bush or Anyone's Better than Bush) that caused so many to coalesce around him. I believe it was that he put forward something that is all too rare, particularly in political arenas – simplicity. His simply stated message, “Yes, we can!”, was pervasive whether he spoke of social issues, economic issues, local or world-scale issues. Though it was and is elegant in its simplicity, it is complex in what it conveys: competence and courage, determination and commitment. Simplicity is something we see all too little of these days.

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**“All too often we take it for granted that if something looks or sounds more complex, then it is more sophisticated, smarter. Sometimes in fact, the opposite is true.”**

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By now you may be wondering how Obama's personal grooming practices have to do with anything and what the heck is Ockham's Razor. Well, actually it has nothing to do with grooming – more about priorities and approaches. It is the principle proposed by William of Ockham in the fourteenth century that “entities should not be multiplied unnecessarily”. In other words, “keep it simple”. Ockham would probably be rolling in his grave to see it *that* simplified because it does have a more subtle and interesting meaning\*, but I am taking the license of authorship.

All too often we take it for granted that if something looks or sounds more complex, then it is more sophisticated, smarter. Sometimes in fact, the opposite is true. I sometimes express things in complicated and complex ways when I haven't taken time to work through my thoughts or my presentation and make sure I find words and ways to express things in an accessible fashion. On the question of simple versus complex, take an everyday example from curriculum. Quadratic equations definitely appear more complex than simple addition. But the quadratic equation may be no more complex to the 17-year-old than the simple addition to the five-year-old! Given the brain processing that the young child has to go through, the simple addition may, in fact, be much more complex.

This assumption of what looks complex is complex gets carried through our attitudes and what we respect as being more intelligent. For example, have you ever (be honest now!) considered that one had to be smarter to teach high school or even to teach certain subjects in high school than to teach in primary? Granted, the content prescribed in the curriculum is more advanced, but is it really true that the work of teaching at a high school level is more complex? At the risk of alienating all my high school colleagues I suggest that what you do is no more (and no less) sophisticated, requires no more (and no less) intelligence than what your colleague in the primary classroom down the hall or down the road does. It just appears that way if we look in the window because a periodic table on the wall looks way more complex than a “times table”.

Some of the most complex of all concepts are expressed in just one word. Think “love”, “peace”, “democracy”. And I would add to that “teaching”. This very complex act can appear quite simple to those who do not teach. Why? Because the more skilled the teacher, the simpler it looks!

As teachers, I think we could and should take a page from Obama's notebook and start shaving with Ockham's razor. In the practice of our profession his

approach would serve us well. Brain research tells us that rather than complex texts and memorization of complicated facts, a simple metaphor or analogy which can get students thinking about how to build meaning and make a connection from the unknown to the known is an extremely effective teaching strategy. Another place where we would do well to simplify is in our communication with parents. We tend to toss around acronyms and sophisticated educational jargon when really most of them just want to be told simply how their kid is doing.

The slogan "Yes, we can!" resonated with me because I know that it's proven day in and day out in the classrooms in this province. We can make a difference. We can change people's lives. We can help create the future through our work.

While Obama was in that privileged position that, if elected, he had the authority to make things happen, he also made it very clear that it was "Yes, we can!" and not "Yes! I can!". After winning he repeated constantly that making good on the slogan was going to take a lot of work, and a lot of people acting together in support of one another. As teachers, while we do not always have the decision-making authority; we do not always have all the resources we would want, we still experience success on a daily basis. Why, in the face of these challenges, do we not just throw up our hands? Well, in this case it's another U.S. President, Bill Clinton's pithy message which serves as a better model. Clinton ran a campaign on "It's the economy, stupid!" As teachers know, "It's the students, stupid!" It really is all about them! Because of them, we can – and we do!

*Beverley Park is Senior Administrative Officer in the Professional Development Division of the NLTA.*

*(\*A straightforward application is that when faced with two theories and the available data cannot distinguish between them, we should stick with the simplest of the two. It does not guarantee that the simplest theory will be correct, it merely establishes priorities.)*



## School Representative Seminars

*Coming in Fall 2009*

A series of School Representative Seminars will take place as a continuation of the ongoing triennial program in October 2009. Nine groupings of branches have been arranged and three seminars are offered each fall on a rotating basis. Schools will have the opportunity for representatives to attend every three years. School Representatives will receive specific information directly from the NLTA office.

