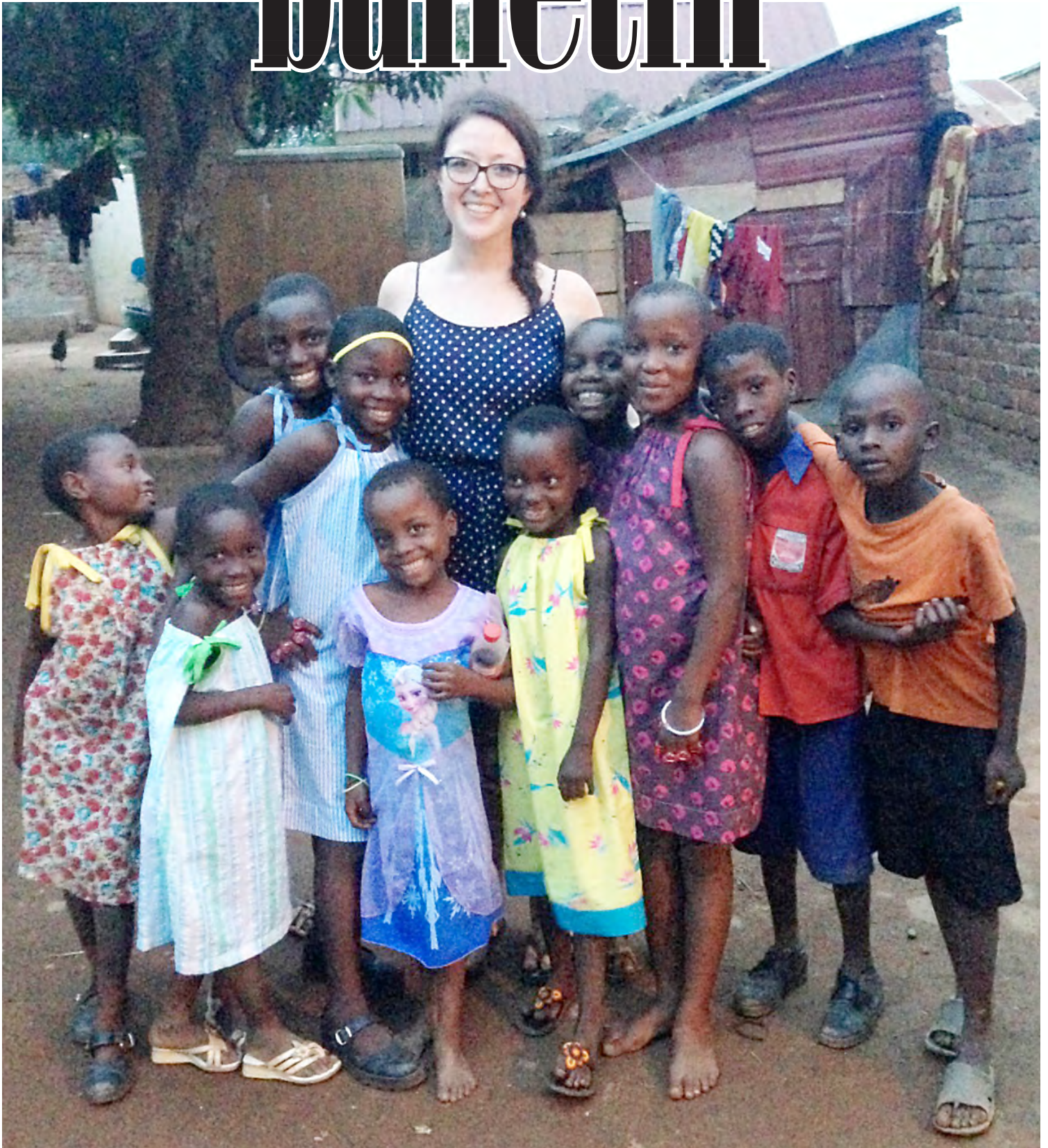


bulletin

Vol. 58/No. 5

May/June 2015



NL teacher Marie Woodford helped build a new school in Uganda with the assistance of many schools in the province (*see article on page 28*).

Up Front

from the President



Real learning comes about when the competitive spirit has ceased. ~ Jiddu Krishnamurti

What is the purpose of our public education system? Are our schools failing our students? Do our schools foster innovation and 21st century learning and what exactly do these terms mean in the context of our schools? How do we measure the success of our schools?

These are just some of the questions being debated and discussed by a variety of organisations and governments who desire to shape education policy and practice. Probably the most important question is, “Who is in the best position to answer these questions?”

The Nova Scotia Government’s 2015 Action Plan for Education entitled *The 3Rs: Renew, Refocus, Rebuild* states, “It is an unfortunate, accepted truth that we have fallen behind in educating our children in Nova Scotia. And they, in turn, have fallen behind, nationally and internationally.” The report is especially concerned with the poor performance of Nova Scotian students on national and international tests of achievement in literacy, math and science.

Nova Scotia’s Minister of Education, Karen Casey, commits to building a modern education system, creating an innovative curriculum, promoting inclusive school environments and advancing excellence in teaching and leadership.

If any of this sounds familiar, it should. In the recent budget speech our provincial government committed to developing “...a 21st century curriculum employing methods that integrate innovative and research-driven strategies, modern learning technologies and relevant resources and context and focusing on learning skills that address the needs to a new generation of students.” Government will also bring together a group of “education leaders” to review the province’s math curriculum.

Liberal Leader, Dwight Ball, committed

to forming his own Premier’s Task Force on Education Outcomes if he is elected. Education is a priority for the Liberal party and while Mr. Ball is aware of the complexities in our schools, he is concerned by the under performance of Newfoundland and Labrador young people nationally. He is committed to improving educational outcomes.

This desire to reform education is part of a much larger international “educational reform orthodoxy” which educational expert, Pasi Sahlberg, describes as the Global Education Reform Movement (or GERM) which applies “market-oriented reform ideas” to education. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) is one of the key players in GERM. The OECD is dedicated to the growth of market economies and takes a distinctive corporate approach to education. It views education in terms of developing human capital for the 21st century economy. Using “evidence based data” from large-scale assessments such as PISA, the OECD has positioned itself as a key adviser to governments on the policies needed to improve teacher practice and student learning in order to prepare young people to participate in the new economy.

More than ever, it is imperative that teachers and their unions have input into the public discourse around successful schools and effective education systems. I have no issue with our educational system being reviewed. It’s healthy to do a review so schools do not stagnate. Every good teacher reviews his/her teaching practices. After all, there is always room for improvement. My issue is with who does the review and on what evidence reforms are based.

We should all be concerned with determining the performance of any education

system and initiating education reform based on the outcomes of national or international assessments (such as PISA) since they reduce the quality and complexity of the system to a score. Math, science and literacy are important, but there is much more richness and diversity to our schools and education system than these three core subjects, and there is more to an education than performance on national and international tests.

I have had the opportunity to hear the singing of students at Se’t A’newey Kina’mation ‘kuom in Conne River, to view the art work of students at Beachy Cove Elementary on display during their Art Day, to see the robotics project of Hillside Academy students in Norris Arm, and to view the student displays at the awards ceremony for the Avalon Regional Heritage Fair. Exquisite, stunning, impressive! They all attest to the absolutely amazing work being done by students and teachers with the support of parents, government and community groups. And these are just some examples of the extraordinary work and successes I have witnessed by the teachers and students of our schools across our province.

Unfortunately, the obsession with rankings on national and international assessments ignores these amazing successes and instead applies a business model of competition to a system and profession that are founded on collaboration.

Reform of public education was a major part of the fifth annual meeting of the International Summit on the Teaching Profession (ISTP 2015) which met in Banff, Alberta. This marked the first time provincial teacher union presidents and executive directors were invited to the

(cont’d. on page 6)

THE bulletin

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

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Subscription Rate: \$18 per year. For subscriptions and address changes contact Linda Babstock, Ext. 256 lbabstock@nlta.nl.ca

Deadlines for material are:
Sept/Oct Issue: September 8
Nov/Dec Issue: November 2



ISSN-1189-9662

Member of the Canadian Educational Press Association, International Association of Business Communicators, and the Canadian Association of Communicators in Education.

Printed on Recycled Paper

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NLTA President James Dinn (front row, first from left) and NLTA Executive Director Don Ash (2nd row, third from left) pictured as part of the Canadian contingent at the International Summit on the Teaching Profession in Banff, Alberta from March 27-31, 2015.

PROVINCIAL/NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL

NEWS

ST. JOHN'S

Leary's Brook students visit Washington D.C. to complete national human rights program

For a ninth consecutive year, Grade 9 students at Leary's Brook Junior High in St. John's participated in an award-winning national human rights program. Leary's Brook has once again been recognized nationally by the Asper Foundation as an exemplary group in Canada.

The educational component required students to complete a comprehensive nine-week program on Sunday afternoons which ran from January until May, aimed at promoting human rights awareness. The group of 42 students contributed over 600 hours of community service this year.

Recent program completion culminated with a travel component to Washington D.C. from May 2-8 where the trip itinerary included visits to freedom memorials, several of the Smithsonian Museums, The White House, The Lincoln and Vietnam War Memorials, Arlington Cemetery, and The Kennedy Centre.

The trip highlight, however, centered around a full-day visit to The United States Holocaust Memorial

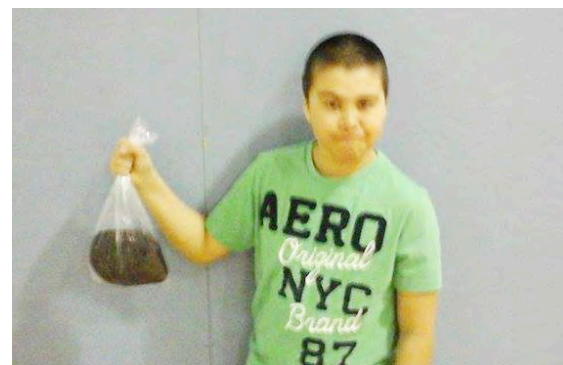
Museum, which included a moving presentation by a Holocaust survivor.

"Congratulations to the Grade 9 Asper Human Rights and Holocaust Awareness Program students at Leary's Brook on the completion of this incredible program and on their stellar representation as new human rights ambassadors on a national stage," says Leo Etchegary, Principal of Leary's Brook Junior High.

MAKKOVIK

J.C. Erhardt student donates hair to support cancer patients

Devlin Hays, a 12-year-old student from J.C. Erhardt Memorial School in Makkovik, Labrador, donated his hair this past March to the Canadian Cancer Society Newfoundland and Labrador Division.



Devlin Hays holds the hair he donated to the Canadian Cancer Society.

Thanks to people like Devlin, the Cancer Society is able to provide wigs, free of charge, to cancer patients throughout Newfoundland and Labrador. In 2013, the Cancer Society received 52 hair donations, and in 2014, they received 346 hair donations. This incredible progress means they are able to help even more cancer patients.



Leary's Brook students at The Einstein Memorial in Washington D.C.

J.C. Erhardt Wolverines are winter sports meet champions

Each year the Winter & Fall Sports Meet is held to determine the best school on the Northern Coast of Labrador (Makkovik, Nain, Rigolet, Postville, Hopedale, Natuashish). The winning teams and participants then qualify to compete in regional play.

