

T H E
bulletin

Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association

Vol. 42 / No. 7 -- May / June 1999





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COUNTDOWN IS ON

by [Lesley-Ann Browne](#)

The weather is getting warmer and the signs of spring and summer are upon us. The evenings are longer and children's voices are heard playing, riding bikes and enjoying the fine weather. Our neighborhood has aromas of bar-be-cues, and lawns are being cleaned up after the winter.

I cannot believe it is the end of another school year. This is the third time I have had the opportunity to wish you a safe and fun-filled summer. The countdown is on for the last few days before the summer holidays. The feeling is in the air. Windows are being opened, the cobwebs are brushed away, and people are more visible as they shed their layers of winter clothing. They are more pleasant too.

You can see the anticipation on the faces of kids as they rush from school in the afternoons. I picked my daughter up from school the other day and there was a different attitude among the children. The door of the school burst open with an enthusiasm that was lacking in the winter months. There is an end in sight and they can sense it. It could be the thoughts of not having to leave their warm beds on cold winter mornings or plans they have for their free time.

As teachers prepare for the last few weeks of school many do not know where they will be teaching in the Fall and what the future holds for them. This is not a great way to start a much deserved break. However, as my experience has revealed it will end well. I am a firm believer in good things come to those who wait. The 40 tulips I planted last Fall are an example of this belief. They popped out three weeks ago and since then have faced a major snow fall, freezing rain, frost, and the trampling of the neighbor's dog and cat. But with a little patience and perseverance, they will bloom.

As we finish the school year I would like to wish everyone a safe and enjoyable summer break. Some teachers will travel this summer while some will catch up on their professional development. Others will take each day one at a time and do whatever they feel like doing. I hope you all enjoy your break and spend your time doing whatever it takes to keep you happy, healthy and rejuvenated.

Have a great summer!

Lesley-Ann Browne is Communications Officer with the NLTA



Back row, left to right: Rivlyn Galway, Gander; Sean Noah, Grand Falls- Windsor; Dana Burrige, Deer Lake; Fred Wood, St. John's; Kevin Foley, Goose Bay; Wayne Lee, Stephenville; Ken Kavanagh, Bell Island.
Front row, left to right: Fred Douglas, Marystown; Winston Carter (Vice President), Carmanville; Fred Andrews (President) St. John's; Ted Murphy, Shearstown; Elizabeth Murphy, Parker's Cove.

Provincial / National / International **NEWS**

COOK'S HARBOUR

1999 Christmas Card Contest winner announced

Jonathan Pittman, a Grade 5 student at James Cook Memorial School in Cook's Harbour has been chosen as winner of the 1999 NLTA Christmas Card Contest. Jonathan was presented with a \$75 cash award and will be receiving a framed copy of his winning entry. His winning design will appear on the NLTA's official Christmas card which will be sent to schools, businesses and other groups in December of 1999.

The theme for the 1999 contest was "My Christmas Tree", and 364 entries were received. Second place was awarded to Kandace Adams, a Grade 5 student at Indian River Middle School in Springdale. Third place was awarded to Janine Mary Hodder, a Grade 5 student at St. Thomas of Villanova School in Manuels.

MOUNT PEARL

Students write and publish own books

Imagine your class being turned into a publishing center, a complete bee-hive of activity. Students in Mrs. Sharyn Byrne's class at St. Peter's Primary in Mount Pearl brainstormed, wrote, edited, revised, illustrated, and published their own books. The process took place over a three to four week span whereby students used their creativity and imagination to write and illustrate stories pertinent to a particular theme. The theme this year centered on Dinosaur writing. Once the written stories passed through the different stages of writing and a final draft was completed, the students engaged in a publishing party. At this party, a toast was made by the principal and students displayed their works of art. Parents and school staff members were invited to the festivity and students enjoyed munching on treats. Once finished, the students took their books home to share with their family and friends. Parents, as well as other readers, were encouraged to write a comment on the students' books. Students enjoyed the writing and publishing process and the educational value was deemed to be quite significant. Skills such as writing, editing, proofreading, revising, illustrating, and book dedication were developed. In addition, each student's oral communication was enhanced as they discussed, read, illustrated and answered questions about their book to their classmates. As Mrs. Grace Hollett, Student-Teacher Advisor from Memorial University cited, "You cannot experience such an event in a book. To see the joy and pride each student encounters is worth the time and effort put into this activity."

SOUTHERN HARBOUR / PARADISE

Correction

Two news items in the April issue of The Bulletin contained photos that were interchanged. The photos from the article "Grandparent's Day" from Our Saviour King Academy in Southern Harbour, and "Soiree Art Mural" from Paradise Elementary in Paradise are reprinted below. Our apologies for any confusion this may have caused.

HOPEDALE

ACMS Festival Choir attend the Melville Music Festival

The Amos Comenius Memorial School Choir attended the Melville Music Festival in March. This annual, non-competitive music festival brings together students from all over Labrador. The ACMS Festival Choir from Hopedale raised almost \$2,000 to attend this event, demonstrating great dedication and commitment in financial preparation and in musical preparation as well. As adjudicator Gary Graham described, not only did the choir sing beautifully, but paid "excellent attention to their director" and had an "excellent sense of fun." Both the school and community of Hopedale are so proud of this fine choir!

This was the first time that the choir performed outside of Hopedale. This year, in fact, marks many firsts for the choir. Nicole Burt, Director of the Choir, says, "Not only is it the choir's first year singing together, but it is the first year that these students have had the opportunity to formally study music in school." This exciting opportunity coincides with an exciting event. This year the students of Hopedale moved into a beautiful new school. Thus 1999 has been a wonderful year for both music and education in Hopedale!

BONAVISTA

Fund raiser for Janeway Children's Hospital

Students at Discovery Collegiate in Bonavista were challenged to collect all the pennies they could muster together and bring them to school for Janeway Day in the Schools in February. On Friday, students brought their pennies to their last class of the day and they then had the pleasure of watching their teacher roll the pennies. The teacher rolling the most pennies received an award for being the most "infamous roller of pennies". Over \$900 was raised. "School spirit was encouraged, students had fun, and consideration of the needs of others (sick children) was promoted," says Albert Trask, Principal of Discovery Collegiate. "There definitely is a value side to education whether we believe it or not!"

ST. JOHN'S

Summer session course offerings

The Faculty of Education at Memorial University of Newfoundland has registrant space available in the following courses during Summer Session 1999 (St. John's Campus): Education 3050, 3280, 3440, 3460, 3470, 3801, 3802, 4172, 4340.

If you are interested in registering for one or more of these courses, please contact the Office of Undergraduate Student Services, Faculty of Education, Memorial University of Newfoundland, St. John's, NF, A1B 3X8; Tel: 709-737-3403; Fax: 709-737-2001; e-mail: muneduc@morgan.ucs.mun.ca; website: www.mun.ca/educ.

A Look Ahead

PRE-RETIREMENT SEMINARS

by [Barbara Lewis](#)

During the Fall of 1998, NLTA hosted seven Pre-Retirement Seminars --; one in Stephenville, one in Corner Brook, one in Gander, one in Grand Falls-Windsor, and three in St. John's. These seminars were held in accordance with Association policy as part of its overall program of pre-retirement counselling, and were attended by 495 teacher participants and 195 spouses.

Information sessions dealt with topics such as the Teachers' Pension Plan, Severance Pay, NLTA Group Insurance, Psychological Preparation for Retirement, Financial and Estate Planning and the Canada Pension Plan. As well, time was set aside for individual counselling of prospective retirees by the various consultants.

From all reports, the seminars were regarded as quite successful. Notwithstanding this however, there have been a number of recommendations for improvement and our plans for the Fall of 1999 will try to incorporate those various suggestions. Preparation is already under way to hold seven seminars during October, November and early December 1999 in Stephenville, Corner Brook, Gander, Grand Falls-Windsor, and three in St. John's.

The sessions will be two days in duration. The program begins with registration from 9:00 to 9:30 a.m. on Day One. The first agenda item begins at 9:30 a.m. with the afternoon session concluding at approximately 3:30 p.m. On that first evening, there is also a 7:00 p.m. session devoted to Psychological Preparation for Retirement, which runs for approximately two hours.

Day Two of the seminar commences at 9:30 a.m. and concludes at approximately 3:30 p.m. Leave is provided for two days, with pay, in accordance with the Collective Agreements.

The full text of the NLTA Policy on Pre-Retirement Seminars, as it has been amended over the past few years, is contained on page 16 of this Bulletin; prospective retirees are urged to read closely these policy provisions and be aware of their application. The registration form for attendance at the 1999 seminars can be found on page 17. Potential participants are reminded that, in order to attend, they must register for a particular seminar. Only those teachers eligible to retire during the school years 2000-2001 and 2001-2002 will be eligible to attend. Furthermore, registration must be received at the NLTA Office at least four weeks in advance in order to ensure approval of attendance. Given the increasing numbers of teachers eligible to retire, we must adhere strictly to the requirement for early registration. As a result, the Association will reserve the right to refuse acceptance of registration forms at any particular seminar if the registration has not been received at the NLTA office in accordance with Association policy.

It is the responsibility of the individual participant to make arrangements for hotel accommodations, should any be required. When you contact the hotel in question, please reference the fact that you are attending an NLTA function and this should provide a reduced rate which is available to persons travelling on Association related business. Note that accommodation expenses are the responsibility of the teacher.

