

bulletin

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93% of parents surveyed

believe Budget 2016 will have a **negative impact** on the overall quality of education in our province

Survey of 662 Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, including 150 parents



Majority of parents

think increased class sizes and loss of teachers will have a **negative impact** on education

Survey of 662 Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, including 150 parents

Up Front

from the President



You don't improve education by demoralising the people who have to do the work everyday. ~ Diane Ravitch

If you're a teacher, it's safe to say Budget 2016 was not an uplifting document, primarily because of how it contrasts with our view of education. Since the introduction of the budget, your Association has made it clear to government and department officials that they are not solving our province's economic woes; they are simply transferring the provincial deficit to our schools and creating an educational deficit. If you've seen the NLTA posts on social media, you know that parents and the public clearly believe the provincial budget has done more harm than good to our schools.

The main victims in all of this will be the children we teach. At the Canadian Forum on Public Education this summer, Dr. Phil McRae reported on a survey of Alberta teachers which yielded some startling statistics. Over the past three to five years, 90% of teachers say the number of students with emotional challenges have increased, 86% say the number of students with social challenges has increased, 85% report the number of students who need behaviour support has increased. I haven't included the percentage of teachers who reported increases in anxiety disorders, depression, and cognitive challenges.

A survey of Newfoundland and Labrador teachers, I suspect, would probably report similar findings. We are only too aware of the mental health challenges facing our students, but don't discount the effects of an under resourced school system on your own mental health. There is preliminary evidence to suggest a correlation between teacher mental health and student mental health.

The theme of the 2016 Canadian Forum on Public Education was "Wellness in Our Schools: Time to Act". The Forum identified the wellness challenges facing our schools and explored the ways we can address those challenges collectively. In her

keynote address to delegates CTF President, Heather Smith, referred to a recent "first of its kind" study by the University of British Columbia that showed a correlation between teacher burnout and students' stress levels. Researchers tested for cortisol (a hormone and biological indicator of stress) in the saliva of over 400 elementary school children from 17 public schools. Teacher burnout and stress were determined through survey results.

Investigators found that in classrooms in which teachers experienced more burnout, or feelings of emotional exhaustion, students' cortisol levels were elevated.

Inadequate supports for teachers may impact their ability to effectively manage their classrooms, contributing to students' needs not being met and increased student stress. Or the increasing number of challenging students as a result of increases in anxiety, behavioural problems or special needs create overwhelming teaching situations for teachers and could cause them to report increased levels of burnout.

While the researchers described it as a "chicken and egg question", they also noted that "the study is a reminder of the systemic issues facing teachers and educators as classroom sizes increase and supports for teachers are cut."

The University of British Columbia supports what we heard during our Panel on the Status of Public Education. As one teacher stated: "Although we as teachers try our best to accommodate every student in our classroom and meet their needs, it is just impossible. There are not enough hours in a day (or support) to get to each child. When we have a class of 27/28 students most of our time is spent dealing with behaviour issues and getting through the day with our sanity intact. At the end of the day, I don't feel like I have done my best as

a teacher!" Furthermore, parents and the public echoed these concerns in our public survey following Budget 2016.

During the budget lock-up this past April, I made it clear to Department of Education officials that measures in the provincial budget would create chaos for teachers, students and schools. At the time of writing this article numerous teachers have contacted me about the confusion, upheaval and stress caused by the loss of teachers, the increase of class sizes, and combined grades which have increased supervision, exacerbated inclusive education deficits, affected programming and made it that much more difficult for teachers to give their students the attention they need. And I haven't even touched on the turmoil created as a result of bussing issues and school closures. Teachers, being teachers, will continue to make the system work. In many cases you even spend your own money to make it work, but it comes at a cost to ourselves and to the students we teach.

Unfortunately the message seems to have fallen on deaf ears.

The lesson for us is clear. The "make it work" approach is not working for our schools if those who make the decisions are not listening and cutting the resources you need to change the lives of your students. In less than a year we will face yet another provincial budget with more implications for our schools. Your Association, your executive, and I have no intention of giving up our fight for investment in education and for the resources you and your students need for a quality education. But we will need your voice, and from time to time we will call on you to step outside your comfort zone to make it heard. It's too important an issue not to.