The J.C. Erhardt Memorial Wolverines were named this year's Winter Sports Meet Champions. The events took place in Rigolet on March 6. The Makkovik team was also voted "Most Sportsmanlike" by the athletes of the other competing teams.



The J.C. Erhardt Wolverines display their winning medals. Pictured l-r: Liam "Brud" Dyson; Ryan Connors (Phys Ed/Social Studies Teacher); Sydney Ford; Dylan Andersen; Amanda Dyson; Charlie Mae Dyson; and Mandy Smith.

NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR

Johnson reveals winner of NLTA golden anniversary trip contest

In the summer of 1964, Johnson Inc. and the NLTA partnered on a group insurance program that launched Johnson's planned benefit business in Canada.

Like any significant partnership, to celebrate the 50-year golden anniversary, a party was held at the Johnson office in St. John's, which also included a special gift. Announced at festivities was the launch of the Johnson Big Apple contest, offering one lucky NLTA member the chance to win a \$5,000 trip to New York city to be drawn randomly from entries in February 2015.


The call with news of her name being drawn by Johnson came as a complete surprise to Kimberly Furey of Sandy Point, a French First Language E-teacher working for the Centre for Distance Learning and Innovation (CDLI) out of the Gander office.

(cont'd on page 6)

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"Wow! It's an amazing feeling. I've never won anything like this before. It's very exciting! What a beautiful surprise," said Kimberly, who decided to take the \$5,000 trip as a cash prize and is planning how her family will use it.

"There are so many possibilities that come to mind, however, we have always talked about and have always wanted to take a family trip; [it's] a great opportunity to plan a trip that we'll all remember," she added.

Johnson Insurance wishes Kimberly and her family a wonderful trip, wherever their travels take them!

MUN Faculty of Education upcoming events

The Faculty of Education summer session runs from June 29 – August 8. The last day to add courses for the summer session is July 6.

Graduate registration for the fall semester in the Faculty of Education begins at 7 a.m. on August 3.

The deadline for receipt of applications and supporting documents for Faculty of Education M.Ed. programs to start in the winter semester is September 15.

ATLANTIC CANADA

Atlantic Canadian teachers 'Big Payoff Contest' winner

This past fall Johnson Inc. decided to put teachers first, by offering Atlantic Canadian teachers the chance to win BIG with the Big Payoff Contest!

Teachers (active and retired) who received a quote between August 1 – December 31, 2014 or already a Johnson customer, were entered for a chance to win the grand prize of \$15,000; the winner would receive \$10,000, PLUS an additional \$5,000 for their school of choice to use for supplies, sports equipment or anything else they may need. A BIG Payoff indeed!

And the WINNER is...Luc Belliveau of the New Brunswick Teachers' Federation! Congratulations to Luc who resides in Dieppe, New Brunswick and plans to spend his \$10,000 "spoiling themselves a little and pay some bills". Luc has selected the school where he is the Vice-Principal, École Carrefour de l'Acadie, to receive the \$5,000 portion of the prize. Luc says he will help to "ensure the money goes towards technology tools, reading materials and help for families in need".

Expression of Interest

Are you interested in joining the Small Schools Special Interest Council?



If so, please complete the following
and return by **June 19, 2015**.

Name:

School:

Email:

Newfoundland and Labrador
Teachers' Association

Small Schools
Special Interest Council

Please fax to **726-4302** or **1-877-711-6582** (toll free)
or email your information to **mail@nlta.nl.ca**

Up Front from the President

(cont'd. from page 2)

International Summit and sat at the table with provincial Ministers of Education.

ISTP 2015 focussed on three key areas: promoting effective school leadership for teachers and principals, strengthening teachers' confidence in their own abilities (self-efficacy), and encouraging innovation in schools and education systems to create 21st century learning environments through collaboration, partnerships and communication.

In one of the last sessions of ISTP 2015, CMEC and provincial union leaders set the following three priorities for Canada:

1. Focussing on teacher leadership and real forms of collaboration, with particular attention to teacher recognition and career enrichment.
2. Fostering a climate of innovation that supports deeper learning and practice.
3. Fostering collective ownership of and responsibility for a climate of high expectations and well-being of all students, which includes integration of services, engagement of families and communities, and providing equitable access to fair and inclusive

education environments, with a special emphasis on Aboriginal children.

Ambitious commitments that will require time for collaboration, financial resources and, most of all, human resources. But how will these commitments be honoured in light of recent cuts to education? While the cut of \$7 million from our education system and the loss of 77.5 teachers from our schools, does not compare to the \$25.5 million in cuts and loss of 249 teachers in New Brunswick, they will nevertheless cause more stress to an already stressed system and impact the learning and teaching environments of our schools. How do we be the teachers we aspire to be, nurture the success of our students, and make our schools truly innovative learning environments when the resources we need are cut from the system?

If we are to answer these questions, then we, the professionals who make the system function, must be leading the discussion. This was made clear at ISTP 2015 and by the events in our own and neighbouring provinces. More importantly, teachers will have to be empowered to lead the discussion. For these reasons I have committed to convening a President's Panel on Education. It will be made up of and hear from people who are passionate about and care for public education.

Whatever the discussion, it will be broader, deeper and richer than just improving test scores. It will be about building on the successes and strengths of our schools and about addressing the challenges of child youth poverty, child youth mental health, safe and caring schools, gender equity, and inclusive education. It will be an opportunity to share our vision of a publicly funded public education and what we want it to do for our students and our children. Finally, it will be about adequate resourcing so we can put flesh to that vision for the children we teach. If real learning is to take place, then whatever system we build must have as its foundation collaboration and not competition.




**ATTENTION
ALL CURRENT & RETIRED EDUCATORS
IN THE NEWFOUNDLAND
AND LABRADOR K-12 SCHOOL
SYSTEM!**

**You are cordially invited to participate
in a research study titled:**

**EDUCATORS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE
CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE PRINCIPALS**

**being conducted by Dr. Jerome Delaney, Ph.D.,
an associate professor in the Faculty of Education,
Memorial University of Newfoundland.**

The academic literature on what makes an effective school principal is less than definitive and this study is an attempt to help fill that knowledge gap.

Please go to the study website at:

<http://fluidsurveys.com/s/effectiveprincipalsstudy/>

and read about this exciting study. If you participate and would like to be entered into a draw for an Apple iPad Mini 2 Wifi 32GB (valued at \$359.00), please follow the instructions in that section of the website.

Participating in a research study has never been simpler; just go to the above website and your participation will be done totally online. All responses are anonymous and confidential. When you have completed the survey, press the **SUBMIT** button and you're finished.

Here's your opportunity to express your opinion
on what makes an effective principal. Please note that **retired** teachers are
encouraged to participate.

For additional information on this study, please contact
Dr. Jerome Delaney by email at jdelaney@mun.ca
or by telephone at (709) 864-2071.

The proposal for this research has been reviewed by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research and found to be in compliance with Memorial University's ethics policy. If you have ethical concerns about the research, such as the way you have been treated or your rights as a participant, you may contact the Chairperson of the ICEHR at icehr@mun.ca or by telephone at 709-864-2861.

NLTA Session Offerings

To achieve our mission of professional excellence and personal well-being, staff at the NLTA offer a wide variety of sessions **which can range from one hour to a full day or more**. These are available for schools, clusters of schools, branches, or other member groups. If we do not currently offer a topic which you feel is timely and relevant to teaching and learning or to you in the practice of the profession, we are also prepared to research and develop a session to meet your identified needs.

Programs and Services Sessions:

- Assessment Practices (using the latest research on assessment of/for/as learning)
- Classroom Instruction – Proven Strategies
- Brain Research – Knowing “How” We Learn and the Implications for How We Teach
- Student Motivation/Engagement
- Differentiated Instruction
- Classroom Organization & Management/ Cooperative Discipline
- Staff Dynamics and Working Effectively as a Team/ Maximizing Your Potential
- Personal/Professional Balance
- Creating and Maintaining a Respectful Workplace
- Dealing with Difficult People/Difficult Situations
- Time/Energy Management
- Stephen Covey’s 7 Habits of Effective People
- Effective Use of Technology in Teaching
- Retirement Planning
- Financial Wellness
- Professional Relations and Managing Conflict in the Workplace
- Social Media: Protecting Yourself and Your Students
- Legal Issues in Education
- Professionalism and The Code of Ethics
- Knowing Your Collective Agreement
- Teacher Abuse/Harassment
- Teaching in Rural Newfoundland and Labrador

EAP Sessions:

Dealing With Stress:

- Exploring Best Practices on Stress Management
- Critical Incident Stress Debriefing
- Making Stress Work for You – Is it Stress or Distress?

Dealing With Conflict:

- Understanding High Conflict Personalities
- High Conflict Personalities – How Does That Affect Me?
- What Do I Do Now? An Introduction to Conflict Resolution Theory
- Addressing and Transforming Conflict
- Getting to the Heart of Conflict
- Critical Skills for Communicating in Conflict

Relationships:

- Responsible and Respectful Relationships
- Promoting a Community of Caring and Respect
- Ethics as a Tool to Strengthening Interpersonal Relationships
- The Art of Reframing
- Integrating Change: Transforming Teams

Personal Well-being:

- Questions and Their Ability to Transform
- Seasonal Affective Disorder – What Can We Do?
- On Grief – Integration Over Time
- Values Clarification: Practical Strategies for Congruent Goal Setting
- The Extraordinary Within
- Implications of Brain Health Issues for Teachers

For more information or to book a session, contact the NLTA at 726-3223 or 1-800-563-3599 or mail@nlta.nl.ca.

Please note that **advance booking is required** and bookings **will depend on availability of staff**.



We dedicate ourselves to the professional excellence and personal well-being of teachers, through support, advocacy, educational leadership and the development and delivery of outstanding programs and services.

MICHELLE LEDREW, 1965 – 2014

Some people care too much...I think it's called love.

~Winnie the Pooh

Michelle LeDrew's love for life, family and those around her is reflective of this quote. Her love of teaching made every single day enjoyable. Michelle recognized the strength and potential in every person, and always took the toughest children under her wing with special care. She treated every student with the kindness, attention and care that she gave to her own two children.

A native of Conception Bay South, Michelle graduated from Holy Spirit High in 1982 and from MUN in 1987. She was the owner of Teddy Bear Daycare and worked as a substitute before beginning her permanent career at St. Teresa's School. In September 2006, Michelle became a valued member of our St. Edward's family as a grade 1 teacher. She remained in this position until her illness would no longer allow her to do so.

"Whatever it is, it is...we'll deal with it!" were words Michelle uttered often. Famous for her "cando" attitude, Michelle got problems solved and tasks completed before most others could get up off their chairs. A strong and generous spirit, she fought hard for all those around her. Always the life of the party with her sparkling blue eyes, mischievous smile, and contagious giggle, she is truly missed in all aspects of our school community.

Michelle passed away on October 25, 2014. She will be forever loved, cherished and deeply missed by her husband Jim, children Jonathon and Kristina, mother Patricia Fagan (Clayton Crocker), sister Dawn (Jim Haines), the LeDrew family (Ralph, Ruby, Terry and Sue), and a large circle of family and friends. Michelle's love will be forever remembered by the staff and students of St. Edward's School.