In order to ensure that seminar participants are able to gain maximum advantage from the presentations, it is our intention to make every effort to keep the seminars to a reasonable size. This means, in effect, that 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.

NLTA Policy on Pre-Retirement Seminars

1. The NLTA will make provision for an ongoing program of pre-retirement counselling through the involvement of Benefits and Economic Services staff in branch workshops, branch meetings, and small group sessions as requested. Elements of the Benefits and Economic Services program relating to retirement planning will be communicated through the use of the NLTA Bulletin, Infosheets, and special publications.

2. The NLTA will provide a special program of pre-retirement counselling to teachers in the form of annual pre-retirement seminars. Only those teachers who are eligible to retire within two years of the expiry of the school year in which the seminars are held will be permitted to attend. Exceptions will be allowed in the case of teachers required to retire on disability pensions.

3. Pre-retirement seminars will be planned each year by the Benefits and Economic Services Division. The location and number of seminars will be determined on the basis of Association policy as determined from time to time by the Provincial Executive Council.

4. Expenses will be paid (or not paid) for teachers and spouses who attend the pre-retirement seminars in accordance with the following stipulations:

(a) No meal expenses will be paid during travel to and from or at the seminar itself.

(b) No accommodation expenses will be paid during travel to and from or at the seminar itself.

(c) No child care expenses will be paid for seminar participants during travel to and from or at the seminar itself.

(d) 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.

ii. Payment for private vehicle shall be at the rate of 6.4¢ per kilometre for the return trip from residence to seminar site.

iii. Travel by 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. The participating teacher and spouse are expected to travel in the same private vehicle and, consequently, only one claim will be entertained for car meterage.

5. Expenses for the spouse of the retiring teacher shall be provided in accordance with Association policy as stipulated in Section G (Pre-Retirement Counselling).

6. Expenses will be provided for one pre-retirement seminar only per teacher participant. A teacher participant shall be permitted to attend one seminar only. (Notwithstanding this, a teacher may attend a second seminar as a spouse.)

7. Teachers attending a pre-retirement seminar must attend the seminar location closest to their place of residence, except in cases where the mode, cost or availability of transportation necessitates otherwise. Such determination will be made by the Benefits and Economic Services Division.

8. 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.

9. All participants, in order to attend, must register for a particular seminar. Registration must be received at the NLTA office at least four (4) weeks in advance in order to ensure approval of attendance.

10. The funding mechanism and program content for pre-retirement seminars will be reviewed annually by the Benefits and Economic Services Committee with recommendations being made to Executive as required.

1999 PRE-RETIREMENT SEMINAR

REGISTRATION FORM

Name

Home Address

Postal Code

Home Telephone

Social Insurance Number

School Name

School Telephone

Please check which session you will be attending:

Oct. 14-15 -- Hotel Gander, Gander

Oct. 21-22 -- Glynmill Inn, Corner Brook

Nov. 4-5 -- Mt. Peyton, Grand Falls-Windsor

Nov. 18-19 -- Holiday Inn, Stephenville

Nov. 25-26 -- Holiday Inn, St. John's

Dec. 2-3 -- Holiday Inn, St. John's

Dec. 9-10 -- 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:

- Travel Costs will be paid according to policy.
- You will receive confirmation prior to seminar
- All participants must pre-register.
- Teachers eligible to retire by 2002 are eligible to attend.

Please submit registration form to:

Melanie Jaster

Benefits and Economic Services Division

Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association

3 Kenmount Road, St. John's, NF, A1B 1W1

Fax: 709-726-4302

FOR NLTA OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received	Confirmation Sent	Information Package Sent

IN CONCLUSION

by [Brendan Doyle](#)

When the last edition of *The Bulletin* arrives in staff rooms, it represents more tangible evidence that another challenging school year is about to conclude. More importantly, opportunities to slow the pace, get re-energized, and be re-connected with family and friends are but weeks away. Savour the pleasant thoughts and expectations!

On a personal level, preparing a brief message for this issue of *The Bulletin* takes on special meaning. This is my last message as President of NLTA, and that conjures up a strange mixture of emotions. Even stronger emotions are evoked when I reflect on the fact that I am also retiring from the teaching profession. My teaching career has been an incredible ride for me and, in spite of the hardships and frustrations inherent in my various NLTA roles, I do leave the profession on a positive note and with the full confidence that better and more rewarding times for the profession are just around the corner. Yes, my NLTA involvements, especially in the past two years, have been stressful. But I am certain that it would have been more stressful and depressing had I chosen not to get involved! The release --; the therapy --; is in the doing!

Teachers who want a better profession --; one that is more protected from government attempts to de-professionalize by adopting policies that restrict professional development activities and by failing to consult on issues like special education --; will have to commit to asserting their influence in the public arena on issues related to education. It is not good enough to demand that it be done; instead, every teacher must be a part of the doing!

Your Association can, and must, play a central role in re-creating and re-invigorating the profession. And, yes, getting involved in the Association, especially in a leadership role, makes you a potential lightning rod for the discontent of the nay-sayers. On the other hand, only increased teacher involvement will ensure that the future direction set for the profession is one that is forged by teachers for teachers. Other interested groups will gladly fill any vacuum teachers leave in the process of direction setting! So, I encourage each of you to choose an area of involvement that reflects your professional interests and comfort level --; be that at the elected branch or provincial office stage, as a member of a special interest council, or as a member of a committee.

Again, I thank you all for the privilege of serving as your President for the past two years, and, in spite of my pending retirement, I do not expect to ever lose my interest in, or enthusiasm for, the NLTA. God bless and have a great summer vacation.

Brendan Doyle is President of the NLTA

FACING THE FUTURE

by Wayne Noseworthy

A recent article by Peter G. Peterson in the US publication *Foreign Affairs* titled "Gray Dawn: The Global Aging Crisis" prompted me to write this article for *The Bulletin*. Mr. Peterson's analysis and projections proved to be a fascinating eye-opener. It caused me to consider the issue of aging on a national and international scale, but more particularly, it required me to examine some specific realities for our own profession and our Association.

Daunting Demographics

Over the next few decades, countries in the developed world will experience an unprecedented growth in the number of their elderly and an unprecedented decline in the number of their youth. The timing and magnitude of this demographic transformation have already been determined. The elderly of the next millennium have already been born and can be counted --; and their cost to retirement benefit and social support systems can be projected.

The "Floridization" of the Developed World

Have you been to Florida lately? The vast concentration of senior citizens in that state --; nearly 19 percent of the entire population --; represents humanity's future. Florida today is a demographic benchmark that every developed nation will soon pass. Experts predict that Italy will hit the mark as early as 2003, Japan in 2005 and Germany in 2006. France and Britain will pass present-day Florida around 2016; the United States and Canada will have more than 20 percent of its population in the senior's class in 2021 and 2023 respectively.

The Economic Burden

In 1999, as we await the millennium, the ratio of working tax-payers to non-working pensioners in the developed world is around 3:1. By the year 2030, if no substantial changes come about, this ratio will fall to 1.5:1, and in some countries, such as Germany and Italy, it will drop all the way down to 1:1 or even lower.

Falling Birthrates and a Shrinking Population

Research conducted by both the United Nations and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development tells us that as recently as the late 1960s, the worldwide total fertility rate stood at about 5.0 (that is, the average number of lifetime births per woman). Worldwide, we now see an unprecedented and unexpected decline in the fertility rate to about 2.7; the rate required merely to maintain a constant population is only 2.1. However, it is critical to note that in the developed world alone, the average fertility rate has plummeted to 1.6.

Unless things change, the total populations of Western Europe and Japan will shrink to about one-half of their current size before the end of the next century. In 1950, seven of the 12 most populous nations were in the developed world: the United States, Russia, Japan, Germany, France, Italy and the United Kingdom. The United Nations predicts that by the year 2050, only the United States will remain on this list. Nigeria, Pakistan, Ethiopia, Congo, Mexico and the Philippines will replace all the others.

Will there be a New World Order?

The facts and projections already referenced provide a tremendous basis for prediction and analysis. One thing is certain, the world as we know it will be substantially different in 10, 20, and particularly 30 years time. Our children will inhabit a very different world from the one that we presently occupy. It is reasonable to conclude that new societies will develop over the next few decades and will bring tremendous changes in the balance of power as it presently exists.

Bringing The Issue Home

Is any of this relevant to us? As I prepare this article, there are 4,531 retired teachers in this province, and we know this number will increase steadily; not only that, life expectancy is also increasing. By contrast, there are only 6,736 active teachers employed in Newfoundland and Labrador. This latter group is

anticipated to decline at a fairly steady rate as the general population of the province and the student population, in particular, declines. Over the next ten years approximately 4,000 teachers will qualify for pension benefits; considering these projections, it is realistic to expect that retirees could outnumber active teachers by about 2002/2003.

This will present a tremendous challenge to NLTA as a protective and supportive organization, particularly as it relates to the maintenance of many of our service programs.

Another significant trend in our society is the continuing decrease in the proportion of our tax-paying population with children in school. More and more it is increasingly difficult to persuade the tax-paying public that public schooling is important and deserves to be financed at a meaningful level. Governments generally are inclined to do things and to finance programs that please significant numbers within the populace. Teacher associations, as one lobby group for quality education, are finding their advocacy mandate a particularly difficult one. To be successful we will need to develop new and strong partnerships with all the stakeholders who share our vision of quality public schooling.