### Group 1 – Avalon

October 16-17, 2009 – Capital Hotel, St. John's  
Branches Attending: Conception Bay Centre, Conception Bay South, Southern Shore, St. John's Centre, St. Mary's Bay, Waterford Valley

### Group 2 – Corner Brook

October 23-24, 2009 – Greenwood Inn, Corner Brook  
Branches Attending: Appalachia, Burgeo, Humber, Port aux Basques, Rameaux

### Group 3 – Grand Falls-Windsor

October 30-31, 2009 – Mt. Peyton Hotel, Grand Falls-Windsor  
Branches Attending: Bay d'Espoir, Belleoram-Wreck Cove, Exploits Valley, Green Bay, Harton, Seagaulher

**Members Only Section of the NLTA Website**

The Members Only Section of the NLTA website was launched to all teachers during the week of January 26th, 2009.

If you did not receive a user name and password please go to [www.nlta.nl.ca](http://www.nlta.nl.ca) and complete the NLTA Member Profile form and return it to the NLTA office. *We cannot email you if you do not provide an email address.*



# Nationally Speaking: Using All Our Potential

The Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF) has a social justice perspective driven by the compassion found in the interests and views of Canada's teachers. High on that list of interests is the waste of potential in our country resulting from the national disgrace of child poverty. We know now that no significant progress has been made in improving the lot of children living in poverty in the last 20 years. How is it that in one of the wealthiest countries in the world we can have so many children living in poverty conditions and do so little about it?

This chart, taken from the Campaign2000 National Report Card, shows not only that no progress on the issue has been made, but also the effect that taxation has on the lower income households in Canada.

Teachers care about children – that is why they become teachers. They also are directly affected by the number of students unable to learn effectively because they come to school under-fed, over-tired, poorly clothed and inadequately cared for because of appalling living conditions. For CTF, child poverty is a focus for action.

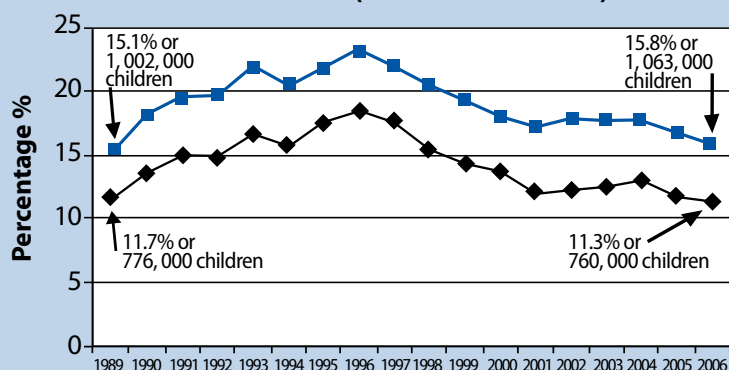
Amongst other things we:

- Present briefs and action plans for the federal government budget and various ministries
- Lobby MPs and senior staff for improvement
- Contribute to development of the Alternative Federal Budget with suggestions for ways to help children living in poverty
- Work with national groups such as Canada Without Poverty (formerly known as the National Anti-Poverty Organization – NAPO), the National Alliance for Children and Youth (NACY), Public Health Agency of Canada and others in the advancement of children's interests.

CTF efforts on behalf of children are forceful and effective. Sadly, the real problem in Canada is that so few Canadians really appreciate the scope of the problem or how it is harming both the present and the future of Canada by draining resources and potential. It seems unlikely that as a country, we can continue to afford wasting much of our human potential.

Please address questions or comments on this article to Emily Noble, President, Canadian Teachers' Federation at [enoble@ctf-fce.ca](mailto:enoble@ctf-fce.ca)

**Chart 1: Children in Canada in Low Income Families  
1989-2006 (before and after tax)**



Source: Statistics Canada's *Income Trends in Canada, 1976-2006*, Table 802

— Before Tax — After Tax

# La voix nationale : Pour maximiser tout notre potentiel

La compassion qui étaye les intérêts et les points de vue des enseignantes et des enseignants du Canada guide la perspective de justice sociale de la Fédération canadienne des enseignantes et des enseignants (FCE). Le potentiel que gaspille notre pays lorsqu'il ignore honteusement la pauvreté des enfants figure en tête de liste de ces intérêts. Nous savons maintenant qu'aucun progrès important n'a été accompli pendant ces 20 dernières années par rapport à l'amélioration du sort des nombreux enfants vivant dans la pauvreté. Comment se fait-il qu'il y ait autant d'enfants pauvres dans une des nations les plus riches du monde, et qu'elle fasse aussi peu pour combattre ce fléau?