How do you spell love? ~Piglet

You don't spell it, you just feel it. ~ Pooh

(Submitted by Danielle Stanley-Genge, with support from special colleagues and Michelle's family.)

DAVID C. WHITE, 1952 – 2014

The teaching profession has lost one of its most outstanding members in the passing of David C. White. Dave was an exemplary teacher, whose impact on his students will be gratefully remembered by the many

whose lives and careers have been enriched by his teaching. Beginning his career in Harbour Breton, then moving to Roncalli, Avondale, followed by a short stint on the Port au Port Peninsula, Dave taught for many years at St. Joseph's School, Heart's Desire, where he later became principal. Restructuring brought him to St. Francis, Harbour Grace, from there to St. Clare's, Carbonear and then to St. Joseph's, Carbonear, from which he retired in 2004.

Dave was well loved by his students. His classroom was not bound by four walls. Class might also happen on the beach or in the woods, as he engaged the world around him to enrich his students' experiences. Armed with a cup of tea and a wry sense of humour, Dave engaged and inspired his students, legions of whom came to offer their condolences. His dry wit, his willingness to lend a hand, his forthrightness and his "calm amid the storm" endeared Dave to his colleagues. He will be ever remembered for his prodigious appetite, the source of much humor and gentle ribbing.

Dave's talents as a teacher were matched by his abilities in other areas. A playwright (he authored a number of published plays) and actor (*Stealing Mary*), Dave was instrumental in establishing the Avalon North Drama Festival which drew acting troupes from schools in the region and fostered the interest in the dramatic arts that now thrives in the area. A noted audiophile and lover of poetry, Dave was also a builder (of houses and rock walls), a farmer, a school sports enthusiast, an outdoorsman, a sometime sailor and an outstanding horseman. He is immortalized in the minds of many in his horse-drawn white carriage, a familiar and much-admired image on the streets of Carbonear.

Dave was a dedicated teacher, a beloved colleague, a loyal and supportive friend, and an engaged community volunteer. Above all, Dave was a loving husband and father. Gloria was the light of his life, as were his children: Cassie (Angus), Peter (Soraya), Sheila (Paul), Kathleen, and Jason (Kim). His cup ran over with the arrival of grandchildren Flora, Ruby, Margaret, Jordan and Hannah. Surrounded by eleven brothers and sisters, Dave's home was the family's heart center. Their collective loss is unfathomable.

A great void has been left by Dave's sudden passing. Dr. Seuss wrote: *Unless someone like you cares an awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It's not.* Well, Dave cared an awful lot about an awful lot of things and we are all better for having had him in our lives.

(Submitted by Eileen Furlong.)



Michelle LeDrew



David C. White



What Did the NLTA Do This Year?

by DON ASH

What a year for your NLTA! As Executive Director responsible for overseeing the work of the NLTA staff and ensuring that the priorities, policies and decisions of your Provincial Executive are actioned, I am so proud of the achievements and accomplishments realized this year on behalf of the teachers of this province. Please take a minute to read this recap of the highlights of your Association's year.

Three major teacher agreements were successfully negotiated and ratified – the Provincial Collective Agreement (94.6%), the Labrador West Collective Agreement (96.3%), and a pension agreement to amend the Teachers' Pension Plan (91%). Both NLTA support staff and administrative staff collective agreements were negotiated and ratified. Province-wide meetings in September (collective agreement), October (pension forum) and April (pension agreement) were held and attended by teachers. Teachers participated in three provincial votes – to ratify the collective agreements and the pension agreement, and to elect the NLTA President and Vice-President. Three Joint Council meetings were conducted during the year and our Biennial General Meeting was held in April.

Besides these extraordinary events, the regular work of the Association continued. The operational framework of the Association was reviewed, revamped and staff reorganized into teams: Programs and Services; Communications; and Corporate Services. Teachers participated in professional development opportunities which included CONTACT, Developing Successful Schools, a New Teacher Conference, a Substitute Teacher Conference, and special interest council events. Pre-retirement and Financial Information sessions were held and highly evaluated by teachers. A membership engagement survey was completed by 1,830 teachers and analysed to help guide and direct the future activities of the Association. The various NLTA committees consisting of staff and teacher volunteers fulfilled their mandates, brought recommendations for action, and conducted a complete review of NLTA policy.

Teachers were kept informed through the Communications Team and use of a variety of means of medium – print, electronic, social media, and website. Input and direction was provided by teachers as the Association, through Provincial Executive, embarked on the development of a public awareness strategy for implementation beginning in the fall of 2015.

The Corporate Services Team continued to implement year 3 of a five-year IT strategy to modernize and meet our IT requirements.

The Programs and Services Team provided a wide array of services from legal to collective agreement administration to financial to counselling to workshops to professional development in their daily delivery of services to teachers.

The Employee Assistance Program coordinators helped hundreds of teachers with confidential personal and professional matters, besides providing workshops for staffs and groups of teachers.

Your NLTA staff and Provincial Executive represented teachers' interests on a daily basis in interaction with Government, school districts, Memorial University, parent groups, and other educational stakeholders and partners.

To say it has been a busy year for the NLTA is an understatement. Your NLTA staff understands that intense workload is also the reality for the teachers for whom they work, and perhaps that is why they approach their own work with such enthusiasm and commitment. It is my privilege and honour to work with such a group of individuals that make up a team that is so dedicated to meeting the interests of teachers. The value that the NLTA provides is perhaps why so many teachers volunteer their time, ideas, and input to keep the Association vibrant and successful in its role as a powerful advocate for teachers. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the NLTA school representatives, the branch presidents, the Provincial Executive and most importantly, the teachers of the Province, for support of the NLTA and its efforts throughout the year.

Many teachers have never visited the NLTA building at 3 Kenmount Road. I encourage you to do so – it is your building. If you get the opportunity to drop by, please do. I also encourage you to get even more involved and engaged with the Association in some of the many activities that are taking place on your behalf.

On behalf of the staff of the NLTA, have a relaxing and rejuvenating summer. Together with teachers, we look forward to the challenges and opportunities that the next school year will undoubtedly bring.

Don Ash is Executive Director of the NLTA.

Kids Eat Smart Foundation

Fueling Bodies and Minds

by SONYA SMITH

As the school year comes to a close we want to thank everyone for making this another successful year for our Kids Eat Smart (KES) Clubs.

We currently provide funding and support to KES Clubs in our Province's schools. With over ninety per cent of schools operating a KES Club we are close to reaching our goal of 100 per cent school participation, helping us achieve our mission of providing nutritious food to every school-age child in Newfoundland and Labrador.

During this school year, there were nine new KES Clubs started in schools throughout the Province including Centre Educatif l'ENVOL, District School, Larkhall Academy, Menihek High, Random Island Academy, William Gillett Academy, Bishop Field Elementary, Mary Queen of Peace and Macdonald Drive Elementary.

KES Clubs rely on the generosity of over 5,000 volunteers including parents, grandparents, educators, school administrators and community leaders to serve over 22,000 meals every school day – that's over 3 million meals a year!

An average KES meal costs \$1. We are very grateful to our Government, the corporate community, organizations and individuals who give generously to financially support Kids Eat Smart Foundation Newfoundland and Labrador.

There are many reasons why children don't eat breakfast. Some children can't or won't eat in the mornings, some children have very long bus rides, other children come from busy households and some children just do not have food at home. Whatever the reason a child may need breakfast, Kids Eat Smart Foundation provides nutritious food in a comfortable and friendly environment.

Kids Eat Smart Foundation Newfoundland and Labrador is a registered charity. The hallmark of KES Clubs is the universal approach. Every child is welcome to participate in a KES Club regardless of socio-economic status. There is no charge to families for children to participate. Children just show up and enjoy breakfast.

We have heard some remarkable stories of success from educators over the years regarding their observations of children who have participated in the Kids Eat Smart program. One of the most memorable is a junior high teacher who shares her story. She said there was a boy in grade 7 who never came to school; he was failing every course. They started a KES Club at this particular school and in a very short time the boy came to school every day. He successfully completed grades 7, 8 and 9 at that school and went on to high school.

As this school year comes to an end we want to say thanks to you, teachers, principals and school administrators who take time to ensure the success of your KES Club. We look forward to working with all of you in the new school year. For more information or if you are interested in starting a KES Club in your school please contact the Kids Eat Smart Foundation at 722-1996, 1-877-722-1996 or info@kidseatsmart.ca.

Sonya Smith is Director of Communications & Fund Development with the Kids Eat Smart Foundation.



NLTA President James Dinn (back row, second from left) joins students and staff at Macdonald Drive Elementary in St. John's during their KES Club Launch held this past January.



Violence in the Workplace Is it an OHS Issue?

by STEFANIE TUFF

Pursuant to section 4 of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* (OHSA), employers in Newfoundland and Labrador must, within reasonably practical limits, provide a work environment that ensures the health and safety of its employees. No law or policy can eliminate all risk in any workplace; however, schools and school districts should have clear expectations and effective protocols in place for preventing and managing unsafe behaviour that may put employees and students at risk. Teachers and administrators should be aware of these procedures and policies and apply them consistently. In the school setting, this means that, with respect to students, parents/guardians or other individuals who are physically aggressive/violent, school districts have a legal responsibility to ensure that the proper preventive measures, supports and training are in place to enable teachers to work without unreasonable threat to their own safety. What is necessary to ensure employee safety is case specific and depends on the nature of the situation.

The *Occupational Health and Safety Regulations, 2012* (Regulations) specifically address the issue of violence in the workplace as a health and safety concern. Section 22 of the Regulations defines violence as “the attempted or actual exercise by a person, other than a worker, of physical force to cause injury to a worker, and includes threatening statements or behaviour which gives a worker reason to believe that he or she is at a risk of injury.” Where there is risk of violence, or the potential is known to exist, the school district must perform a risk assessment and establish procedures, policies and work environment arrangements to eliminate the risk to workers from violence. Where elimination of the risk to workers is not possible, the employer must establish procedures, policies and work environment arrangements to minimize the risk to workers. As well, the school district has an obligation to inform teachers and other employees who may be exposed to the risk of violence in the workplace of the following:

- the nature of the risk;

- the precautions that may be taken; and,
- information related to the risk from persons who have a history of violent behaviour and whom employees are likely to encounter in the course of their work.

Under the OHSA, teachers have the right to work in an environment that is as safe as is reasonably practicable. If a teacher believes that his/her workplace is unsafe, and if the concerns have not been adequately addressed by the principal/immediate supervisor, then a report can be made to the workplace Occupational Health and Safety Committee. The employer must respond in writing within 30 days following receipt of a recommendation from an OHS Committee. As well, if a teacher has reasonable grounds to believe that specific work circumstances are dangerous to his/her health and safety and has brought this to the attention of his/her principal, that teacher has the right, pursuant to the OHSA and the Regulations, to refuse unsafe work until remedial action has been taken. Whenever possible, it is recommended that any teacher who feels their situation may warrant this type of response should contact the NLTA for advice and assistance before exercising the right of refusal under the OHSA.