Research conducted recently for the Association projects a student population by the year 2010-11 of approximately 63,000; this is a significant drop from the 1997-98 level of about 100,000 students. Similarly, unless current allocation methods are drastically altered, we could see the number of teachers in 2010/11 at an alarming low of around 4,400.

Looking Ahead

These are daunting statistics and sobering concepts. However, the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association has always faced up to the tough challenges confronting teachers and teaching in this province. We have prevailed in the past and we will prevail in the future --; of that I have no doubt.

Over the past decade NLTA has led the way with regard to educational reform; we must continue to influence the agenda in a way that requires Government and School Boards to do what is best for our students.

Our legacy is a proud one and we will approach the eve of the 21st century knowing that our contribution as an organization and your insight as individual teachers will ensure a bright future for teaching and learning.

The past year has been a transitional one for the Association as we have tried to focus more and more on professional and pedagogical issues and the things that directly impact teachers in the classroom. We will continue to define "teacher based priorities" in the coming year.

I wish you all a well-deserved break during the summer and encourage you to come back to school in September rejuvenated and motivated to take on the challenges ahead. Get involved in your Association and make it truly yours.

On behalf of all staff at your provincial office, I offer our sincere appreciation for the co-operation and support that you have shown us during 1998-99 as we worked as a team to realize the goals of the organization. We commit our total energies and abilities to working with President Fred Andrews and your new Executive during 1999-2000 in making NLTA the best that it can be.

[Wayne Noseworthy](#) is Executive Director with the NLTA.

PREMIUM INCREASES LIKELY

by [Barbara Lewis](#)

Under the NLTA's Group Insurance Program, the options Life, Health, Dental and Long Term Disability (Salary Continuation) are insured under a surplus/deficit financial agreement. This financial arrangement is common for group plans of our size. This simply means that in good financial years, as we had experienced up until recently, any surpluses were returned to the NLTA Trustees to be invested, and any deficits were to be repaid by the NLTA Trustees out of the Group Insurance Trust Fund. A hefty build-up of surpluses during the 1980's and early 90's occurred because of this arrangement. However, in the late 1990's, the reverse has now happened. These plans are now in a deficit financial position and therefore deficits are to be recovered by the Underwriters either by a) direct payments from the Group Insurance Trust Fund, b) deficit recovery premiums built into the required premiums for the next financial year commencing September 1, 1999, or c) some combination of the two.

Up to the end of the last financial statements (August 1998 for Life, Health and Dental; and December 1998 for Long Term Disability), NLTA's Group Insurance Plan owes the insuring company over \$2,000,000 in deficits. Why? Premiums were not increased to match the plan's experience 1996 to 1998. Those payments are still outstanding with interest and a repayment recovery program to the Underwriter remaining to be dealt with.

As for the current financial year, recent figures show major ongoing deficits. Why? Even the premium increases put in place this year are now showing to be too low to match actual payouts.

An overview of the current financial position of these plans is as follows:

Life

This is the worst year on record for teacher deaths. No one can project in any one year how many deaths will occur. To the end of March, 1999, payouts in benefits are more than double the premiums paid. Therefore, an increase in premiums will be required for September 1, 1999 in the range of approximately 15%.

Health

More than 75% of all health payouts are for drugs. New drugs being approved are more expensive than traditional drugs. The NLTA's Health Plan is currently showing payouts in excess of 12% to 13% of premiums paid. Teachers constantly ask why isn't this or that benefit included in the Health Program. The simple answer is that the current premiums received cannot cover the benefits paid out.

Dental

NLTA's plan is a "basic" plan exclusive of orthodontics, dentures and other major procedures. Still, the premiums paid in are less than the benefits paid out. Coverage for additional benefits will require higher premiums, over and above those now required for incurred deficits. A further increase in dental premiums is anticipated for September 1999 in the range of 7% to 8% just to maintain current benefits.

Long Term Disability (Salary Continuation)

The number of claims for this sickness/disability insurance has escalated drastically in the current financial year. This is the worst financial experience seen since the inception of the plan. At the time of writing, it is anticipated that there may be an approximate 20% increase in premiums required for September 1, 1999.

Teachers can expect increased premiums September 1, 1999 for Life, Health, Dental and Long Term Disability (Salary Continuation). How much those increases will be will depend on the latest financial projections received by the NLTA Group Insurance Trustees at their meeting on June 30, 1999. (Note: The projected increases given above do not include deficit recovery premiums for the current financial year. They are based solely on the financial experience for the various plans to date and projected in 1999-2000). What does all this mean for teachers? Simply put: to maintain current benefits into the next financial year, there will have to be premium increases. The other alternative is to reduce benefits and adjust premiums to reflect same. Clearly, there can be no additional benefits added to the current plans without a substantial increase in premiums. Since Government pays 50% of the Life and Health premium cost, they will have to agree to any additional premium increases.

The NLTA Group Insurance Trustees will meet on June 30, 1999 to review the most up to date financial experience for all the Insurance Programs. By that time, they will have the most current figures provided by the Underwriter and will be in a position to vote on how to manage the Group Insurance Plan on a sound financial basis into the next fiscal year. There is no doubt that without substantial cuts in benefits paid out, premiums will have to increase. The level of increase will depend on the extent to which Trustees will decide to a) reduce benefits, b) increase premiums, or c) a combination of both. Even to maintain current benefits, it appears that premium increases are inevitable.

Barbara Lewis is Administrative Officer, Benefits and Economic Services, with the NLTA.

THE WORK OF RECOVERY

by [Claudette Coombs](#)

Living with loss has become a routine part of our existence. Although we experience all the emotions associated with loss we somehow manage to continue functioning and usually are able to reestablish some new meaning to our lives. We learn how to recover and rebuild. Recovery can be a long and difficult process but it will always be an active process. It cannot happen without our deliberate involvement.

Developing an understanding of the loss is a prerequisite to recovery. Loss is a psychological as well as physical, experience. We need to understand what we have lost, the implications on our present and future, and how to manage the pain, sadness and mandatory changes associated with the loss. The magnitude of our emotional or behavioural reaction (whether expressed publicly or held privately) may suggest the significance of the loss. If the loss affects many areas of our lives and involves roles which help us define ourselves, we have serious work to do to ensure recovery.

Understanding Loss

We can easily see the physical loss when we lose a loved one or are subjected to a loss of health. Routines of daily existence will undergo dramatic changes. However, as drastic as these changes are, adjusting to the physical losses can be much easier than accepting and adjusting to the psychological losses. We now have to restructure our thinking, review and alter our expectations and acknowledge that life will never again be as it was. We must develop and incorporate a new definition of "normal".

A key premise to recovery is understanding the concept of loss. It implies that either we had, owned, borrowed or expected something to be ours and now that is no longer a reality. We have been done an injustice, life seems unfair and maybe the world is less complete because of that loss. We see the intensity of these reactions when a community is about to lose a school. We feel the personal tragedy when we give birth to a child who will never be well. We trudge through the anguish when a loved one is removed from us by death. Unfortunately, when we endure loss, we tend to focus only on what has been taken away, rather than also acknowledging what is left. The things remaining are the reasons, and provide the methods, for our recovery.

Tools for Recovery

When we are able to anticipate a loss we can actually begin the recovery process immediately, otherwise we can only begin to respond as the loss happens. Although individuals vary in ability and need we can draw on some commonalities in the recovery process. Because we function on a timeline and because our brains prevent us from dealing with too much at once, we can expect that recovery will occur in at least three different stages: immediate (crisis); short-term (survival); and, long-term (restoration).

The first stage is the immediate response to the shock. This practical, crisis management approach to taking care of immediate necessities often allows us to deny our emotions or deliberately put them on hold. There are details to look after, arrangements to be made and actions to be taken in order to prevent further complications. Sometimes we look back at this stage and either don't remember, or wonder, how we got through it.

Next is the short term handling of details. This is also an approach to practical details but will include facing emotional factors. We have moved to survival mode and are attempting to re-establish routines. There may be need for family and financial adjustments. This requires a plan for doing things differently in the future. But now that the immediate issues have been handled, we have more time to think about the psychological

impact of our loss.

In the case of a death or the end of a relationship our dream of life has been stolen forever. The loneliness settles. We may try to fill in some of the gaps by relying on family or friends to listen as we share the pain or as we attempt to reconstruct our lives. We may seek out ways to distract or occupy our minds because we do not want to think about or feel the pain. But the pain is inevitable. By now we have already confronted and modified most of the physical demands in our altered lives. We have rearranged routines and made numerous adjustments to cover the new demands. But the pain remains. Family and friends can help to fill some of the gaps while we begin a process of creating a new place in our lives to keep the loved one close. Some things we can do to deal with the acute loneliness and sense of loss include:

- create new traditions that recognize the loved one's contribution to your life;
- use birthdays or anniversaries to celebrate the good memories;
- write a letter or carry on a conversation with the loved one;
- keep pictures or treasures in a special place;
- schedule a time and place to "remember";
- include new people and activities in your life.