THE bulletin

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CONTENTS

Features

10 From the Executive Director

You Cannot Improve Student Outcomes With Larger Class Sizes
by Steve Brooks

12 Programs & Services

Sick Leave – Please Explain How It Works!
by Perry Downey

14 Going on Leave?

Things You Should Know

15 Finding Time: Teachers' Personal Time and the Collective Agreement

by Miriam Sheppard

16 Developing Successful Schools 2016

18 Project Overseas 2016: Making a Difference in Sierra Leone

by Rodney Drover

20 Hats Off!

School Administrators' Council Distinguished School Administrator of the Year Award Winner 2015-16

21 *Beverley Park Honoured with CTF Special Recognition Award*

22 Living Well

Meditation – Training the Mind
by Judy Beranger

24 In the Classroom

Becoming Reggio-Inspired
by Cathy Baker

26 Looking to Ignite Curiosity and Excite the Mind? Host a STEM Expo!

by Stephanie Collins

28 Autism in the Classroom

Supporting Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder
by Kendra Lane

Departments

Up Front from the President	2
On Location News	4
In Memoriam	8
Calendar	31

NLTA Membership Cards

If you require an NLTA membership card, please visit the NLTA website at www.nlta.nl.ca, click on "Forms" and then "Request a Membership Card". Cards will be mailed to the home address we have on file for you. If you have had a recent address change, please update your current address.

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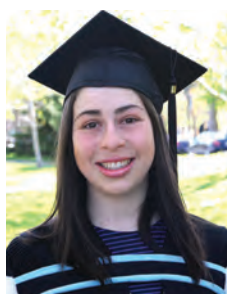
Note: You may need your NLTA membership card to access discounts from the NLTA Teacher Discount List which can be found on the NLTA website at www.nlta.nl.ca. Go to "Programs and Services" and then "Member Services".

PROVINCIAL/NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL

NEWS

NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR

NLTA Medal winner announced



Alicia Wells

Alicia Wells, originally from Bonavista, is the 2016 recipient of the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association Medal. Alicia graduated from Memorial University at the Spring 2016 convocation with a Bachelor of Education Degree (Primary/Elementary). During her studies in the Faculty, Alicia maintained an excellent academic record with an overall average of 89.45% in her Education courses. She was the recipient of numerous scholarships throughout her degree for her academic merit and was named to the Dean's List for 2014-15.

Alicia was also an active volunteer at Memorial. She was Treasurer of the Education Society, volunteered with Got?, and was an Orientation Group Leader for Memorial's Orientation events. In addition, Alicia worked as a lab teaching assistant and in 2014 she attended the Math-Science Special Interest Council Provincial Conference in St. John's.

Outside of school, Alicia is very active in her community. She volunteers as Coordinator with the annual Bonavista Church Street Festival and works with the Garrick Theatre. In addition, she tutors school-aged students in multiple subjects. Alicia is a certified Primary StarSkate Skating Coach with Skate Canada. She is also an avid outdoors person and values the important connection between body and mind.

Alicia completed her teaching practicum at Matthew Elementary in Bonavista. During her internship placement she was very involved in school life and participated and volunteered in a host of extra-curricular activities. Alicia received a glowing reference from her cooperating teacher who described her as "an enthusiastic and motivated intern" who "had shown great initiative in all areas within the classroom". She commented that Alicia was "well on the way to becoming a fantastic teacher!"

Alicia has truly enjoyed her undergraduate degree and is appreciative of Memorial's Faculty of Education. She plans to further her studies in education as she has been accepted into the Special

Education Degree program at Memorial for Fall 2016. In addition, she plans to further her studies by eventually receiving her Masters.

The NLTA Medal is awarded annually to an Education student who, during his/her academic career, has made an outstanding contribution to the Faculty of Education and to the University. The recipient must be a graduating student and have a consistently good academic record in the professional courses required for the degree. The award is made by Memorial University on the recommendation of the Dean of Education.

Technology Education Research Study Recruitment

David Gill, Assistant Professor of Technology Education at Memorial University (currently on leave as a technology education teacher for NLESD), is conducting a study entitled "Teaching Intermediate Technology Education in Newfoundland and Labrador".

In seeking participants for this study he is looking for any teachers and/or administrators in NL that have ever taught, or are currently teaching any of the intermediate (grade 7-9) technology education modules.