An Occupational Health and Safety Officer may also become involved in addressing workplace safety matters when an employee concern has not been satisfactorily remedied by his/her supervisor or as part of a right to refuse investigation. But what is the role of an OHS Officer and what can he or she do? An OHS Officer enforces the OHSA and Regulations to ensure that workplaces in the province are safe for workers and in compliance with the legislation. In carrying out their duties, OHS Officers have certain powers. For example, OHS Officers can:

- enter and inspect a workplace, at any reasonable hour;
- require the production of, examine and make copies of relevant documents, records, plans, etc.;
- make examinations and conduct investigations, including speaking with witnesses;

- take pictures, recordings, and/or samples and conduct tests;
- issue orders that: require an unsafe working condition to be remedied within a specified period of time; or, stop work immediately until the risk to workers' health and safety is addressed.

Orders are issued to enforce compliance with the OHS and Regulations. An order cannot be rescinded unless the OHS Officer is satisfied that the situation in question has been remedied so as not to pose a threat to the health and safety of workers.

With respect to health and safety concerns arising from the violent behaviour of a student, following an appropriate risk assessment, various options may be identified for establishing procedures, policies and work environment arrangements that minimize the risk to workers, which may include (but are not limited to):

- the provision of training or re-training for appropriate staff regarding proper and safe de-escalation and restraint techniques;
- development and implementation of a policy for a panic/emergency alert system or protocol;
- appropriate staff using and carrying two-way radios for calls for assistance;
- developing and implementing a violence prevention plan in relation to any risks of violence identified in the risk assessment for teachers who are required to work alone with students with reported violent behavioural issues.

The age and cognitive ability of the student(s) in question will have an impact on the type of options that are appropriate in any situation. As well, it may be necessary to consider different approaches when the risk of violence comes from the behaviour of a parent/guardian as opposed to a student.

Teachers who have questions or require assistance with concerns regarding workplace health and safety, including issues related to violence in the workplace, should contact an Administrative Office in Programs and Services at the NLTA.

Stefanie Tuff is an Administrative Officer with Programs and Services at the NLTA.

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lfitzpatrick@letstalkscience.ca

Mark Your Calendars!

Monday, August 3, 2015

9:00 am – 3:00 pm

NLESD Conference Centre,
40 Strawberry Marsh Road, St. John's, NL

Wednesday, August 5, 2015

9:00 am – 3:00 pm

Nova Central School District, Central Regional Office
203 Elizabeth Drive, Gander, NL

Wednesday, August 19, 2015

NLESD - S.D. Cook Building
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In It Together The Collegial Model and the Code of Ethics

by MIRIAM SHEPPARD

The Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association policy embraces a collegial model of educational leadership. The collegial model espouses the following basic principles of educational leadership:

1. Educational administration exists to promote the achievement of educational goals.
2. The educational function is not divisible along lines which can be clearly ascribed to "management" or "labour".
3. All teachers have a responsibility to be participants in the administrative process. (This does not mean, however, that teachers can or should be delegated administrative duties.)
4. The administrator's role is that of an educational leader among teachers.
5. A better educational climate is to be found where members of the Association enjoy high morale, where they work together enthusiastically, where the administrator is a professional co-worker on a professional team.

Association policy recognizes that all teachers, regardless of professional role, shall be members of the same professional association and, hence, members of the same bargaining unit. The Association also recognizes that administrators, in their role as leaders, are often assigned managerial responsibilities.

Notwithstanding this, all teachers can operate most effectively as colleagues within the ranks of one professional teachers' association.

Sometimes, however, administrators may feel conflicted when carrying out their assigned managerial responsibilities. Investigating teacher concerns, the teacher evaluation/peer review process, ethical issues/conflict, and job actions/labour relations might provide opportunities to reflect on how NLTA membership and administrative responsibilities interact. The Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association Code of Ethics is an important factor in and complement to the collegial model, and can be of some assistance in such situations.

The Code of Ethics applies to all members of the Association: teachers, substitute/replacement teachers, principals, vice-principals, department heads, program specialists, guidance counsellors, itinerant teachers, speech language pathologists and educational psychologists. It serves as a guide to what is considered acceptable professional practice for NLTA members. When navigating complex situations, administrators should consider the underlying principle of the Code of Ethics, which is that members of the Association do not take actions that are detrimental to colleagues, the profession or the Association. This does not mean that teachers or



NLTA Scholarships

To obtain an application form visit the NLTA website at www.nlta.nl.ca and click "Forms" or contact the NLTA at:

Tel: 726-3223 or toll free at 1-800-563-3599
or mail@nlta.nl.ca

Application Deadline: July 31, 2015

administrators are prevented from bringing forward concerns. It simply means that concerns must be addressed in such a way that they respect the roles and responsibilities inherent in different positions, as well as the individual(s) involved. For example, a principal with concerns regarding a teacher's performance in the classroom would first present those concerns to the teacher in question prior to making any report to the school district office. This expectation exists regardless of whether the teacher is on formal evaluation or not. If, after informing a teacher of his/her concerns and attempting to resolve the issues at the school level by clarifying expectations and offering appropriate supports, the administrator believes it is necessary to forward the concerns to the School District, he/she does so only after making the teacher aware that this is being done. If concerns are submitted in writing, the teacher must first have the opportunity to review the report and include their own comments if they wish.

It is also important to note that the Code requires a teacher who is in an administrative or supervisory position to make an honest and determined effort to help and counsel another teacher who is having serious performance problems or difficulties. Similarly, any teacher with concerns regarding the conduct of a colleague, including administrators, would first present the concerns to the teacher in question. Teachers who are experiencing difficulty in resolving conflict or other difficult situations can access support through the Association's professional relations process, keeping in mind that NLTA members should make every effort to resolve professional relations disputes at the local level, carefully following the NLTA Code of Ethics. In a labour relations dispute, it is important to keep in mind the Code provision that cautions teachers not to "take any individual or collective action which is prejudicial to the Association, to other members of the Association, or to the profession generally".

Teachers who have questions regarding these and other matters are encouraged to contact an NLTA Programs and Services Administrative Officer for advice.

Miriam Sheppard is an Administrative Officer with Programs and Services at the NLTA.

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Pre-Retirement Seminars 2015

Teachers within two years of retirement eligibility should register for one of the NLTA's five Pre-Retirement Seminars scheduled to be held in the fall of 2015 in Corner Brook, Grand Falls-Windsor, and three in St. John's. These seminars are held in accordance with Association policy as part of its overall program of pre-retirement counselling. Clause 18.12 of the Provincial Collective Agreement and Clause 29.12 of the Labrador West Collective Agreement provide two days paid leave to attend these seminars.

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

Things You Should Know About Attending

- Potential participants must register with the NLTA for a particular seminar and apply to their Board office for leave.
- Only those teachers eligible to retire during or before June 2018 will be eligible to attend.
- Registration should be received at the NLTA Office at least four weeks in advance to ensure approval of attendance.
- The Association reserves the right to refuse acceptance of registration at any particular seminar if the registration forms have not been received at the NLTA office in accordance with Association policy.
- It is the responsibility of the individual participant to make arrangements and pay for hotel accommodations, should any be required. Please reference that you are attending an NLTA function and the hotel should provide a reduced rate which is available to the NLTA.
- Travel expenses shall be reimbursed in accordance with the following provisions:
 - i) participants shall be reimbursed the lesser of travel by private vehicle or public transportation to the seminar closest to the place of residence. In the event that a teacher requests and is accepted to attend a seminar other than the closest seminar, the participant shall only be reimbursed the amount applicable for travel to the closest seminar.
 - ii) payment for private vehicle shall be at the rate which is 15% of the average cost of self-serve regular gasoline as determined on the first day of each fiscal quarter for the return trip from residence to seminar site.
 - iii) travel via public conveyance shall be reimbursed for ferry, taxi, or economy airfare; in the case of airfare, the lesser of excursion (seat sale) or 80 percent of economy airfare will be paid, where excursion (seat sale) fares can be arranged. Receipts shall be required for all reimbursement.
 - iv) no expenses will be paid to participants living or teaching in the community where the seminar is held.
 - v) a partner is welcome to accompany the participating teacher to the pre-retirement seminar, but no expenses will be covered.
- All other expenses, such as meals, accommodation and child care, are the responsibility of the participating teacher.
- Expenses will be provided for one pre-retirement seminar only and a teacher participant shall be permitted to attend one seminar only. (Notwithstanding this, a teacher may attend a second seminar as a partner.)
- Teachers must attend the seminar location closest to their place of residence, except in cases where the mode, cost or availability of transportation necessitates otherwise.
- Directors, Assistant Directors, Senior Education Officers and partners, are welcome to attend one pre-retirement seminar, but no expenses will be paid in accordance with this policy.

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

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

2015 PRE-RETIREMENT SEMINAR

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

Name

Mailing Address

Postal Code

Home Telephone

Social Insurance Number*

School Name

School Telephone

Email

*** By providing your SIN you are authorizing the NLTA to request your pension information from the NL Department of Finance. This information will be used for NLTA internal purposes only.**

Please check which session you will be attending:

☐ **Oct. 22-23** – Mt. Peyton Hotel, Grand Falls-Windsor

☐ **Oct. 29-30** – Hampton Inn & Suites, St. John's

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

☐ **Nov. 19-20** – Hampton Inn & Suites, St. John's

☐ **Dec. 3-4** – Holiday Inn, St. John's

Will your partner be attending? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Name of partner (if attending)

Earliest eligibility date for pension

Have you attended a previous pre-retirement seminar?

☐ Yes ☐ No

- Note:**
- Teachers within two years of retirement (on or before June 2018) are eligible to attend.
 - All participants must pre-register.
 - You will receive confirmation prior to seminar.
 - Travel costs will be paid according to policy and only to the nearest seminar.
 - Teachers are advised to bring a calculator.

Please submit registration form to:

Melanie Jaster

Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association

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

Fax: 709-726-4302; 1-877-711-6582 (toll free)

or submit online at www.nlta.nl.ca. Go to Forms and click "P".

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

FOR NLTA OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received	Confirmation Sent	Information Package Sent



School Administrators' Council Distinguished School Administrator of the Year Award Winner 2014-15

Each year the School Administrators' Council (SAC) of the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association recognizes one of its school administrators with the Distinguished School Administrator of the Year Award. This prestigious award is decided through a rather rigorous application process with applicants being identified in all ten provincial SAC Regions. The SAC Distinguished School Administrator of the Year Award Winner receives a cash award of \$500, a personal plaque and their name engraved on a perpetual plaque which hangs in the recipient's school for a year. The recipient is honoured at the annual SAC Conference. In addition, the winner of the award becomes the SAC provincial nominee for the Canadian Association of Principals' Distinguished Principal of the Year Award.

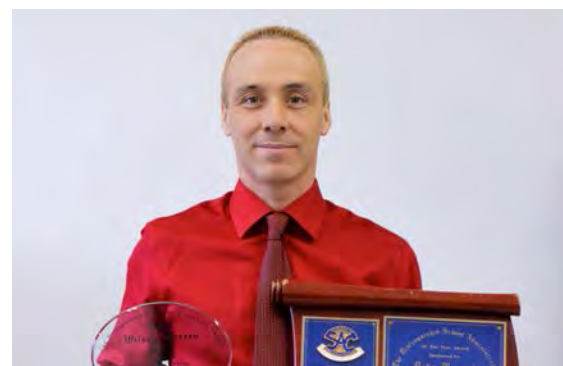
The 2014-15 recipient of the SAC Distinguished School Administrator of the Year Award is **Dr. Wilson Warren**. Wilson is a Teaching Principal at All Saints All-Grade School in Grey River. His nomination form stated the following background information.