The routines which have been built into our lives serve as constant reminders of the extent of our loss. By introducing new routines and rituals we provide the opportunity to offer new meaning to the past and allow for a future of personal growth. Some of the pain, sadness and loneliness can be replaced with a gratitude for the happy memories. Because of the learning which occurred in the relationship, the happiness that existed there and the anticipation of future growth can never be stolen by grief. The period of sadness that follows loss is eased somewhat as we progress through the next stage.

We have moved beyond mere survival to the restoration stage when we are able to look at our lives and find new ways to fill the emptiness left by the loss. Now we begin what may be the most intense work of all, the rebuilding of our lives. In the case of a death, we lose someone who may have held many roles and therefore met many of our needs. A spouse is a lover, a friend, a companion, a confidante, a mirror, a true partner. With the loss of a partner we lose so much of ourselves and lose our avenue for meeting so many of our basic and higher level needs. Comfort, intimacy, reaffirmation, sharing, understanding, pleasure, and so much else has been intricately linked with our loved one --; and now that's gone. We survive this loss by finding new ways to meet our needs without losing the memory and the value of our loved one.

Living Again

Although we have experienced losses related to career, relationships, future plans, health or life, we are not left with nothing! We still have treasured memories; we have dreams that we can modify; we have personal strengths that we use to rebuild our lives. Our progress may be slow and at times we may stand still but we are moving toward a new view of reality, a new "normal", by accepting the losses and learning to build on what remains. We are allowing ourselves to heal from the pain and we can experience life again. We don't choose the loss and pain but, for what we have left, we can choose redirection rather than regrets.

[Claudette Coombs](#) is an EAP Coordinator with the Employee Assistance Program for teachers. For confidential assistance contact Claudette Coombs (ext. 265), or [Kathy Burford](#) (ext. 242).

Be Active and Keep Fit

TEACHERS TAKING ACTION

by Kathy Burford

All too often, we are reminded of the environmental, genetic, and lifestyle factors that reflect disease. We often have good intentions to take better care of ourselves but fail to take action. Increasingly, we are aware of the danger signs that beckon us to pay attention to our lifestyles and to make changes, but we sometimes don't pay attention. High blood pressure, high cholesterol, migraines, arthritis, insomnia, and exhaustion are a few health problems that come to mind.

At the same time, we see the effects of rapid change and the demands that have been placed on our over-stretched teaching population. Just this year, there has been an overall increase in the use of benefits from the teachers' health plan, and a one third increase in benefits for long term disability. And the number of deaths of teachers in their mid-forties to early fifties has doubled compared to last year's statistics. We have to be aware of our choices and be determined not to be one of next year's statistics.

The World Health Organization stated in 1946 that, "Health is a condition of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of illness or disability." Wellness, a lifestyle concept that has been around for the past few years, bears a striking resemblance with this definition of health stated over 50 years ago. It includes a number of dimensions such as: physical activity, stress management, environmental sensitivity and nutritional awareness. And, at the center of these dimensions, is self responsibility. It is not only living and reacting to illness, but being pro-actively involved in the choices that will help you strive for optimum health. Lifestyle choices and actions are under our control, like deciding how and when to exercise, what to eat, how we perceive ourselves, being vigilant to environmental concerns, and being aware of our attitudes towards illness and health.

We can do something to increase our resilience, improve our health and well-being, and boost our immune system to cope with the effects of change and demands of living by examining our attitudes about health and wellness. If we know that overweight, inactivity, junk foods and the over-consumption of drugs and tranquilizers are not beneficial to our health, why do we continue down the slippery slope of mediocre health or ill-health? Do we over-rely on others, i.e. physicians, hospitals, to step in and take care of us when we encounter health problems instead of taking actions that would increase our ability to fend off ill-health? Do we place obstacles in the way of taking self responsibility by thinking there isn't enough time; that we have bad genes; have a lack of money or information? Or is it just a lack of interest in optimal health and no belief that we have some measure of self-responsibility in how we feel. If one were to ask why there is a lack of interest in wellness, we might hear that the information is boring, or that exercise is boring or too time consuming, or that the lifestyle toward wellness takes too much time, effort, and sacrifice. If given choices, no one would prefer being faced with premature death, heart disease, high blood pressure, obesity, diabetes, stroke, colon cancer or depression as a result of a sedentary lifestyle over having a good life and being well.

Let us turn our attention to the benefits of planned and purposeful activity before we begin putting together a plan that reflects our own needs and circumstances. Any form of exercise can play a role in preventing heart disease and will benefit your heart in its ability to pump blood to your working muscles and help your muscles make use of the oxygen from your blood. Research has shown further benefits include better health, improved fitness and weight control, a better self image, lower stress, improvements to sleeping, and the ability to relax.

One recent study of 700 people reported improved sleep for those who exercised once a week. In another

study it was shown that walking helps people with osteoarthritis. And women who are in menopause, walking helps improve bone loss associated with osteoporosis. If you are a golfer, walking while golfing 18 holes will burn off about 470 calories. You will see an improvement in muscle tone in your thighs in just a two week period if you start walking a 15 minute mile at least three times a week. You are getting the workout you need when you challenge your heart and lungs (breathing is labored but you are not out of breath). Any active workout will send more oxygen to your brain increasing your alertness capacity.

According to Canada's Guide for Physical Activity, an activity plan can include walking golfing, skating, gardening, cycling, continuous swimming, tennis, dancing or climbing stairs. To get the maximum benefit, you need to plan an activity that will increase your heart rate and do it 4-7 days a week. Physical activity will increase your endurance, your flexibility, and strength. Even a long workout of 40-60 minutes may seem like a daunting task if you have been inactive. Instead, start with shorter periods of 10 minutes each and work your way up to longer periods. Walking may also be a good activity to start with if you have been inactive and are not predisposed to taking part in strenuous exercise.

Generally, when you begin a fitness walking program you should start with three 20 minute sessions per week. Depending on the regularity, walking will help in improving your overall fitness. It will also help you lose weight if you walk at a moderate pace five times a week for 45-60 minutes. For maximum benefit to burn off calories and to lose weight, your walks need to be of longer duration and sustained for at least three months. To help maintain weight, walking at a moderate pace three to five times a week for 20-45 minutes will show benefits. Walking will also help reduce stress and tension and improve your cardiovascular health by reducing the risk of heart disease, high blood pressure, and other chronic illnesses usually associated with a sedentary lifestyle.

In the workplace, The Canadian Council for Health and Active Living at Work has seen encouraging signs of employers supporting and encouraging employees throughout the country to get active. Employer support comes from the notion that healthy employees are more productive and are sick less often. This is a positive payoff for not only the employee but the employer as well. While some work sites have set up fitness areas or paid memberships in health clubs, others have introduced programs that encourage more physical activity. Other creative efforts include educational sessions on health, wellness and fitness to motivate those in the workplace to get active. Contests and challenges also motivate and provide rewards for those who participate.

Some suggestions for staying healthy and fit include:

- Purposeful and sustained aerobic activity at least three times a week for a 30 minute period, e.g. walking, bicycling, hiking, gardening, swimming.
- Designing an activity that is realistic and one that you know you will enjoy.
- Having a walking companion to walk with you. Since some people start an activity alone and with the best intentions, they often find it hard to sustain alone.
- When you reach your goal, whatever it is, reward yourself.
- Check with your physician (a must if you have been inactive) about what level of physical exertion is safe for you.
- A plan for warm-up stretching and cool down periods before and after your activity is important. If in pain, you may have to cut back on the amount of exertion you thought you were up for. If for some reason, you sustain an injury, give yourself time for the injury to heal rather than forcing yourself back into activity that might aggravate the healing process.

Start experiencing the benefits of optimal health in all areas of your life-at home, at school and in your community. Encourage others to join you since activities started alone are harder to keep one's motivation alive. Have a happy, healthy summer and enjoy whatever form of walking or exercise you decide upon.

Once you start, you will reap the benefits, feel better, and be on the road to better health.

[Kathy Burford](#) is an EAP Coordinator with the Employee Assistance Program for teachers. For confidential assistance contact Kathy Burford (ext. 242), or [Claudette Coombs](#) (ext. 265).

NLTA PRESIDENT ADDRESSES BGM

Outgoing President Brendan Doyle addressed delegates at the Biennial General Meeting held April 7-10 in St. John's. The following are excerpts from his address.

Pathways

My grave concern for the quality of teacher work life compels me to reference the special education policy espoused in "Pathways to Programming and Graduation". In theory, this policy is supposed to be a means of developing individual programs for students of varying abilities. In reality, Pathways, in its failure to reflect the realities and practicalities facing students and teachers, represents a nightmare for teachers and is the classic example of how NOT to implement policy. My views, which I believe to be your views, are not shared by the champions of this policy in the Department. In fact, the main champion of Pathways has described NLTA's responses to this initiative as "storming", that is, the inevitable resistance to change that occurs when you try to introduce something new. Folks, as a lifelong resident adjacent to the "Wreckhouse" area of the province, I have an appreciation for "storming" that may be at variance to what our Department friend may be expecting. Let me assure you that, if current efforts to have a major dose of reality and practicality injected into Pathways are not successful, and sooner rather than later, then I am prepared to use my Wreckhouse roots to create a "Southeaster" that no pathway will escape. I expect these critical issues will surface during this Convention, and I may have more to say at that time.