Ce graphique, tiré du rapport de 2008 de Campagne 2000 sur la pauvreté des enfants et des familles au Canada, montre non seulement l'absence de progrès à cet égard, mais aussi l'incidence qu'a l'impôt sur les ménages à faible revenu au Canada.

Les enseignantes et enseignants se soucient des enfants — c'est la raison pour laquelle ils sont entrés dans l'enseignement. Ils sont aussi directement touchés par le nombre d'élèves incapables d'apprendre efficacement parce qu'ils arrivent à l'école sous-alimentés, épuisés, pauvrement vêtus et ne bénéficiant pas de soins suffisants à cause de conditions de vie épouvantables. Pour la FCE, la pauvreté des enfants est une priorité.

Parmi les actions qu'elle mène, la FCE :

- présente des mémoires et des plans d'action à l'égard du budget du gouvernement fédéral et à divers ministères;
- exerce des pressions sur les membres et les cadres supérieurs du Parlement en vue d'améliorations;
- contribue à l'élaboration de l'Alternative budgétaire au palier fédéral en apportant ses suggestions quant à la manière d'aider les enfants qui vivent dans la pauvreté;
- travaille aux côtés d'autres groupes nationaux

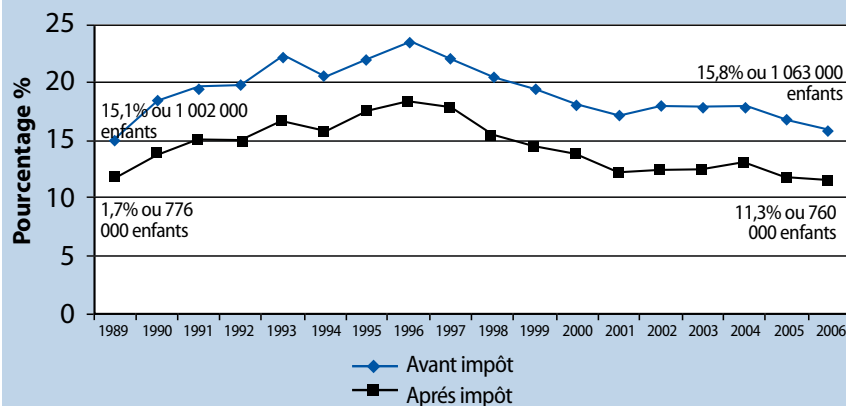
comme Canada sans pauvreté (anciennement connu sous le nom d'Organisation nationale anti-pauvreté — ONAP), l'Alliance nationale pour l'enfance et la jeunesse (ANEJ), l'Agence de la santé publique du Canada et d'autres organismes qui font progresser les intérêts des enfants.

Les efforts que déploie la FCE pour les enfants sont efficaces, voire puissants. Malheureusement, le véritable problème au Canada est que peu de Canadiennes et de Canadiens comprennent vraiment la portée du problème ni ses répercussions sur le présent et l'avenir du Canada, soit l'épuisement des ressources et du potentiel. Il semble impossible que notre pays puisse continuer à gaspiller la majeure partie de son capital humain.

*Veuillez envoyer vos questions ou commentaires sur cet article à Emily Noble, présidente de la Fédération canadienne des enseignantes et des enseignants, à l'adresse suivante : [enoble@ctf-fce.ca](mailto:enoble@ctf-fce.ca).*

**Graphique 1: Enfants vivant dans des familles à faible revenu au Canada, 1989 – 2006 (avant et après impôt)**

Source : Tendances de revenu au Canada, Statistique Canada, 1976-2006, tableau 802







## New Teacher Profile

# Deanna Miles

by SANDRA QUIGLEY

Deanna Miles came to our school fresh from university. In fact, she had just attended a recruitment fair in St. John's and was looking to work with the Western or Central School Boards. The application for Labrador, ironically enough, was just supposed to be practice, to see how the interview process worked. Well, she was offered a replacement position at Queen of Peace Middle School in Happy Valley-Goose Bay, teaching Grade 7 Science. This well suited her B.Sc. in Chemistry (advanced Major) from St. Francis Xavier and her B.Ed. (Intermediate and High School) from Memorial University.