Wilson left home at a very young age to pursue his dream of becoming a Physical Education Teacher. He attended Dalhousie University on a student loan and a part-time job. After receiving his B.P.E. degree he left Canada for a year and taught in Korea. Upon his return, he taught for two years at South Indian Lake, Manitoba. When the job of Principal was posted for All Saints All-Grade School, Wilson applied and was successful. In the subsequent years, Wilson completed his Masters and Doctorate degrees at the University of Calgary. He is the youngest son in a large family with brothers and sisters old enough to be his parents. He was only in his thirties when his Dad died at age 83. His Dad always referred to Wilson as the "School Master".

Wilson believes that the students of his small rural school have the same potential for success as students in any other school. His personality allows his students to approach him and to express any concerns that they may have. He is their friend when the

need exists. However, the students have total respect for him as their Teaching Principal. He is totally comfortable interacting with his students. On Sports Day, for instance, he does all the activities with his students. On recycling days he rolls up his sleeves, tucks in his tie, and works side-by-side with the students who are handling the recyclables.

The tasks can be overwhelming in a small multi-grade school. Yet, Wilson ensures that each child's needs are met. He takes tremendous pride in his heritage and he is an inspiration to all who doubt that anything is 'possible'.



The photo above shows the 2014-15 SAC Distinguished School Administrator of the Year Award recipient, Dr. Wilson Warren, holding the personal plaque and the perpetual plaque. The award was presented at the SAC 2015 Conference by George Tucker, Administrative Officer, Programs and Services, with the NLTA, on behalf of the sponsor, Ruby Manuel, a Realtor with EXIT Realty on the Rock. Unfortunately Ruby could not attend the Awards Luncheon due to a work commitment.

If you are interested in learning more about the SAC Distinguished School Administrator of the Year Award or if you would like to nominate a school administrator colleague for the 2015-16 award, please contact George Tucker, Administrative Officer, Programs and Services with the NLTA at gtucker@nlta.nl.ca.

Teacher Recognized for Contribution to Oil & Gas Industry

Do you remember that one special educator who inspired you to pursue your dream? For many of his students, **Clarence Button** of O'Donel High School in Mount Pearl is that teacher. For the past two decades, Clarence has been opening students' eyes to the variety of careers available to them, especially in the local oil & gas industry. The Petroleum Industry Human Resources Committee (PIHRC), in partnership with Provincial Oil & Gas Week, recently awarded Clarence with the "Inspiring Young Minds" Educator's Award.

The award recognizes a teacher who has had a direct and positive influence on young people to pursue post-secondary education related to a career in the oil & gas industry and exhibited exceptional educational talent through effective instructional practices and student learning results.

"The value of post-secondary education and the importance of learning and development are central to the 'people power' of the oil & gas industry," said Bob Cadigan, co-chair of PIHRC. "Partnerships with our educators help the industry obtain the people it needs to thrive. Educators are an instrumental part of this value chain and we are pleased to recognize their role in the industry. I offer my sincere congratulations to Mr. Button and thank him for his contribution to the lives of students in the province and to the local industry."

Darrin Pike, CEO/Director of Education for the NL English School District, views the award as an excellent opportunity for schools. "We have many teachers in our district who play important roles in encouraging, educating and shaping the lives of students and this award is providing an avenue for them to be recognized. We all know that the oil and gas industry is an important one for our province and teachers such as Mr. Button, who go above and beyond and help our students prepare for a career in the sector, are leading the way in education and career awareness. I congratulate and thank Mr. Button, along with his colleagues, for their continued efforts."

The "Inspiring Young Minds" Educator's Award was presented to Clarence at the Noia Industry

Achievement Awards Gala at the Sheraton Hotel on February 25, alongside the Outstanding Contribution and Rising Star Awards. The prize includes a commemorative plaque, two tickets to the gala and \$2,000, split 50/50 between the individual educator and the school. The educator's portion is to be used to further their personal and professional development as an educator. The school's portion is to be used towards educational resource material or technology resources of their choice. Funding for this award was made available by the Newfoundland and Labrador Oil & Gas Week Steering Committee.

Since 2007, one of PIHRC's main focuses has been providing information about the Newfoundland and Labrador oil & gas industry to high school students and their influencers. The goal has been to stimulate interest in young Newfoundlanders and Labradorians in pursuing post-secondary education and training which could lead to eventual employment in the industry. In addition to the Educators' Forums, PIHRC also makes contact with students through its Ambassador Program, attending Career Fairs, providing teaching resources for Career Development Teachers, and providing information on its website, www.oilandgascareerinfo.ca.

(Information for this article was provided by Lindsey Hewitt, Project Manager with the Petroleum Industry Human Resources Committee.)



Clarence Button accepts his "Inspiring Young Minds" Educator's Award at the Noia Industry Achievement Awards Gala on February 25, 2015.



Responding to High Conflict Personalities – Revisited

by JUDY BERANGER

In an article which appeared in the September 2014 edition of *The Bulletin* I outlined the patterns of behaviour that are known to be typical responses exhibited by people with High Conflict Personalities (HCP) along with strategies for addressing them. In response to the positive feedback and requests for more on the subject I decided to take a deeper look at this relevant topic which struck a chord with many of our teachers and administrators.

First of all, it is important to acknowledge that anyone can exhibit certain High Conflict Personality (HCP) traits at particular periods in time but for them, these behaviours are fleeting and not typical. Examples of high conflict behaviours include being rigid, being negative, uncompromising, blaming others, unable to reflect on behaviour, lacking empathy, and avoiding responsibility. Individuals with good mental health will have the ability to choose how they react and will seek strategies that are respectful and promote a win/win outcome. In any conflict we have the opportunity to become a better person by committing to constructive and respectful responses or we can choose the opposite and become stuck in a repetitive, non-productive dance. How do you choose to react when you are in conflict? The more you get to know yourself the more you will be able to develop conflict prevention and conflict resolution strategies that can work for you. The strategies used for HCP types can also be quite helpful for other types of conflict.

In *The Crossroads of Conflict*, Ken Cloke shares his beliefs about how conflict can lead us to crossroads in our lives. One path leads to anger, bitterness and a focus on unresolved past incidents. All too often this results in adversarial relationships and impasse. As you might expect, this is the default path chosen by people with High Conflict Personalities. The crossroads offers a second path which leads to empathy, honesty, respect and a focus on the future, thus promoting improved communications and collaboration. Cloke further suggests a third, often hidden path, that branches off from the second and its focus is on the here and now. It sparks the possibility for

rich growth of compassion and integrity, drawing us into a heightened awareness of the present, thereby encouraging deep learning, profound ideas and openhearted relationships. He describes this path as one of transformation of wisdom, spirit and heart.

Throughout the High Conflict literature, notably in Bill Eddy's work, we see that focusing on our part of the communication or interactions – how we choose to respond – can greatly influence how the other person reacts. That is, of course, unless an unaddressed high conflict personality (HCP) is present. Eddy has coined a name for describing the language of people with a high conflict personality. He calls it “blamespeak”. Blamespeak is defined as a disrespectful way of interacting and talking with or about others that is blaming, and primarily intended to divert attention away from the Blamespeaker. It is emotionally intense and out of proportion to the issues. The blamespeaker feels no responsibility for the problem or the solution and ignores all of the good a person has done and all the bad that s/he has done. Eddy says the HCP has no sense of shame, embarrassment or boundaries. Unfortunately, the blamespeak often sounds believable to those who are not informed about the situation. The goal of the healthy person is not to be drawn in to the blamespeak game, even though it is so easy to be caught up in the blaming. Doing so places the healthy person at risk of being labelled as a HCP type as well!

According to Bill Eddy, when people are in HCP mode it is unrealistic to expect them to be reasonable. It would be helpful to reflect on why it is that we work so hard at trying to make them see our point of view. For the most part HCPs remain quite defensive in conflict situations and unconsciously seek negative advocates to justify their misperceptions and misbehavior and to assist them in blaming others. Eddy says that HCPs are often too disorganized and emotionally distraught to maintain a high conflict dispute on their own, but can be skilled at drawing others in with their intense emotions and false claims.

Brain Research and High Conflict

There is considerable brain research reported by Doidge, Goldberg, Seigel, Schore and others that can explain our choices when addressing conflict in terms of the right and left hemispheres of our brain. The left brain is the logical, problem solving centre. For potential conflict situations it can generate flexible and collaborative thinking, moving participants toward problem solving. The right brain is the more reactionary side, fast and defensive paced, with all or nothing thinking that is more crisis oriented. People with HCP lack the ability to flow between these two hemispheres. We all have the tendency to move to the fast, defensive, reactionary mode when threatened, while people who are high conflict (HC) tend to be there most of the time. The secret is in creating a flow that is mindful of the importance of both sides of the brain.

What to do?

Napoleon Hill once said that action is the real measure of intelligence. We have to bring our thoughts forward into action and focus attention on moving toward problem solving and solution-based approaches. Throughout Bill Eddy's literature he suggests the importance of a BIFF response. BIFF is an acronym for brief, informative, friendly and firm. It is important that we respond as quickly as is reasonable and possible. We need to be:

- Brief – to ensure fewer opportunities to trigger defensiveness
- Informative – giving neutral information that is solution focused
- Friendly – though difficult it may be, it is important to be as friendly as is reasonable even if we have to act the part. This assists in calming the other person and increases the likelihood of shifting to problem solving.
- Firm – this gives closure, maintains respect and highlights that you are finished with the conversation.

If we simply stop the fighting but fail to settle the issues, most of the conflict will remain. If we settle the issues but do not resolve the underlying reasons that gave rise to them, a large portion of the conflict will disappear. Anything lying beneath the surface can reappear unexpectedly and trigger future conflicts. If BIFF responses are used consistently and often, change can happen on both sides.

Mannie and Murtha provide a good example of this. They are divorced and have a shared parenting plan. Murtha is still quite angry and possessive of the children along with the fact that it seems she has a HCP. Mannie is trying his best to disengage from con-

flict situations. Having asked Murtha to exchange a few parenting hours with her so their children could attend his staff family party the following email took place.

Murtha's email: Mannie, I can't believe you are so selfish to ask to have the children on my time, not to mention taking them to your staff party with alcohol likely present. If this is just a ploy to get at me and for you to parade the kids around like you are the best father in the world it won't work. If they only knew!

Mannie replies with a BIFF response: Murtha, thank you for responding to my request to take the children to my staff party. All the staff with children are invited to bring them along and there will be no booze present. There will be lots of activities I know our children would enjoy. However, since you don't agree I will respect your wishes and withdraw my request as I realize it is during your time with the children.

Mannie was brief, informative, friendly and firm. He chose to disengage from what could have turned out to be a very volatile situation. He did not give advice, admonish or apologize as it could be easily misinterpreted in high conflict situations. The reality is in situations like this the arguing could have gone on for quite some time with no hope of resolution.