Education Reform

Let me make a few comments on education reform that take on a personal perspective. It was always my prayer that when the full wrath of denominational discrimination hit one of our members, it would be a teacher of impeccable teaching credentials and uncompromising personal integrity. Well, my prayers were answered resoundingly in the person of Bonnie Rowsell from District 5. When the dreaded moment of blatant denial of basic human rights struck, I had the memorable experience of sharing tears of anguish and pain with Bonnie. Fortunately, I later had an even more memorable experience of sharing tears of joy with Bonnie when her Board decided to do the Christian thing and right the wrong done to her by reassigning her back to her rightful position in the District. Colleagues, in her absence, I ask that you show your appreciation to Bonnie Rowsell for her courage and determination, as well as for her willingness to work so cooperatively with NLTA during these most trying times. God bless you, Bonnie!

My final comment on education reform, and an important one, is to reiterate that NLTA rose above a purely protectionist stance even when it would have been easy to do otherwise. For example, our relationship with government resulting from the repressive and repulsive measures introduced as Bills 16 and 17 could easily have given us justification for adopting any and all measures aimed at scuttling any government agenda, including educational reform. And I believe we could have scuttled it or, at the very least, made things much more complicated than they were --; if you can imagine that being possible! The true professionalism of teachers in Newfoundland and Labrador was surely put to the test --; we passed with flying colours --; and I will not hesitate to remind others of that fact when the need arises.

Administration

The introduction of site-based management --; a technical, fancy phrase for downloading --; signalled a dramatic shift in the role of administrators. These people have been given the responsibility for making the tough decisions respecting school budgets, staffing and program issues, leave requests, student placement, and the list goes on. Add to this the increased demand for public accountability that falls to administrators, especially via school councils, and it is not hard to understand why they may question how their newly acquired managerial functions can be reconciled in a collegial model that currently exists by virtue of them being members of NLTA. We must acknowledge and resist those forces that would have administrators

removed from the bargaining unit, and we do this, I believe, by the Association giving full support to their issues and concerns and by being proactive and forthright in discussing the pros and cons of having administrators in the bargaining unit.

Teacher Certification

My final thoughts are in the area of teacher certification and stem directly from concerns about the need for teachers to be able to respond to increasing demands on their own learning. Yes, some learning occurs in preservice education. But tomorrow's profession will require far more learning on the job, especially from colleagues. To facilitate a more vigorous learning profession, teachers must take more control over their learning agenda, and this can only occur if teaching becomes a self-regulating profession. Stated another way, teachers must establish, and seek compliance to, an exacting set of professional standards of practice. To this end, your Association has taken on the formidable challenge of developing an alternate model of teacher certification for this province; and you will be updated on the status of this undertaking during Convention.

TEACHERS HONORED

In keeping with past tradition, the efforts of a number of teachers who have made significant contributions to both their profession and their Association were recognized at Convention 1999. Award winners for 1998 were announced last year but presented at this Convention. The following provides information on the awards and the 1999 winners.

Dr. Otto Tucker · Honorary Member

Dr. Tucker began his teaching career in 1942 in the communities of La Scie, Trout River and Change Islands. For the 1948-49 school year he was principal of Salvation Army School in Botwood, and from 1949-51, Salvation Army School in Gambo. While in Gambo he co-founded the Gambo-Gander Branch of NTA and was elected its first President.

While attending Memorial University of Newfoundland, he co-founded the NTA Branch on campus. In 1958 he graduated from Memorial with a B.A.(Ed.) and received a medal for student leadership. He served as principal of Salvation Army School in Windsor and was President of the NTA Exploits Valley Branch. From 1958-59 he was vice-principal at Botwood Salvation Army Central High School.

In 1960-61 he taught history at Booth Memorial while writing his thesis for a partial requirement for a M.Ed. at the University of Alberta. The thesis was titled "Origin and Development of Regional and Central High Schools in Newfoundland."

From 1961 to 1964 he was school principal in the Mackenzie Delta region of the North West Territories in the communities of Aklavik and Fort McPherson. He then attended the University of Toronto and graduated in 1967 with a Ph.D in Education. While at the University of Toronto he organized the first Graduate Students Association in Education and was elected as the President of the Association.

He was a professor of Education at Acadia University in Nova Scotia until 1971 when he moved to Memorial University, also in the position of professor of Education. It was from Memorial that he retired in 1988.

Besides his extensive educational and professional history, Dr. Tucker has also been very active at the community level. He co-founded and is President of the Wessex Society an organization that explores and strengthens Newfoundland's link to the West County of England. He was recipient of the Silver Cross of St. George, and the Canadian Centennial Medal, for his work with the Wessex Society. In 1984 he received an Honorary Doctor of Laws Degree (L.L.D.) from Memorial University of Newfoundland. He is also a volunteer with the Newfoundland Cancer Society, a member of the Provincial Steering Committee for prostate cancer support group, and co-founder of the Inter-Church Fund for Hungry Children.

The Bancroft Award

The Bancroft Award was established in 1980 to mark the 90th anniversary of the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association. The award recognizes outstanding service at the branch level of NLTA for the betterment of education and professionalism for teachers.

Robert Eddy, a teacher at Vanier School in St. John's, is recipient of the 1999 NLTA Bancroft Award.

Robert has held numerous volunteer positions over the years and has continuously worked diligently on behalf of teachers. He has been a member of the 100th Anniversary Committee, the Professional Day Coordinating Committee, the Teacher Certification Committee, the Occupational Health and Safety

Committee, and chair of the School Board-Teacher Liaison Committee.

He has been a delegate to Convention ten times since 1976; President of Marconi Branch in 1991-92 and 93-95; President of St. John's East Branch, 1989-90, 90-91; Vice-President of St. John's East Branch, 1986-87, 87-88, 88-89; and he was the founding President of the Elementary Teachers' Special Interest Council.

Dave Wicks, a teacher at Gander Collegiate in Gander, is recipient of the 1999 NLTA Bancroft Award.

Dave has been an active and dedicated member of NLTA for many years. He has been President of Ganova Branch since 1991; Vice-President for 1990-91, 1989-90; and Treasurer of Fogo Branch in 1980-81. He has been a delegate to Convention for 13 years and a member of numerous committees and planning groups. These include the CTF Advocacy Strategies Team, 1998-99; the Membership Benefits and Services Committee, 1998-99 and 1997-98; and the Ganova Branch Retirement Committee from 1989 to the present.

Dave has also had many other branch positions and appointments over the years and has attended numerous conferences on behalf of NLTA.

The Barnes Award

The Barnes Award was established in 1987 to recognize outstanding service to the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association in the field of Professional Development by teachers involved in Special Interest Councils and Curriculum Development committees.

Arlene McCann (Luke), a teacher at Brother Rice High School in St. John's, is recipient of the NLTA Barnes Award.

Arlene has devoted her teaching career to the promotion of French as a Second Language with the Roman Catholic and Avalon East School Boards. She was the first French Program Co-ordinator to initiate summer institutes for teachers of French and has played major roles in Department of Education working groups and conducted inservicing of French monitors.

Her involvement at the regional and provincial levels of the Modern Languages Council has spanned her entire career. She is an outstanding leader in curriculum development and professional development and has tirelessly investigated and developed opportunities to provide resources to improve the skills of French teaching personnel.

The Special Recognition Award

The Special Recognition Award was instituted in 1990 by Johnson Incorporated to recognize the 100th Anniversary of the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association. The award is presented annually to an active NLTA member who has made a major contribution to the cultural, social and/or community life of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Sheila Lee, a Kindergarten teacher at Dunne Primary in St. Mary's Bay, is recipient of the 1999 NLTA Special Recognition Award.

Throughout her 28 year teaching career Sheila has been involved in numerous special projects and activities. A member of the Riverhead Fire Department Ladies Auxiliary, the Ladies Auxiliary of Royal Canadian Legion Branch 62, St. Mary's Bay Centre Development Association, the Riverhead Recreation Committee, the School Council, Steering Committee for Tourism of the Regional Economy Development Board, and various church activities, she has been the driving force behind many successful projects. She is a big promoter of recycling, literacy, and volunteering.

The Roy C. Hill Award

The Roy C. Hill Award was established by the Roy C. Hill Charitable Foundation and is administered by the Canadian Teachers' Federation Trust Fund. The program was set up to encourage and reward active classroom teachers who have developed new ideas for the improvement of teaching practises. The awards are valued from \$2,500 to \$10,000, and all teachers in Newfoundland and Labrador are eligible to apply.

Geoffrey Booth, a Program Coordinator with the Labrador School Board, is a recipient of the 1999 Roy C. Hill Award.

The award-winning, innovative project is Student Empowerment Students Helping Students, Teachers and Their Community. The program brings ideas, experiences, ideals, civic responsibility, codes of conduct, etc. to students in a new, exciting, acceptable format. The program is presented by student facilitators who attend training sessions on effective presentation techniques and then lead large group sessions by themselves or as a part of a team of presenters.

The President's Award

The 1999 recipient of The President's Award is **David (Dave) Wicks** of Gander. The award of an engraved watch and plaque were presented to him by outgoing President Brendan Doyle at an awards luncheon during Convention 1999.

The President's Award is presented to one person during the Presidents' term of office at Convention during the final year of the term of office.

For a recipient to be eligible he/she must be or have been an active member in good standing of the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association for at least five years. They must have served the Association at the provincial, branch, or executive level or within the Special Interest Council structure. They must be recognized amongst their peers as a teacher who has given of him/herself to the Association and be recognized among his/her peers as an exemplary educator in the profession.