Deanna Miles

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**"If I had any piece of advice to give another new teacher it would be to get to know your staff. Your fellow teachers can be a wealth of information and they are very supportive."**

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What a great place to live! Deanna's brother had spent two years there and really loved it. So, she wasn't long hopping aboard the boat to arrive just in time for students in September. Right away she jumped into community life by leading a group of Pathfinders every Thursday evening. She wasn't long getting involved in school life either. As School Representative for the Creative Arts Festival in November, Deanna was responsible for arranging all the logistics within her school for visits from an array of artists. "I really loved the student ambassador program here at Queen of Peace. The artists raved about how well they were treated by the student assigned to greet them, help them navigate the school and assist them with set-up, equipment etc. I really tried to

match the student's interest with the artist they were paired with... you know, dancers with dancers, budding artists with painters, musicians with students interested in music. It worked out really well." While Deanna insists that her role was just to set schedules and do paperwork, the festival couldn't work without that vital organizational link.

Deanna also eagerly volunteered to accompany Mrs. Hicks on a three-day trip with the Grade 7 Band. Another teacher chaperone was needed and Deanna certainly filled the role with enthusiasm. Thirty plus Queen of Peace students were billeted with peers from E.G. Lambert School in Churchill Falls. They workshopped with Mr. Mark Bonnell, the music teacher there, practiced their music, performed for the primary children as well as at an Evening Talent Show. They were also lucky enough to tour the Churchill Falls Hydro Electric Plant. It was quite an experience and well worth the five-hour bus ride!

"In addition to the extra-curricular activities, this year I have really tried to energize and enliven my classroom space and my teaching. As this is my first year, I have spent a great deal of time decorating and organizing my classroom as a science room. Also, over the spring break, I completely re-organized the science lab at my school by getting rid of old supplies and compiling an inventory of materials. I worked with Grade 7 students on the Provincial Bridge Building competition and on a Provincial Photography Contest as well."

"The best part about being a new teacher" says Deanna "is the feeling you get when the students really 'get it'. You'll be explaining a difficult concept, and you can see it's not sinking in; but then you try another way and suddenly a light goes on and you know they understand. I love reaching the children. It's so exciting when something clicks. The hardest part is the classroom management – learning when to be strict and when to be flexible and finding ways to really earn their respect.

I wish someone had told me how dense the curriculum is and to pace myself so that the students

keep up. Staying right on schedule is not always possible. You have to tone down your language to make it age-appropriate and that's something you always have to keep in mind. I did get some good advice from my co-operating teacher at Appalachia High School in St. Georges. He said that the job of teaching does not define you. You define the job. You decide how you want to fulfill your role as teacher. He also said that if a lesson doesn't go exactly as planned, don't worry about it. Reflect on it and learn from it but don't dwell on it. There is too much more to be done to waste time worrying. If I had any piece of advice to give another new teacher it would be to get to know your staff. Your fellow teachers can be a wealth of information and they are very supportive."

Deanna kind of grew up with teaching. Even in Grade 4, she was a reading buddy with Kindergartners. In high school she was a swimming instructor and she participated in Tutoring for Tuition. She continued this work at the university level and with the X-Project by tutoring less-advantaged children ages 7-14. From an early age she spent time helping out in her Mom's primary classroom and her Dad left Engineering for a teaching career at the high school level, so you could say she comes by it honestly. "Having a family is part of my life plan and the teaching lifestyle would be great for that."

"In the future I hope to do a Master's Degree in Counseling Psychology and work as a Guidance Counselor in a school setting and possibly even in private practice. I'd like to do this sooner rather than later. I know that MUN has an excellent program with fabulous professors, so that's where I'd like to study."

Deanna's first year has been a busy, happy and productive one. Whether she remains a classroom teacher or pursues her post-graduate studies, her positive outlook and strong work ethic will serve her well and add something good to all those she "reaches" with her ready smile and enthusiastic attitude.