An ongoing challenge for those living or working with high conflict personalities is the ever present fear that it is only a matter of time before something negative arises. In order to practice and be in the habit of giving BIFF responses it is important to ensure you address any ongoing fears. Talking with someone wise and trustworthy, checking in with EAP, and writing things down in a journal can be very beneficial. Name what it is you fear, describe it in detail, refocus on what is positive about it, identify a worse fear and as Ken Cloke says, "reframe it as courage."

Leo Tolstoy once said, "Everybody thinks of changing humanity and nobody thinks of changing himself." A person with a High Conflict Personality is not likely to change but our response to the person can change. Developing skills that reduce our fears and strengthen our resolve will increase our energy and move us towards becoming more adept at being brief, informative, friendly and firm.

Judy Beranger is a Wellness and Employee Assistance Coordinator with the EAP for Teachers. For confidential assistance contact Judy (ext. 265) or Gail Carroll (ext. 242).



STEM Education: a K-12 Responsibility

by CRAIG WHITE

In its most recent *Spotlight on Science Learning* report, Let's Talk Science examined youth attitudes toward science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) when considering their options after high school. The national report revealed that youth are not necessarily drawn to specific jobs but rather to a set of interests and values. Most young people want careers that will allow them to make a contribution to society (84%), help people (79%), make decisions (75%), and solve problems (70%). A significant number indicated interest in owning their own business (48%) or becoming an entrepreneur (39%).

The *Spotlight* study also indicated that 89% of youth are primarily driven by their likes and interests when planning for the future. Studies by Statistics Canada indicate that youth do think about careers early in life and are more likely to make permanent "no" decisions early and more "yes" decisions in later adolescence and early adulthood. This suggests that students need to be given broad exposure to the types of careers available and how these align with their likes and interests. It further suggests that educators need to help students relate the subjects they are doing to career options that exist now or which may exist in the future.

STEM skills in high demand for future workforce

In the next 10-15 years, an estimated 6.5 million jobs will be created, many of which will require STEM skills. Today's students will need preparation for these future careers, and therefore it is important that youth are made aware of the links that exist between the subjects they're studying in school and their desired futures. These links may be to careers that are clearly STEM-based (e.g., medicine, research, engineering, technologists), to those that may not be as clearly STEM-related (e.g., managerial, financial, skilled trades), or to career types that may not yet exist. Regardless of their career aspirations, students armed with a strong STEM background will find themselves highly employable.

Developing STEM resources a challenge

A high-quality STEM background is not something that can be developed in a single course or collection of courses, nor can it be developed at a specific grade level. It is best developed over a long period of time, during a student's entire K to 12 school experience. Many teachers may feel ill prepared to offer such an experience to their students, including teachers with strong STEM backgrounds. It can certainly be a challenge to find or develop high-interest, high-engagement STEM resources and activities to both stimulate students' interest and increase their motivation to engage with the subject content.

This scenario has the potential to add significantly to a teacher's work and stress load. Let's Talk Science aims to assist school administrators and educators by offering free programs and resources tailored to students' STEM learning needs. An award-winning, national, charitable organization focused on education and outreach to support youth development, Let's Talk Science operates in St. John's, NL, with staff and volunteers coordinating and delivering engaging, province-wide STEM programs and events, from school visits to professional learning workshops.

K-12 and grade level specific STEM programs

Among the programs Let's Talk Science offers free to educators and students, **Let's Talk Science Outreach** provides motivating, high interest activities that will supplement your own in-class activities. Operating from September through June from over 40 post-secondary sites across Canada, the Outreach program sees enthusiastic volunteers visiting classrooms to engage students with curriculum-aligned STEM activities. Memorial University operates two on-campus Outreach sites: one in St. John's and one at Grenfell Campus in Corner Brook. Interested educators are encouraged to make requests for classroom visits early, and should note that availability and grade expertise vary from site to site.

Tomatosphere™ is a unique classroom project that uses the excitement of space exploration as a context for teaching K-12 students the skills and processes of science experimentation and inquiry. Available in both French and English, Tomatosphere™ provides students with an opportunity to engage in an authentic, real-world STEM research. Registered classes receive seeds that have been exposed to space or space-like conditions along with unexposed seeds. Once planted and monitored, the data collected on seed germination and growth rates is forwarded to NASA via the Canadian Space Agency, helping inform scientists on issues related to the viability of growing food in space.

Preschool to grade 3 educators can look to **IdeaPark**, a dynamic, online place that offers a suite of planning tools, STEM resources and professional learning opportunities. IdeaPark resources are designed to support the development of young children's language, problem solving, critical thinking, numeracy and teamwork skills. IdeaPark is currently available in English, with French resources soon to follow.

For students in grades 6 to 8 who are achieving at (or above) grade level, the **Let's Talk Science Challenge** provides an opportunity for enrichment, problem solving, teamwork skill development and more. Each spring, this free, team-based, competitive enrichment event takes place at over 20 Let's Talk Science Outreach locations across Canada, including Memorial University's St. John's and Grenfell campuses. Featuring an exciting question and answer competition, as well as an interactive, hands-on design challenge, this event inspires students to engage in STEM learning beyond their curriculum.

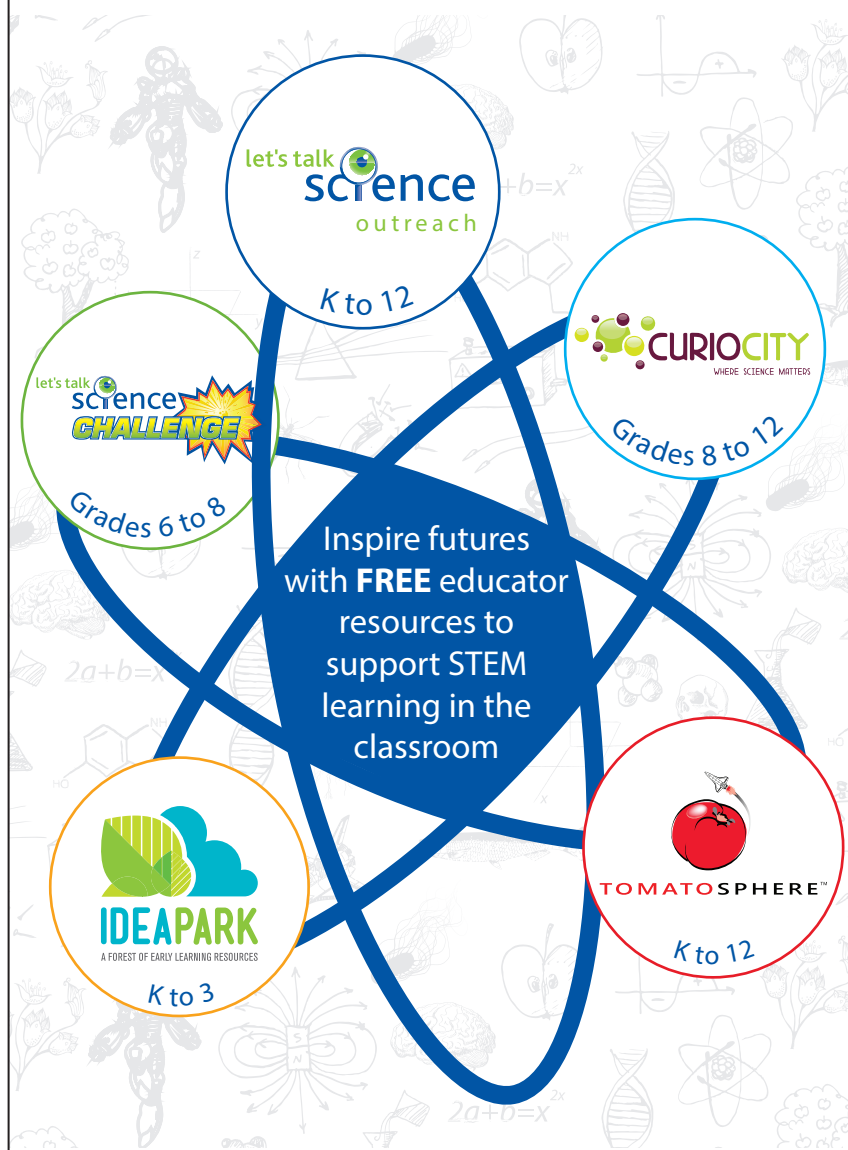
CurioCity is a web-based program that supports youth development and learning through engaging and relevant articles, videos, career profiles, action projects and more. Numerous articles and videos are aligned to topics in various provincial grade 7 to 12 science curricula. A bilingual program, CurioCity also provides free educator resources and learning strategies to engage students in STEM learning.

Newfoundland and Labrador educators are invited to learn more about these available programs and to view the full *Spotlight on Science Learning* report online at www.letstalkscience.ca.

Craig White is a retired District and Department of Education Program Specialist for science. He is currently a Grade 7-12 Education Consultant for Let's Talk Science. Craig can be reached at cwhite@letstalkscience.ca.

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For more details about Let's Talk Science program offerings in Newfoundland and Labrador, contact: **709.754.4965**

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Moving Beyond Electronic Consumption

Student Creation in the Digital Age

by DAVID GILL & LAURA MATCHIM

“Digital technologies are different. They are not just objects, but systems embedded with purpose. They act with intention. If we don’t know how they work, we won’t even know what they want. The less involved and aware we are of the way our technologies are programmed and program themselves, the more narrow our choices will become; the less we will be able to envision alternatives to the pathways described by our programs; and the more our lives and experiences will be dictated by their biases” (Rushkoff, 2010, p. 148-149).

The quote above is taken from Douglas Rushkoff’s 2010 book *Program or be programmed* and it sums up the essence of his argument quite nicely. His idea is that if we do not actively engage in the construction and deconstruction of our technological world then we are at a disadvantage. More and more, technology plays a large part in our lives and the less we know about the mechanics of the tools and services we use on a daily basis, the more vulnerable we are to the whims of their creators. Creation is control. Creation is power. And through the responsible use of technology we can help our students be more than content consumers – they can take control of their own digital existence.

Within the K-12 education community, a lot of time is spent on discovering the next best thing – the latest gadget or piece of software that will change education forever. Unfortunately, because of the time lost in this pursuit, a lot of the technology that is already available in school and home is left underutilized and dismissed out of turn. If we are constantly looking for the next best thing we run the risk of developing only a superficial understanding of technology and its potential role in supporting authentic and substantial learning experiences for our students. We have to move our students beyond the passive consumption of electronic media and offer them opportunities to create and share their work in a meaningful and connected way. And by this we don’t mean relying on templates and other creative aids – which amount to the digital equivalents of colour-

ing or worksheets. We mean by helping our students to understand and apply some basic elements and principles of visual design, regardless of the technology they are using, we can get them closer to creating meaningful pieces of work that have real value.

Computer technology is rapidly evolving to be more powerful, compact, and mobile. Access to digital devices is rapidly integrating with our daily lives and modes of communication are almost instantaneous. Efficiency for communication is achieved through intuitive graphic design in interfaces – shapes, colour and lines that guide us how to operate each function. Without our being aware of it, visual arts plays an important role in how we interact with technology. Conversely, we need to use elements and principles of design to visually communicate with others. However, understanding how to design can be lost through the use of templates and pre-set tools in mobile applications and computer software that create shortcuts for users. Why consider making a poster or slideshow presentation from scratch when you can use professionally made, aesthetically pleasing templates that are already offered in software?