Dave has been an active and dedicated member of NLTA for many years. He has been President of Ganova Branch since 1991; Vice-President for 1990-91, 1989-90; Treasurer of Fogo Branch in 1980-81. He has chaired rallies to support teachers' rights, has initiated branch responses to educational and financial consultations, and has chaired or been a member of numerous committees. Dave was also recipient of the NLTA Bancroft Award which was presented at Convention 1999. Information about the award and more about Dave's activities within the profession are outlined above.

RESOLUTIONS FROM BGM 1999

More than 120 resolutions were presented at the NLTA Biennial General Meeting held in St. John's in April 1999. Resolutions that were Carried, Amended and Carried, or Referred to Executive are included below; the remaining resolutions that were Defeated or Withdrawn by the sponsoring branch can be found in your Convention Bulletin.

Category A: **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Special Education Policy

1. That NLTA prepare an information package that will clearly and succinctly outline special education policy and the anticipated effects that it will have on students and classroom teachers. Such information package should be sent to all schools, school councils, and media agencies in the province and be used to inform the parents of this province of the changes re special education that are planned by government. (AMENDED & CARRIED)
2. a) That broader guidelines be clearly identified and taken into consideration when placing children in programs of assistance under the new Pathways program to include children who are at risk and in need of remediation, and
b) That no child presently in need of and receiving academic assistance be eliminated from such assistance next year with the implementation of the Pathways program. (AMENDED & CARRIED)
4. That NLTA explore ways or means to ensure that the implementation of the Pathways initiative shall not proceed in our schools until the NLTA is satisfied that personnel and other resources as recommended in the Canning Report (1996) are in place. (AMENDED & CARRIED)
Professional Development Journal
6. That NLTA investigate the possibility of creating an "electronic" professional development journal. (CARRIED)

Foundation Document on Professionalism

7. That NLTA develop a foundation document on professionalism. (REFERRED TO EXECUTIVE)

Teacher Evaluation

8. That the NLTA produce information on teacher evaluation that outlines the purpose and criteria for meaningful evaluation. (AMENDED & CARRIED)

Teacher Certification

10. That there be a Grade VIII level teaching certificate for a teacher who has obtained a PhD or two masters level degrees. (REFERRED TO EXECUTIVE)
11. That NLTA develop a foundation document on teacher certification to be used in asserting a strong voice in contributing to teacher certification and any move to establish a re-certification scheme. (CARRIED)

Category B: Association **BRANCH RESTRUCTURING**

12. That NLTA survey all NLTA members vis a vis the effectiveness of the current branch structure and make recommendations as to possible future branch restructuring/ reorganization. (REFERRED TO

EXECUTIVE)

Subsidizing Government Costs

16. That no NLTA money be used to subsidize government costs. (CARRIED)

Private/Public Partnerships

17. That NLTA develop a position paper on private/public partnerships in the Newfoundland and Labrador school system. (CARRIED)

Category C:

BENEFITS AND ECONOMIC SERVICES

Collective Bargaining for School Administrators

18. That, following the 1999 Biennial Convention, the NLTA commence meetings with the School Administrators' Council, with a mandate to explore the desirability of establishing a separate and distinct category for collective bargaining purposes for school administrators within NLTA. (AMENDED & CARRIED)

19. That, following the 1999 Biennial Convention, NLTA commence a study with a mandate to determine and report to all NLTA members the pros and cons of school administrators leaving the NLTA and setting up a separate, distinct association. (CARRIED)

Leaves With Pay

24. That NLTA attempt to negotiate an amendment to Article 18.08 to read: "Upon application to the school board, a teacher shall be granted leave with pay, not exceeding three (3) days in the aggregate in the school year". (AMENDED & CARRIED)

Compassionate/Family Leave

25. That NLTA attempt to negotiate an amendment to Article 18.03 to replace the word "may" with the word "shall" so the article begins: "Upon application to the school board, a teacher shall be granted leave with pay not exceeding three (3) days in the aggregate in a school year...". (AMENDED & CARRIED)

26. That NLTA attempt to negotiate for at least two extra days per year under Article 18.03 for instances where extensive travel is involved or where extraordinary circumstances prevail. (AMENDED & CARRIED)

Discretionary Leave

27. That NLTA attempt to negotiate an article allowing for personal leaves at the teacher's discretion. (AMENDED & CARRIED)

Sick Leave

28. That NLTA attempt to negotiate an amendment to Article 15, such that sick leave days continue to accumulate at 18 days per year for every year taught beyond the accumulation of 190 days. (AMENDED & CARRIED)

Educational Leave

29. That NLTA attempt to negotiate an amendment to Article 20.06 (educational leave) to read: "Leave granted under this article shall be at the rate of full salary". (AMENDED & CARRIED)

30. That NLTA attempt to negotiate a term of one year sabbatical leave at full salary for teachers with ten (10) or more years of service. (AMENDED & CARRIED)

Teacher/Student Allocations for Primary Grades

31. That the NLTA attempt to negotiate with government a statement that the maximum number of children

within a primary classroom will not exceed twenty. (AMENDED & CARRIED)

Allocations for Specialist Teachers

32. That NLTA lobby/negotiate with government and school boards to ensure that the provision of specialist teachers in the areas of music, physical education, technology, guidance, learning resources, etc. are increased, not diminished or eradicated. (AMENDED & CARRIED)

33. That NLTA immediately take whatever steps are necessary to ensure that teachers are not replaced with quasi-professional personnel. (AMENDED & CARRIED)

34. That NLTA lobby/negotiate government for the provision of the allocation of guidance counsellors on the basis of one (1) per 500 students and that no guidance counsellor be responsible for more than three (3) schools. (AMENDED & CARRIED)

Department Heads for Special Education

35. That the NLTA attempt to negotiate to have department head status available in the area of special education as is currently available in other areas. (AMENDED & CARRIED)

Teacher Allocations

36. That the NLTA attempt to negotiate maximum limits on class size. (AMENDED & CARRIED)

37. That all schools have a minimum of 0.5 allocation for the principal and one (1) full-time secretarial position and, where a vice-principal is designated, the position have not more than one-half (1/2) time teaching duties. (AMENDED & CARRIED)

38. That all schools be provided a full-time learning resources teacher and a full-time technology support person. (REFERRED TO EXECUTIVE)

40. That NLTA, in conjunction with the School Administrators' Council Provincial Executive, begin discussions immediately with the Ministers of Education and Finance with a mandate to implement the following allocation formula for school administrators:

Number of Students	Number of Administrative Units
001-099	0.5
100-249	1.0
250-499	1.5
500-699	2.0
700+	2.5

(AMENDED & CARRIED)

Salary Scale for School Administrators

41. That NLTA, in consultation with the School Administrators' Council Provincial Executive, enter into discussions with the Ministers of Education and Finance to pursue a revised salary scale for school administrators. (AMENDED & CARRIED)

Allowance Structure

42. That NLTA, in conjunction with the Executive of the School Administrators' Council, enter into discussions with the Ministers of Education and Finance with the goal of changing the current definition of class (i.e. 35 students) which is presently a factor in determining the bonuses paid school administrators, guidance counsellors, department heads, etc. (CARRIED)

Job Description for School Administrators

45. That NLTA, in conjunction with the School Administrators' Council Executive, commence meetings with the Department of Education, Treasury Board, and the School Boards Association with a mandate to develop a job description for school administrators (principals and vice-principals). (AMENDED & CARRIED)

Job Description for Teachers

46. That teachers receive a mutually agreed upon job description in writing at the beginning of a new position and when modification is sought. (REFERRED TO EXECUTIVE)

Supervision of Students

47. That NLTA attempt to negotiate that teachers who are required to do recess, lunch, and bus duty, be given time within that school day to compensate for such time. (AMENDED & CARRIED)

48. That, in the next round of negotiations, the NLTA seek the use of paid personnel to assume all non-teaching supervision duties presently (CARRIED) out by teachers. (AMENDED & CARRIED)

Teacher Transfers

50. That NLTA attempt to negotiate, subject to Article 9.10, that a teacher shall be transferred to a comparable position within the school district when a teacher requests such a transfer to a vacant comparable position. (AMENDED & CARRIED)

51. That NLTA develop a policy with regard to teacher transfers. (AMENDED & CARRIED)

Pension Indexing

53. That, in the next round of negotiations or sooner, the NLTA seek indexing of pensions for all teachers whose TPP benefits are integrated with the CPP. (EDITED & CARRIED)

Pensionable Service

55. That teachers be able to buy back strike time lost before the last contract agreement. (CARRIED)

56. That NLTA enter into negotiations with government regarding a reciprocal transfer of pensions with the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) and all other federal departments. (CARRIED)

57. That NLTA attempt to negotiate that teachers with substitute service prior to September 1989 should be provided with a more equitable method of purchasing such service for pension purposes. (AMENDED & CARRIED)

58. That the NLTA lobby both the provincial and federal levels of government to ensure that all pensionable service be allowed to be purchased as worked service. (CARRIED)

59. That NLTA seek to have pension legislation changed to accommodate the purchase of university years as 'work service' up to a maximum of four years regardless of whether or not these years occurred prior to the commencement of the teaching career. (CARRIED)