*Sandra Quigley is a French Immersion teacher at Queen of Peace Middle School in Happy Valley-Goose Bay and President of the Lake Melville Branch of the NLTA.*

# 9th Annual Provincial Fair Teacher Recruitment

***Two Locations –  
May 11, Corner Brook & May 13, St. John's***

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?**

**Monday, May 11, 2009  
4:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.  
Food Court  
Sir Wilfred Grenfell College  
Corner Brook**

**Wednesday, May 13, 2009  
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 the place for you.***

**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.**

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
  - Faculty of Education
  - Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association
  - School Districts
  - Mamu Tshishkutamashutau/ Innu Education
- and other Educational Partners



# Is Your Classroom Equipped for a Globalized World?

by ERIN AYLWARD

It's the fall of 2008, and Oxfam Canada is hosting a one-day social justice conference with fifty of the region's brightest high school students. "How many of you have heard of Nelson Mandela?" asks Oxfam staffer Bill Hynd. We look on in shock, as only *four* of 50 students hesitantly raise their hands.

The world is shrinking at a dizzying rate, and it is crucial that our school system accommodates these changes. Our country's well being is intricately tied to the affairs of countries worldwide, as has been so powerfully demonstrated with the current economic recession. This growing interdependence extends far beyond the interactions of our nations' leaders, however: classrooms everywhere have become sites for global interaction, and Newfoundland and Labrador is no exception. Growing numbers of immigrants and refugees have enriched classrooms across the province, bolstering diversity while underscoring the need for tolerance and global understanding.

Meanwhile, students from this province have expanded their horizons far beyond our provincial borders. Students are no more than a TV program or an instant message away from children across the world. In addition to these cyber connections, our province's youth are travelling more and more outside the country, reinforcing their awareness of global interconnectedness. Under these new circumstances, a global issues education can be one of the most valuable outcomes of a student's academic career, and it is vital that we work to provide students with this education.

This article will introduce the concept of global citizenship, demonstrate why it is important, and explore ways in which this concept can be promoted in the school system. Global citizenship means teaching students about international issues while also building the capacity for these students to take action on problems. This may seem like a tall order or, at the very least, a balancing act, given other curriculum expectations. However, it is important enough to make the effort.

The value in global citizenship is articulated in the Department of Education's curriculum, as citizenship is considered an essential graduation learning, and social studies curriculum, in particular, is governed by outcomes involving interdependence; citizenship, power, and governance; and culture and diversity.

This emphasis appears to be rather appropriate given the number of benefits associated with global citizenship. First, addressing global issues promotes values such as tolerance and compassion – attitudes that are crucial for combating racism and nurturing active citizens. Furthermore, studying international issues forces students to acknowledge cultural biases and appreciate alternative points of view, promoting critical thinking and engagement among students.

What's more, an education that promotes global citizenship can be one of the most effective ways to combat political apathy in youth. Studies show that students become increasingly pessimistic about global issues beginning at the age of 11. If we wish to create a generation that will harness social change, it's crucial that we empower these students through the school system and combat what could become a lifetime of political cynicism.

Taking action on global issues is a vital component of global citizenship and the benefits of this approach extend far beyond the results of the specific projects that students undertake. Studies have increasingly shown that experiential learning is crucial to the development of active citizenship. Taking action on issues allows students to engage with community leaders while also learning about cooperation and leadership. Most importantly, however, it allows students to realize how *they* can create change, by introducing them to the skills and knowledge required to take action on an issue.

## How do we create global classrooms?

Do you find it hard to catch the news every night? Did your education background not include EU trading policy or international development studies? For

teachers at any stage in their career, it can appear daunting to take on global issues when they might not have a rich background in this field.

It is here that the journey begins: to borrow a line from Mahatma Ghandi, we must be the change we want to see. If we want to foster active, globally aware citizens, then we will have to first educate ourselves on these issues – but don't worry – there are plenty of ways to seek support! Indicate on your professional growth plan that you would like to receive training on global citizenship. Browse through a few of the suggested websites below; many NGOs have created online toolkits and packages to make it easy for educators to start thinking about global issues. Touch base with community organizations about delivering presentations on specific issues; this is a great way to build relationships while also saving on the amount of expertise that we must develop individually.