The issue that arises is an over-reliance on tools that already decide how a design project will appear with no innovative effort on the part of the creator. Without learning how elements and principles of design work together to visually communicate a concept, creators are unaware of why attributes of a template are successful. And when a template fails, they are unable to re-examine the fundamentals and effectively find ways to improve the blueprint. Instead, creators only learn how to design within a set of template boundaries that someone else has implemented. The opportunity to develop an intuitive design sense is lost, and this may lead to an unwillingness to experiment. In this way it becomes impossible to generate new ideas or approaches to visual communication.

Projects that include topics about elements and principles of design do not have to be exclusive to the Visual Arts curriculum. It is applicable to

many other subject areas but with a focus in digital creation, Technology Education courses can offer the opportunity to teach students how to effectively communicate with any kind of digital media. Whether it is animation, video production, document creation, web design or various types of image editing, fundamentals of design can help students become more aware of how they present information and images in their work.

In order to ensure a focus on specific learning outcomes, a simple approach is key to achieving a balance between technology and engagement. Technology integration projects make frequent use of digital images, but most of the time students are simply poaching the work of other photographers and designers. Most teachers will be unable to instruct students to a high level of proficiency in graphic art for typical classroom projects, but simple photography isn't foreign to most students with their near ubiquitous access to smartphones, digital cameras, and tablets. Engaging students through the use of tools they already know is a simple and powerful way to harness their creative spirit.

Pictures are powerful – they are filled with meaning, messages, and can evoke emotions in others. The proliferation of smartphone technology presents a great opportunity, not only to teach basic principles of photography, but to teach the responsible and appropriate use of these devices in a classroom setting. Developing a set of lessons that promotes the use of these devices in a positive way can be empowering. Moving beyond the idea of just point-and-shoot can have its own benefits as well. By teaching the simple ideas behind photographic composition, we can help our students think critically about their subjects and the relationships and connections to the work that has been assigned. Understanding a few other simple ideas about lighting and focus points can also help students to become more self-aware and critical of their own work. The cross-curricular potential of integrating photography is vast and the questions one simple picture can invoke can be a powerful teaching and learning tool. With these things in mind, it might be worth giving our students more opportunities to create their own art instead of poaching it.

Typography is a field of graphic design that influences readers toward a particular interpretation of text by the stylization and arrangement of words to promote a specific emphasis. Typography can allow readers to understand information efficiently by representing letters in an organised, consistent manner. This concept may seem fairly straightforward, but without awareness of basic design fundamentals, common mistakes can be observed, such as the inclusion

of too many clashing font styles that drown out information. This misuse of typography confuses an audience whose reading experience ought to be effortless. Successful typography motivates the reader to absorb the entire body of the text. Teaching how to structure and style text can show students that their work can be enticing and a pleasure for others to read.

Graphic designers have shown multiple ways that text can be appealing. For visually stimulating posters, websites, and advertisements, using text in conjunction with images can communicate ideas efficiently and concisely. In particular, many teachers use poster design projects that allow students to imbue their own meaning into course material. Now that schools have better access to computer technology, it is easier for students to experiment with their own digital creation. Students are able to explore their ideas either casually or in-depth, while the teacher has the choice between industry-standard desktop computer software such as GIMP or Adobe Photoshop, or more accessible and convenient mobile applications. Allowing students to create their own relationship between text and images with these projects can develop their intuitive design sense. It should be noted, however, that while mobile applications allow for shorter and less technically involved projects, desktop computer software affords students more control which can result in a robust, quality outcome for those who invest the time and care.

Technology is an ever-present reality in all of our lives and the more that we can know about and manipulate it, the greater control we can have over its influence. Our students are bombarded everyday with messages embedded in pictures and text. One way of empowering them is teaching how to deconstruct these mediums while developing the skills to create their own messages. This can be a challenge, but there are many people and organizations that are willing to help. TESIC is one such organization. TESIC's primary mandate is to offer professional development in the areas of technology integration and education and over the last several years it has revitalized a province-wide network of likeminded individuals. If you are interested in learning more about technology integration and how stuff works you may want to consider attending this year's Summer Institute of Technology Integration (SITI) at Memorial University. More information about the institute can be found at <http://siti.tesic.org>. We hope to see you there this summer with your digital device and imagination in tow.

David Gill is Vice-President of the Technology Education Special Interest Council. Laura Matchim is a substitute teacher with a specialization in Technology and Art.



Supporting Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder

by KENDRA LANE

As the end of another school year approaches we find ourselves reflecting on the successes and challenges of the year, while looking for ways to make next year even better. There are many resources available to guide educators in supporting their students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). In fact, some argue that the plethora of resources for behaviour and teaching strategies can seem overwhelming and create a secondary challenge of trying to navigate what may or may not work for particular students. Below I have listed some valuable resources that ASD professionals rely on for educating, supporting, and working with students on a daily basis.

Social Cognition, Communication & Skill-Building

The concept of Social Thinking® comes from the curriculum created by Michelle Garcia Winner. Many students with high-functioning autism and Asperger's Syndrome have difficulty understanding that other people have perspectives and thoughts that may be different from their own. The Social Thinking® curriculum doesn't teach social skills explicitly, rather it focuses on the thinking strategies that precede social communication and interaction, helping students better understand social complexities and build on their own social abilities.

Even the Social Thinking® product line can be overwhelming, which is why I highlight two resources to gain a better understanding of what Social Thinking® is and how you can use it to help your students: *Thinking About YOU Thinking About ME* and *Think Social!*.

Thinking About YOU Thinking About ME is a great introduction to learning more about social cognition and awareness. Winner's perspective-taking model incorporates Theory of Mind in a practical sense and includes specific lessons that can be adapted to suit a variety of settings. *Think Social!* is the complementary curriculum book to *Thinking About YOU Thinking About ME* and sequences through lessons that teach students about working and thinking in a group. *Think Social!* describes goal-oriented activities, appli-

cable from K-12, that encourage modification to meet a variety of student needs.

The *Talkabout* series by Alex Kelly is another great tool to have on hand for building the social capacity of students in groups. Based on developing self-awareness and an awareness of others, the *Talkabout* series provides quick reference lessons and activities that focus on self-awareness, body language, conversational and listening skills, and assertiveness.

Implementing Structure

The TEACCH® Autism Program, University of North Carolina, is world renowned for its Structured Teaching methodology. Any resources distributed by TEACCH® will help professionals understand the purpose of structure for students with ASD and just how valuable those levels of structure are to maximizing a student's ability to learn.

Most of us working with students with ASD have attempted to implement a "schedule" for our student(s). In rare cases, the first attempt worked and a student uses his/her schedule independently and with ease. In the majority of cases, however, creating a schedule is a trial and error process that sometimes leaves us wondering if the student will even benefit at all. This is where the fine details matter. The TEACCH® Autism Program's website (www.teacch.com) offers an online learning module called *Structured TEACCHing: Individual Schedules*. This online course (about one hour) breaks down the importance of an individualized schedule for students with ASD and details how to create a schedule to meet the exact needs of an individual student. Please do not underestimate the impact of an appropriate, independently-used schedule on students with ASD of any age and ability, in any educational environment.

Managing Anxiety

Many students with an ASD diagnosis experience debilitating anxiety, particularly in the school and community setting. The *Facing Your Fears* curriculum was created by Judy Reaven, Audrey Blakely-Smith,

Shana Nichols, and Susan Hepburn, specifically for addressing anxiety in individuals with ASD. The entire curriculum includes a student workbook, parent workbook, and facilitator's set which provides enough material to run group or individual sessions. *Facing Your Fears* uses memorable and age-appropriate material that can target specific worries or fears and reinforces the importance of practicing in social situations and generalizing concepts to a variety of settings.

You don't have to be a mental health practitioner to use this series in practice. The curriculum is a great tool to better understand how anxiety impacts those with autism and how you can assist these students in managing their anxiety and overcoming related obstacles.

Self-Regulation

As mentioned in my article in the March/April 2015 edition of *The Bulletin*, perhaps the most adaptable resource for teaching self-regulation skills to students with ASD is the Zones of Regulation® curriculum developed by Leah Kuypers. The Zones of Regulation® addresses underlying deficits in emotional and sensory regulation, executive functioning, and social cognition, to effectively teach students with ASD how to become more aware of their emotions and impulses. This awareness allows students to learn to regulate themselves more independently. The Zones curriculum is currently comprised of the resource manual, *The Zones of Regulation: A Curriculum Designed to Foster Self-Regulation and Emotional Control*, and the new release of *The Zones of Regulation App*, an interactive and mobile app for technology-based learning.

Join Autism Society, NL on Friday, November 13, 2015, when author Leah Kuypers hosts a one-day workshop in St. John's entitled *The Zones of Regulation®: A Concept to Foster Self-Regulation in Students who Struggle to Manage their Emotional and Sensory Needs*. Space is limited; please contact info@autism.nf.net for registration details.

Any resource designed to teach or support students with ASD has to have some level of flexibility. As we all know, every individual is unique and has a different combination of strengths, weaknesses, interests and abilities. For more information on any of these resources, or additional resources for supporting students with Autism Spectrum Disorder in the classroom, please contact Kendra Lane at Autism Society, NL.

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

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The Power of Giving

Building a New School in Uganda

by MARIE WOODFORD

The act of giving is a powerful gift. It is good for the mind, heart and soul. It is also good for our communities, our schools and for our students. My recent humanitarian mission to Uganda is a true example of the power of giving and how easy it is to be a world changer.

My two life passions have been combined. I am a teacher and I am also a humanitarian. I believe in the power of education. It allows us to open our minds, understand the world and lead us to our hopes and dreams. Education is a universal necessity and is the escape route from poverty. This year, with the help of many NLESD schools, a new school filled with supplies was built for 105 orphans in the small Ugandan town of Mpigi.

In 2007, I spent a semester teaching and facilitating in the slums of Mombasa, Kenya. It opened my eyes and I saw firsthand how the smallest acts of kindness can have a lasting impact. Years later, I am now a member of a small local charity, Jorja's Journeys. The team has spent years doing local charity work and also empowering African orphans through education and sustainability projects. We have five women on our team, as well as Jorja, a Grade 5 student from Goulds Elementary who has already travelled to Uganda on three occasions.

The idea of 'children helping children' was paramount in the construction of the new school in Uganda. There are so many benefits to this simple idea. Everybody wins. Young children in Uganda are now receiving a high quality education with new desks, chalkboards, and all the school supplies you can imagine. On the other end of the world in Newfoundland, our students have gained insight on the developing world, proved their compassion and empathy, made actions to help empower others, and in turn have felt how good it feels to give to others.

This year I am teaching at Crescent Collegiate in Blaketown. The generosity and kindness of the school community has touched my heart on so many occasions. Their interest and generosity to help the children of this orphanage came in so many ways. My Grade 9 classes participated in a wake-a-thon and filled a suitcase with school supplies, the Special Needs class held a coin collection, the Allied Youth group created 55 pillowcase dresses with the help of staff and parents, students wrote letters, a student painted educational posters for the new classrooms, the staff took up a collection, students were writing local businesses for donations, and I was (and still am) always answering questions from students.