Pensions Integration

61. That NLTA revisit the integration formula for the TPP with CPP and attempt to have the integration formula adjusted to ensure that the integration factor cannot be greater than the monies the recipient receives from the CPP. (CARRIED)

Provision of Substitutes

64. That the last sentence of Article 29:03(b) read: "The number of substitute days available to a Board under this article during a school year shall be one (1) for every teacher in the board." (CARRIED)

65. That NLTA attempt to negotiate a position on the hiring of substitute teachers based on qualifications and seniority to be applied at the district level. (AMENDED & CARRIED)

Teacher Workload

66. That the NLTA attempt to negotiate and take the necessary steps to provide adequate preparation time in the regular school day. (AMENDED & CARRIED)

67. That NLTA attempt to negotiate a minimum number of preparation periods during a day for teachers to complete required work. (AMENDED & CARRIED)

68. That action be immediately taken to establish guidelines/suggestions for school boards/administrators that will ensure an equitable workload is maintained within a school and throughout the school board. (CARRIED)

70. That any teacher required to attend interagency meetings regarding a student be given time during the instructional day to attend such meetings. (AMENDED & CARRIED)

71. That NLTA identify services to be provided by teachers within the time frame of the teacher workday. (EDITED & CARRIED)

72. That the NLTA seek to establish a more precise definition of the teacher work day and week. (AMENDED & CARRIED)

73. That the NLTA examine the issue of fractional teaching positions within the province. (CARRIED)

74. That the NLTA seek full-day school closures for parent-teacher interviews. (CARRIED)

Teacher Compensation

76. That any monies/honorarium due a cooperating teacher as a result of their work with a teacher intern be paid directly to that teacher. (REFERRED TO EXECUTIVE)

77. That NLTA attempt to negotiate remuneration or compensation for teachers who perform duties outside the regular school hours. (AMENDED & CARRIED)

78. That, in the next round of negotiations, the NLTA seek additional incremental steps on the teachers' salary scale. (REFERRED TO EXECUTIVE)

Holdback Pay

79. That NLTA negotiate that any monies saved as a result of the "method of payment" to teachers be used by government to enhance/strengthen benefits to teachers. (AMENDED & CARRIED)

Provision of Student Assistants

80. That student assistants be provided for learning disabled students when they are integrated into the regular classroom setting. (AMENDED & CARRIED)

81. That special education teachers assigned/hired as a result of documented need under the various categories of challenging needs not be required to take on the duties of student assistants, i.e. portering, toileting, lifting, feeding, various personal needs, meeting of special transportation vehicles, and assisting students in disembarking from these vehicles. (REFERRED TO EXECUTIVE)

Notification of Vacancies

82. That NLTA attempt to negotiate an amendment to Article 8.02 to read: "Notwithstanding Clause 8.01,

substitute and replacement positions that are known fifteen (15) days in advance and are of more than one (1) month's duration shall be advertised in accordance with procedures outlined in Clause 8.01." (AMENDED & CARRIED)

83. That in the next round of collective bargaining, the NLTA negotiate a change in the wording of Article 8.02 to read: 'Notwithstanding Clause 8.01, substitute and replacement positions that are known to be of more than one (1) month's duration, on or before the commencement of the position, shall be advertised according to procedures outlined in Clause 8.01.' (AMENDED & CARRIED)

Teacher Hiring

84. That, in the next round of negotiations, the NLTA seek to ensure that part-time tenured teachers be given preference in hiring. (AMENDED & CARRIED)

Teacher Layoffs

87. That, in the next round of collective bargaining, the NLTA negotiate an amendment to Article 9.10(c) to delete the word "substitute" so that the clause would read: "Teachers who are laid off and eligible for recall shall, subject to Clause 6.03, be given priority for replacement and terms positions; however, rejection of offers of such positions does not eliminate the teacher's right to recall for available permanent positions." (CARRIED)

Group Insurance

89. That the NLTA health plan be reviewed with a view towards possibly extending its coverage to include the full cost of two hearing aids. (CARRIED)

90. That the Group Insurance Trustees investigate the extending of hearing aid coverage to the purchase of two hearing aids to a maximum of \$600 per hearing aid. (CARRIED)

91. That the Group Insurance Trustees investigate the coverage of hearing aid accessories (batteries, ear hooks, tubing, and ear molds) up to a maximum of \$150 per year for the member and his/her spouse. (CARRIED)

92. That the Group Insurance Trustees investigate the offering of coverage for return transportation to a member both when a child/spouse is admitted to or discharged from a hospital. (CARRIED)

93. That the transportation benefit under the health insurance plan for medically necessary reasons be applied to all travel rather than for travel in excess of 200 km for the return trip. Failing that, the 200 km penalty should be applied as a deduction for all travel so that the penalty is equalized for all. (REFERRED TO EXECUTIVE)

95. That NLTA examine the possibility of freezing rates of insurance premiums for its members. (CARRIED)

(Current Policy) Resolutions

CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION

5. That, with respect to the implementation of specific curriculum programs, a) appropriate inservice be given all teachers prior to the implementation of any new program; b) sufficient teaching resources be made available within all classrooms for the teaching of all new programs; and c) appropriate time be allocated for all teaching staff where the development of any relevant supplementary resource materials is necessary within existing or new programs.

Teacher Evaluation

9. That NLTA review, refine, and expand its (CURRENT POLICY) on teacher evaluation, as stated in the policy handbook, so that it can be used to evaluate school board evaluation policies and programs.

Pensionable Service

54. That service lost because of position-sharing between two teachers be counted as pensionable service as is any other approved unpaid leave.

Quality of Teachers' Work Life

75. That NLTA take an active role in ensuring that the quality of the teachers' workplace is up to approved health standards, i.e. air quality, use of cleaning chemicals, etc.

Group Insurance

94. That the health benefit package be placed on the market for new tender bids.

97. That NLTA make provisions for each special interest council to bring resolutions directly to BGM.

98. That a substitute teacher be called to replace any teacher (regardless of workload) when said teacher is sick.

Notice of Motions for By-Law Change at the 2001 BGM

ATTENDANCE AT JOINT COUNCIL MEETINGS

99. That By-Law III.B. (Privileges of Active Membership) be amended by adding a new subsection to read: "No teacher shall be excluded from a meeting of Joint Council unless Joint Council is discussing a personal matter regarding a teacher or staff person of NLTA."

Attendance at Executive Meetings

100. That By-Law III.B. (Privileges of Active Membership) be amended by adding a new subsection to read: "No teacher shall be excluded from a meeting of Provincial Executive unless Executive is discussing a personal matter regarding a teacher or staff person of NLTA."

Province-wide Voting for Provincial Executive

101. That there be a province-wide voting for Provincial Executive.

Convention Delegates

102. That the number of voting delegates at NLTA Conventions not only be based on teacher populace, but on distinct geographical regions.

Composition of Provincial Executive

103. That the Provincial Executive be equally comprised of all the different regions of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Resolutions from the Floor

FL1 That the Minister of Education be invited to address Convention and to participate in a question period immediately following his/her address. (AMENDED & CARRIED)

FL2 That NLTA approach government (Department of Education) and tell them, in no uncertain terms, that CRTs/standardized testing be limited to one test per grade/level per year. (CARRIED)

FL3 That the SIC Co-ordinating Committee be given a mandate to complete the work it has commenced to date and to work toward the actioning of recommendations approved by NLTA Executive. (CARRIED)

FL4 That as soon as possible following the conclusion of the BGM 1999, the NLTA commence a study on the issue of providing all special interest councils full parliamentary privileges at future BGM's. This study and its recommendations would be conducted and concluded with the intention of providing sufficient time in order that the appropriate notice of motion for by-law change can be submitted. (EDITED & CARRIED)

FL6 That the NLTA develop a policy statement on gifted education to be completed by the 2001 BGM. (CARRIED)

FL7 That the NLTA enter into discussions with school boards and/or government to formalize an agreement whereby teachers and/or administrators elected or appointed to school councils shall not place their relationship with their employer in jeopardy as a result of actions taken by said councils. (CARRIED)

FL8 That NLTA investigate the possibility of collaborating with the Federation of School Councils to integrate media literacy issues into Newfoundland and Labrador schools as soon as possible. (EDITED & CARRIED)

FL9 That our provincial President, when deemed necessary, instruct the entire membership to halt any further implementation of the Pathways document, unless and until new teaching personnel and resources are supplied to our schools. (EDITED & CARRIED)

FL10 That the NLTA insist and work toward making the Department of Education and school boards provide the necessary and recommended supports for the programs already implemented and future programs that will be implemented from the Canning Report. (EDITED & CARRIED)

FL11 That the NLTA conduct a poll of the full membership during the 1999-2000 school year on the defeated proposed By-Law XII change regarding a province-wide vote. (AMENDED & CARRIED)

FL12 That prior to the holding of the poll, the NLTA distribute an information package to each school. This package will contain the positions of both the NLTA and the proponents of province-wide voting. (REFERRED TO EXECUTIVE)

FL13 That prior to the holding of the poll, but after the distribution of an information package, the NLTA arrange to hold a forum to debate the issue of a province-wide vote in the most efficient and cost efficient means possible (e.g. community cable, TIC, Bulletin, etc.). (REFERRED TO EXECUTIVE)