Once you've educated yourself on these issues, how do you transform your classrooms into sites for global change? First, it is vital to pique students' interest and concern in international affairs. An awareness of global issues is an essential component of global citizenship, and this can be fostered in a number of ways. First, we must make these issues fun and engaging – class debates and discussions on issues, presentations delivered by fellow students, the use of various forms of media within the classroom – all of these are effective ways to engage students with the world around them. What's more, these issues can be brought to life for students by using creativity and innovation. I can trace my interest in global issues back to my high school years, which were filled with live, in-class demonstrations of tsunamis, art exhibits, analogies of globalization, and the list goes on... If I had not first been exposed to global affairs in these fun and engaging ways, I may never have picked up a newspaper in my adult life.

To foster active citizens, however, an understanding of global affairs is not enough. Teachers must also try and foster as many experiential learning opportunities as possible within the classroom. Studies have shown that students learn the most about citizenship and social issues when they are *actively* engaged with these issues. Your school may already provide students with experiential learning opportunities through extracurricular projects and clubs. This is a great start, but is by no means the end point! Taking action in the *classroom* is important for its ability to foster reflection and critical engagement, and, crucially, makes global citizenship inclusive by exposing *all* students to these issues.

Classrooms can buy goats for Oxfam, write letters to MPs, lobby school administration to provide fair

trade coffee at staff meetings – the possibilities are endless! Some of the most useful resources to help teachers navigate the many ways to foster global awareness and action are listed below and can help you transform the scope and impact of your classroom.

As the world we live in becomes increasingly smaller, educators in Newfoundland and Labrador are faced with the challenge of equipping students for a globalized world. Promoting global citizenship is important. It can also be achievable, engaging, beneficial, and fun. As teachers open classroom doors to the world, they are opening the hearts and minds of students and becoming part of a growing, global movement.

#### Global Resources:

- [www.globaldimension.org.uk/](http://www.globaldimension.org.uk/)  
(UK-based search engine with an extensive database of teacher resources)

#### Teacher toolkits about helping students take action:

- [www.imminentshift.com/active/activism.pdf](http://www.imminentshift.com/active/activism.pdf)  
(sponsored by the Canadian International Development Agency)
- [www.unicef.org.uk/youthvoice/dosomething.asp](http://www.unicef.org.uk/youthvoice/dosomething.asp)  
(sponsored by UNICEF)
- [www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/get\\_global/files/section\\_one\\_get\\_global\\_steps\\_english.pdf](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/get_global/files/section_one_get_global_steps_english.pdf)  
(sponsored by Oxfam International)

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*Erin Aylward is currently a Political Science Honours student at Memorial University, a Canada Millennium Scholarship Laureate, a Killam Fellow, and the NL Regional Youth Liaison for Oxfam Canada. She is currently working on a campaign to have global issues better represented within the school system, and can be contacted at [erinaylward@hotmail.com](mailto:erinaylward@hotmail.com).*





### PROVINCIAL SAC CONFERENCE

May 20-22, 2009

Terra Nova Golf Resort. The theme of the Conference, *Leadership That Matters*, will focus on the idea of authentic and significant leadership for administrators. Conference participants will take a closer look at the soft skills of leadership. There will be a pre-conference on May 20, with a focus on effective assessment and the role of administrators in this process. For more information check out the website at [www.sac2009.ca](http://www.sac2009.ca). Registration on the website will not be considered complete until fees have been paid.

### LEADERSHIP AND LEARNING SUMMER INSTITUTE

July 2-4, 2009

Corner Brook. The institute is designed for principals, vice-principals, department heads, lead teachers, aspiring teachers, etc. Explore the vital role of leadership in enhancing student learning along with colleagues from the district and across the province. Featured speakers: Dr. Kenneth Leithwood and Nicole Vagle. Contact information and registration details available at [www.wnlsd.ca](http://www.wnlsd.ca). Direct inquiries to: George Keeping, Education Officer - Human Resources, Western School District, [george.keeping@wnlsd.ca](mailto:george.keeping@wnlsd.ca), Tel: 709-637-4032; or George Tucker, PD Division, NLTA, [gtucker@nlta.nl.ca](mailto:gtucker@nlta.nl.ca), Tel: 726-3223 or 1-800-563-3599, ext. 245.