Other teachers and students also accepted the challenge to help out students halfway across the world. Holy Trinity High in Torbay created over 80 dresses for this orphanage last year and this year the music program donated recorders. At Roncalli High in Avondale, the Senior Boys' Volleyball Team hosted a bake sale to support school construction and a group of Grade 7 girls took up a collection for textbooks. Holy Cross Elementary in Holyrood held a donation day to raise money for the new school. Students from Immaculate Conception in Colliers donated their time to sell balloon animals and cupcakes. Jorja's Grade 5 class from Goulds Elementary donated money to buy two goats to help out local widowed mothers. Also, pre-school students, from the Little People's Workshop in St. John's, held a 'LemonAID' stand to help support the orphanage.



Grade 9 students at Crescent Collegiate in Blaketown proudly display the school supply donations and letters for the new school in Uganda.

There was so much love and kindness from our children to help other children who are in need of so many things we take for granted.



Marie Woodford with some of the children at the orphanage. They love to have their picture taken.

The efforts proved worthwhile. In March, I travelled to this orphanage and saw the desperate need of the children first hand. It was an emotional journey as I traveled through Africa realizing how blessed I am to live in Newfoundland and Labrador. The everyday living conditions are so far from our realm of thinking. It makes you realize that “normal” is subjective. My everyday “normal” is living in one of the best countries in the world, surrounded by equality, human rights, and abundance. Their everyday “normal” is of poverty, corruption, inequality and survival. The children in the orphanage also have no parental love, guidance or support. Instead, they rely on each other. I was reminded of gratitude, appreciation and what happiness really means.

On my first morning in the orphanage I took a walk around the grounds. The children were in their classes. I walked around in awe as my eyes were opened to the reality of how many children of the world learn each day. To see children so eager to learn, but without a pencil and sitting on the ground, was heartwarming and heart wrenching at the same



Writing letters back to students at Crescent Collegiate – so happy to have new pencils, pens and paper!

time. Three of the classrooms, which were 10x10 shacks, had no floors, leaky walls and roof, and were very dusty. The cramped rooms had no desks, textbooks or posters on the wall. The teachers had no desk, chair, plan book or pens. There were definitely no computers, SmartBoards, or a library full of books. I knew that building them a new school would greatly enhance their daily life and future.

The orphans are fighters. They are beautiful little children who want to succeed. They laugh, play, sing, dance and they do it with a smile on their face. Their innocence and outlook on life is inspiring. However, I know for the children to be confident, independent, and empowered adults, they need to be educated. That's why this school, a highly effective learning environment, is so important. School is often considered a luxury and a privilege and is denied to many. Now, 105 children in a small town in Uganda have a chance, a chance to escape poverty. They have a school with desks for students and teachers, chalkboards, shelves for the new text books and reading books, containers filled with markers, pencil leads, crayons, glue, scissors and rulers. They also have maps, globes, posters and stickers. All the things a child would love.



The new school.

The students here in Newfoundland and Labrador have made a true difference in the lives of these deserving children. They have brightened their future, and in turn reflected on themselves. They have reflected on their own society, on the world, on their morals and ethics, as well as their values and concerns. They see that it is easy to give and be a world changer. They felt the true power of the gift of giving.

Marie Woodford is a teacher at Crescent Collegiate in Blaketown.



The Teacher, the Artist Inspired and Inspiring

by BEVERLEY PARK

So there I was driving down route 230, which should, I think, be mandatory for every citizen of the province. For one thing it would serve as the ultimate driving test; if you can drive that road you can probably competently drive anywhere. The hills are steep, the curves are like “S’s” in a very quirky font. That should not be a problem, except that the distractions of the ocean, the mountains, the tuckamore, the barrens, and the wildlife, make navigating the road a real chore. I am not cynical by nature but those NL tourism ads seem somewhat exaggerated – until you take a drive on one of our more rural routes like the route from Deer Lake northward.

I had just finished a workshop in Port Saunders. I had had the opportunity to work with many of those same teachers about a decade ago, and after our lunch break I showed some photos that I had taken at that time. We laughed as we saw ourselves. The hair was a little greyer, the shapes and sizes had changed for some of us. In fact, the very school that we had been in 9 or 10 years ago has been replaced by a brand new, modern, state-of-the-art building. Those changes were obvious – but as the day went on, it was what had not changed which became obvious to me. The commitment of the teachers, some who are months away from retirement, was palpable. At one point we engaged in a process of problem solving on case studies of students, analysing what they do, why they do it and how we respond. These were not generic textbook cases, but a discussion of their own students. One of the teachers remarked that it reminded him of a clinical/hospital situation where a group of professionals gather around one patient or “case” to bring their individual knowledge, experience and skill to bear toward finding a way to intervene and make the person better. He further commented that this was not a typical mode of operating and how unfortunate that is. It may occur exceptionally, for IPP meetings, but, in general, most teachers deal with individual students in their classroom environments in their own way. What a luxury to be able to draw upon the knowledge of peers!

I experienced in this school a true desire for collegiality and authentic demonstrations of collaboration – and a respect *for* and *from* everyone – the bus driver/caretakers, the teachers, the administration,

the student assistants. The only people missing from the “family photo” were the kids. If I had my time back I would have taken a day earlier to be there with them to see those interactions. Even as we discussed how children can sometimes get on that one nerve we have left; how they sometimes challenge us with their “why” questions or how they sometimes displayed unacceptable behaviours, these teachers never once ever spoke with malice or to seek retribution. Each and every single teacher spoke with caring and a genuine desire to help students become their “best” selves. As part of my presentation I projected a couple of slides which I forecasted as being very challenging: 1) “It is when students are the most unlovable that they need love the most.” and 2) “Every student has the potential for choosing appropriate behaviour and becoming a more responsible citizen of the school community regardless of background, past performance or current level of functioning”. It’s up to us to provide the opportunity. Whereas these slides often arouse debate or at the very least reticent acceptance, these teachers were immediately on board...they just wanted to figure out how!

With a Bulletin deadline looming and a blank page (and about 5 articles in progress that I could not seem to finish) I knew I had to write about the teachers I worked with today. They are one of any number of staffs in this province who continue to inspire me. But inspiring me is quite secondary to the fact that what they did 10 years ago, what they did today and what they will do tomorrow, and for some ten years’ time – which is to care deeply for their students – they will continue to do. Beyond inspiring others, they continue to be inspired.

As I drove down the highway at some point I listened to an interview with Christopher Pratt who is opening a new exhibit at The Rooms. In his 80th year Mr. Pratt commented that he has more on his list of things he wishes to do than on his list of things done. He still has a passion for his art that has not wavered. I believe teaching is an art...but our tableaux are not hanging on walls, they are living and walking and working among us. They are the students we have taught. It is not only wonderful, it is imperative that we maintain our passion for our art. And whether as an artist you are in your first or tenth or thirtieth year; whether your hair has changed colour, may you still see the potential beauty in the palette of pupils in front of you each day.

With great thanks to the teachers and support staff at French Shore Academy.

Beverley Park is Senior Administrative Officer in Programs and Services at the NLTA.

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TESIC's SITI@MUN 2015

St. John's Campus, Faculty of Education, Memorial University

July 30 (evening) - August 2, 2015

TESIC and Memorial University's Faculty of Education are excited to announce our second annual Summer Institute of Technology Integration. SITI@MUN 2015 will highlight best practices grounded in the NL classroom emphasizing technology integration and innovation: Google Apps for Education, Moodle Learning Management System, Google Classroom, IOS in Education (iPads and Literacy, Numeracy, Special Services), 3D Printing, Examview. This will be a unique opportunity to network with a large cross-section of Newfoundland and Labrador educational stakeholders. Sessions focusing on the integration of mobile technology, assistive technology, inclusive technology use, cloud based educational services, the latest research trends, and more will be available.



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SUMMER INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY INTEGRATION – SITI@MUN 2015

July 30 - August 2, 2015

Faculty of Education, St. John's Campus, Memorial University. TESIC and Memorial University's Faculty of Education are excited to announce the second annual Summer Institute of Technology Integration – SITI@MUN 2015. Registration and other conference information can be found at siti.tesic.org.

LET'S TALK SCIENCE K-3 SUMMER INSTITUTES 2015

August 3, 5 and 19, 2015

Let's Talk Science, in partnership with the NLESD, is offering a one-day Summer Institute for K-3 and Early Childhood Educators: Inspiring Minds: Engaging Children in Inquiry and Problem-Solving Through Children's Literature. Facilitated by Lynn Fitzpatrick, K-6 Education Program Consultant for Let's Talk Science. Three sessions available: August 3, St. John's; August 5, Gander; and August 19, Corner Brook. Fee: \$50/session (includes full day of professional learning and lunch). Seating is limited. Sign up today at www.exploreideapark.org/ProfessionalLearning. Any questions, contact lfitzpatrick@letstalkscience.ca.

CONTACT 2015

August 4-7, 2015

Saint John Campus, UNB. Waves of Change; Oceans of Opportunities. For more information contact Beverley Park, bpark@nlta.nl.ca.

SUMMER WRITING INSTITUTE

August 6-7, 2015

Summerside, PEI. Focusing on assessing student writing, conferring with student writers and mini lessons. Facilitated by Carl Anderson, a leading expert on teaching writing to K-12 students. Fee: \$195. Contact <http://bit.ly/1CcXIU0>.

SHEONOROIL CONFERENCE

SAFE SCHOOLS: ONE PEACE AT A TIME

September 24-25, 2015

Delta Hotel, Halifax. Featuring Stan Kutcher, Michael Ungar, Bill Carr and Zac Crouse. Registration fee: \$250. Register at www.nstu.ca. For information contact Gail Doucette at gdoucette@staff.nstu.ca

NLCPA ANNUAL CONFERENCE AND AGM 2015

October 21-23, 2015

Capital Hotel, St. John's. Featuring renowned psychologist Dr. Danie Beaulieu, founder and president of Académie Impact in Lac-Beauport, Quebec. For more infor-

mation contact: Angie Wilmott, NLCPA, angiewilmott@nlesd.ca.

5TH CANADA MOODLE MOOT CONFERENCE

October 21-23, 2015 (Pre-conference: Oct. 20)

Montreal, QC. "Connecting with Moodle". Moodle is an open-source Learning Management System used throughout K-12, higher education, business and non-profits. Register at: <http://moodlemoot.ca/>. For more information contact: canadamoot@gmail.com.

AUTISM SOCIETY NL – THE ZONES OF REGULATION

November 13, 2015

Holiday Inn, St. John's. Presented by Leah Kuypers, a leading autism presenter, on the topic of fostering self-regulation in children and youth with ASD (www.zonesofregulation.com). This conference is designed for classroom teachers, instructional resource teachers, student assistants, parents and caregivers, speech/language and occupational therapists, behavioural management consultants, and others working with individuals with ASD – in the school, home and/or community. Early bird registration: \$239 (Deadline: September 25, 2015); Regular registration: \$269 (Deadline: November 6, 2015). Contact ASNL for registration details: 709-722-2803; info@autism.nf.net.

NLTA Summer Hours

**July 3 - September 4
Monday to Thursday
8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Friday
8:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.**