FL14 That NLTA conduct a referendum to determine whether or not teachers want a provincial vote of teachers for President, Vice-President and Provincial Executive of NLTA. (WITHDRAWN)

FL15 That during the initial voting on by-law amendments and/or the introduction of new by-laws, that the Scrutineers Committee be required to count the vote (where the vote is close) rather than wait for a division call. (AMENDED & CARRIED)

FL16 That teachers be allowed to purchase as pensionable service, periods of time spent as instructors or administrators in adult education or literacy programs. (REFERRED TO EXECUTIVE)

FL17 That the health insurance coverage be increased to 100 percent for extended dental coverage, including dentures and braces. (REFERRED TO EXECUTIVE)

FL18 That the health and dental insurance coverage be extended to cover travel, accommodations, meals and taxis for any medical or dental emergencies. This coverage would be 100%. (REFERRED TO EXECUTIVE)

FL19 That the Communications Committee of NLTA establish and implement a process to acknowledge resigning and/or defeated Provincial Executive members at future BGMs. (REFERRED TO EXECUTIVE)

Proposed NLTA Act and By-Law Changes from Provincial Executive

The following proposed NLTA Act and By-Law changes were accepted by the 1999 BGM:

By-Law V.B. --; Life Membership (Privileges)

That Subsection B --; Privileges, of By-Law V. --; Life Membership, be amended to read: "Life members may attend and speak at meetings of the Association, but not at meetings or portions of meetings relative to collective bargaining. They shall not be entitled to hold office in the Association, nor vote, nor be members of the Executive. Other privileges may be granted as per Association Policy."

By-Law V.A.(2) --; Life Membership [Classification]

That subsection A.(2) --; Classification, of By-Law V. --; Life Membership, be amended to read: "Life Membership shall be granted to every retired teacher: (2) who, at the time of retirement or of electing to go on deferred pension, was (a) a member of this Association and whose membership in this Association is not less than 20 years in the aggregate, or (b) actively employed with a school board in the field of primary, elementary, and secondary education and had been a member of this Association for not less than 20 years in the aggregate."

By-Law XI.A(3) --; Nominations and Election for Executive

That By-Law XI.A.(3) --; Nominations and Election for Executive be amended by replacing the words '9:00 a.m. on' with the words 'the commencement of' and by adding the word 'sessions' after the word 'Convention'. The amended by-law would read in part: "The Electoral Committee shall receive nominations for the Executive up to the commencement of the second day of Convention sessions in accordance with By-Law XI.A.(1) ".

By-Law XII.A(2) --; Nominating and Election Procedures for Officers

That By-Law XII.A.(2) --; Nominating and Election Procedures for Officers be amended by replacing the words '9:00 a.m.' with the words 'the commencement' and by adding the word 'sessions' after the word 'Convention'. The amended by-law would read in part: "That the Electoral Committee receive nominations for the office of President and Vice-President up to the commencement of the second day of Convention sessions in accordance with By-Law XII.A.(1)".

Proposed NLTA Act and By-Law Changes from Branches

The proposed NLTA Act and By-Law changes presented by the Placentia Branch which would have resulted in province-wide voting for the positions of President, Vice-President, and Provincial Executive were dealt with as follows:

- The proposed changes to By-Law XII were defeated.
 - The proposed changes to By-Laws IX, X, XI, XII, XIV, and the new proposed By-Law XV were withdrawn by the sponsoring branch.
 - The proposed changes to Sections 5.(1), Section 13, and Section 14 of the NLTA Act were also withdrawn by the sponsoring branch.
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GET INVOLVED

Join a Provincial Committee

Are you a knowledgeable, interested and committed member of your association? President-Elect, Fred Andrews, has established a committee structure for the 1999-2000 school year to assist the Provincial Executive Council in conducting the business of the Association. These committees, chaired by members of the Executive, prepare recommendations to Executive on a wide range of issues which affect both Association policy and action. The participation of teachers as members of the committees is essential in providing a link between the Executive and the membership of the Association.

Committees will meet approximately four times per year. Meetings are usually held after school hours; some may be held via teleconferencing. From time to time weekend meetings may be required. Teachers are reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses for travel, meals and child care as per NLTA policy.

You are asked to consider volunteering to serve as a member of a committee that is of interest to you. Committee members are usually drawn from the same geographic location (within 90 km) as the chairperson. With the permission of Executive, one committee member may be chosen from outside the geographic location provided that expenses incurred are kept within reasonable limits. Committee members are chosen by the chairperson early in September of each year. All applicants will be informed of the status of their application at that time.

Every effort will be made to have equal representation of males and females and to ensure generational equity on committees. Depending on the terms of reference of the committee, every effort will also be made to include teachers with responsibilities in various areas of the teaching profession.

If you are interested in becoming a committee member, please fill out the form below and e-mail it to the NLTA office by June 30.

Committees, 1999-2000	Chairperson	Location
Curriculum	Ken Kavanagh	St. John's/Bell
Equity Issues in Education	Wayne Lee	Island
Membership Benefits and Services	Kevin Foley	Stephenville
Communications/Political Action	Fred Wood	Goose Bay
Professional Issues in Teaching	Elizabeth Murphy	CBS Rushoon

Please Note:

1. The Finance and Property Committee, chaired by Rivlyn Galway, is set up under By-Law XVII of the Association which requires that the members of this committee be taken from the Provincial Executive Council.
2. The Group Insurance Committee is chaired by Ted Murphy and operates out of St. John's. Members are chosen in June by the Provincial Executive Council following recommendations from the President. A request for members to serve on this committee was included in the April issue of The Bulletin.

If you require additional information on the duties of committees, please contact [Gerald Costello](#), Assistant to the President, at 709-726-3223, Ext. 222 .

1999-2000 NLTA Committee Volunteer Application

Name

Home Address

Postal Code

Home Phone

School Name

School Address

Postal Code

School Phone

E-mail

Branch

Present Position

Grades

Added
Responsibility

Years of
Experience

Areas of Expertise

Branch Involvement

Provincial Involvement

Committee Preferences (In order of choice)

1.

2.

3.

Submit

Reset

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

Living Heritage: A Canadian Studies Institute for Teachers

July 11-18, 1999

Faculty of Education, University of Alberta, Edmonton. An 8-day professional development opportunity for teachers of Canadian Studies (Grades 4 to 12 history, social studies, anthropology, geography, and Native studies). Registration fee: \$450. For information and application forms, contact: Patricia Shields, Spectra Education, #410, 10113 - 104 Street, Edmonton, AB, T5J 1A1, Tel: 403-413-1672; Fax: 403-421-7164; e-mail: pshields@compuserve.com.

Summer Leadership Institute '99

August 1-5, 1999

Sir Wilfred Grenfell College, Corner Brook. Theme: Learner-Centered Schools.

Sponsored by the Atlantic Provinces Education Foundation. Hosted by the Faculty of Education, Memorial University of Newfoundland. For further information visit our web site at:

<http://www.stemnet.nf.ca/apefinstit99/> or contact Dr. Jerome Delaney, Faculty of Education, MUN, Tel: 709-737-7614; Fax: 709-737-2345; e-mail: jgdelane@stemnet.nf.ca.

Small Schools Institute

August 9-11, 1999

St. Anthony. Contact: Barbara House, Tel: 709-635-2337 (s), 709-634-2205 (h).

Small Rural Schools in the Global Community

August 11-15, 1999

St. Anthony. An international symposium on rural education and telelearning featuring keynote speakers and presenters from islands and countries of the North Atlantic Rim. Sponsored by The Centre for TeleLearning and Rural Education, Faculty of Education, MUN, in partnership with NLTA, the Department of Education, and the Northern Peninsula/Labrador South School District. Contact: René Wicks, Tel: 709-726-3223, Fax: 709-726-4302; e-mail: rwicks@nlta.nf.ca.

School Counsellors Association of Nfld. (SCAN)

September 23-24, 1999

St. John's. Contact: Wade Prior, Tel: 709-279-2870.

Home Economics/Family Studies

October 1-2, 1999

Gander. Contact: Joy Sceviour, Tel: 709-884-5931.

Humanities

October 7-8, 1999

St. John's. Contact: Geoffrey Booth, Tel: 709-944-7628.

Learning Resources

October 14-16, 1999

Corner Brook. Contact: Kathy Rowsell, Tel: 709-634-6837.

Music

October 15-16, 1999

St. John's. Contact: Mary Dinn, Tel: 709-745-1253.

Primary

October 20-22, 1999

Gander. Contact: May Keats, Tel: 709-256-7785 (w); 709-679-2162 (h); e-mail: mkeats@stemnet.nf.ca. Ideas on suggestions for presenters would be welcome.

CEC National Institute '99 Newfoundland Council for Exceptional Children

(in conjunction with NLTA Council of Special Services)

November 11-13, 1999

St. John's. Special Matters Beyond 2000: Newfounde Frontiers. Join us as we explore frontiers in the provision of special services to exceptional children for the year 2000 and beyond. Keynote address: Dr. William Jenson, University of Utah, author of "Tough Kids Tool Box", will present Practical Behaviour Management Strategies. Contact: Dr. Wayne Nesbit (CEC), Tel: 709-737-8606; David Philpott (CEC), Tel: 709-739-7443; or Dr. Ajit Bedi (COSS), Tel: 709-738-4081.