### DEVELOPING SUCCESSFUL SCHOOL (DSS) 2009

July 20-23, 2009

Mount Allison University, Sackville, NB. Theme: *Learning Focused Conversation: Practical Strategies for Collaborative Inquiry*. DSS application and brochure available on the NLTA website at [www.nlta.nl.ca](http://www.nlta.nl.ca). Click on "Professional Development Opportunities". Application deadline: May 15, 2009. For information contact George Tucker, PD Division, NLTA, Tel: 726-3223 or 1-800-563-3599, ext. 245; [gtucker@nlta.nl.ca](mailto:gtucker@nlta.nl.ca).

### SUMMER INSTITUTE 2009

August 10-11, 2009

The Battery Hotel & Suites, St. John's. A two-day workshop based on the work of Dr. Jerome Sattler, covering the latest developments in the assessment of cognitive ability and behavior in children. To guarantee registration, you must register on or before May 29, 2009. For further information contact Trent Langdon, President, Newfoundland and Labrador Counsellors' and Psychologists' Association, [trentlangdon@esdn.ca](mailto:trentlangdon@esdn.ca); or George Tucker, PD Division, NLTA, [gtucker@nlta.nl.ca](mailto:gtucker@nlta.nl.ca), 709-726-3223 or 1-800-563-3599 (ext. 245).

### COSS SUMMER WORKSHOP: DIFFERENTIAL DIAGNOSIS OF DYSGRAPHIA, DYSLEXIA, ORAL AND WRITTEN LANGUAGE LEARNING DISABILITY, AND DYSCALCULIA

August 12, 2009

Delta Hotel, St. John's. Featured Speaker: Dr. Virginia W. Berninger from the University of Washington and author of the Process Assessment of the Learner. Limited to 50 participants. For more information contact Keith Adey at (709)489-6481 or [keithadey@nf.sympatico.ca](mailto:keithadey@nf.sympatico.ca).

### 2009 ASSESSMENT SUMMIT

August 20-21, 2009

Halifax, NS. Hear five of the most distinguished assessment experts in North America illustrate why the fundamental purpose of assessment is not to rate, rank and sort students, but rather to provide meaningful feedback that leads to improved student learning. Cost: \$549.99 + HST. Special group pricing for registration fees paid by boards, schools etc. Registration deadline: May 31, 2009. Register online at [www.nselc.ednet.ns.ca](http://www.nselc.ednet.ns.ca) or call 902-422-3270.

### THE MOTIVATION BREAKTHROUGH: 6 SECRETS TO TURNING ON THE TUNED-OUT CHILD WORKSHOP

October 5, 2009

Delta Hotel, St. John's. The Council of Special Services proudly presents internationally acclaimed educator Richard

Lavoie (producer of the F.A.T. City Workshops). The morning lecture is entitled *The Motivation Breakthrough: 6 Secrets to Turning On the Tuned Out Child* and the afternoon session is entitled *It's So Much Work to Be Your Friend: Helping the Child with Learning Disabilities Find Social Success*. For more information contact Keith Adey, [keithadey@nf.sympatico.ca](mailto:keithadey@nf.sympatico.ca), Tel: 709-489-6481. Registration forms are posted on the NLTA website, [www.nlta.nl.ca](http://www.nlta.nl.ca), under "Professional Development Opportunities".

### 5TH ANNUAL NATIONAL CHARACTER EDUCATION CONFERENCE

November 2 and 3, 2009

Deerhurst Resort, Huntsville, Ontario. Educator Pre-Conference: Dr. David Suzuki and Dr. Phil Vincent. Youth Pre-Conference: Micah Jacobson. Keynote Speakers: Tom Jackson, Dr. Monte Selby, Micah Jacobson. For further information please visit [www.ncec.ca](http://www.ncec.ca).

## Dates to Remember

### May 2009

- May 7 **Deadline:** Notification by Board of layoff
- May 10-16 Branch Election Week
- May 21 **Deadline:** Professional Development Fund applications
- May 29-30 NLTA Executive Meeting

### June 2009

- June 15 **Deadline:** Notification by board of acceptance/rejection of Deferred Salary Leave requests
- June 18 **Deadline:** Professional Development Fund applications

### July 2009

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