If you are interested in contributing to this research there are three ways to potentially participate. First, you can complete the online questionnaire (<http://bit.do/teched>) which should take between 5 and 20 minutes depending on your level of engagement. Second, after completing the questionnaire you can indicate that you would like to participate in a face-to-face interview. Third, you may also indicate that you would like to participate in classroom observations.

If you have any questions or have issues accessing the survey please feel free to contact David directly at dgill@mun.ca. This study has been approved by the University of Calgary Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board and the NLESD.

NL School Food Environment Survey

Across the continent, there has been a shift in how educators understand 'school food'. For example, in B.C., students head to the beach to harvest clams and even hunt deer together. These activities are valued as part of the culture, the curriculum and as a way to bring good food onto students' plates. Just imagine in this province, if local berries were a staple on the school menu! Part of the shift in thinking about school food comes from asking about not just what costs the least, but what has the most value. Food is connected to people, to places, to culture and to the curriculum. The purpose of this research is to learn about what the current school food environment looks like in Newfoundland and Labrador and what promising innovations and ideas local stakeholders have for the coming years. We are asking schools across the province to share your experience of school food so that we can understand what exists in order to help build on local successes and experiences. Please follow this link to participate in this brief survey on behalf of your school: <https://goo.gl/forms/oFjjMZ888qn4NrUv2>

CANADA

Growing Into Resilience: A Survey for Sexual and Gender Minority Youth

This survey is for Canadian sexual and gender minority (LGBTTIQQ2SA) youth and young adults between 12 and 29 years old. Dr. André P. Grace (andre.grace@ualberta.ca), Director of Research at the Institute for Sexual Minority Studies and Services (iSMSS) is conducting this research, which the Research Ethics Board at the University of Alberta has approved. You are invited to participate.

The results of this survey will be used to help young Canadians through improvements in education, healthcare, foster care, group homes, youth justice, and other spaces that should provide recognition and support. This survey gives youth and young adults across Canada an opportunity to provide key input to help us in this work.

The survey asks you to respond to items about the many factors impacting your everyday life. These items focus on interactions at school and in healthcare, families, faith groups, and the larger community. The survey is designed so you can talk about the factors that affect your health and happiness;

that is, the factors that affect how you become more resilient. It can take you up to 30 minutes to complete. However, please take the time to complete the entire survey. You will be helping all LGBTTIQQ2SA youth and young adults who need supports. You might consider some of the items to be sensitive and stressful to answer. If you have concerns and need assistance and support from us, please email Jeffrey Hankey (jrhankey@ualberta.ca).

To participate in the survey please follow this link: <http://ers.fluidsurveys.com/s/resilience-survey>. For French Version: <http://ers.fluidsurveys.com/s/resilience-fr/>

VICTORIA

It's Back to the Old School

The One Room Schoolhouse in Bristol's Hope (formerly Mosquito) opened its doors this past June and welcomed the Grade One students from Persalvic Elementary School in Victoria, NL.

Mrs. Johnson's Grade One class were given a tour of the school, with information on how the school was heated, what was used to provide lighting and the use of slate boards for writing on. The children also meet Mrs. Yvonne Sheppard, a former teacher of the school, who actually started teaching in Mosquito on her 16th birthday in the early 1950s.

This was the first time since the late 1950s that an actual class of children have sat in the desks and chairs and listened to a reading of *Dick & Jane*.

This school was built between 1818 and 1828, and was attended by students from grades K to 11 until the late the 1950s. It is now a registered Heritage Structure and is maintained by the Bristol's Hope Historical Society 2010 Inc.



Students place wood in the stove as children of years ago would have done.

NLTA STAFF CHANGES

APPOINTMENT NOTICES

The Provincial Executive Council of the NLTA is pleased to announce the following staff appointments:

Steve Brooks

Steve Brooks has been appointed to the position of **Executive Director** effective September 1, 2016.

Steve holds a M.Ed. (Curriculum and Instruction) from Memorial University as well as a B.Ed. (High School Social Studies/Religious Studies) and a B.A. (Political Science). He also has a Certificate in Industrial Relations from Queens University and has completed numerous training programs including Labour Relations Foundation, Negotiations Skills, and Dispute Resolution.

Steve joined the staff of the NLTA in 2008 as an Administrative Officer, Benefits and Economic Services Division. In August 2013 he was appointed to the position of Assistant Executive Director.

Steve has an extensive background as a district leader, school administrator and teacher.

Stefanie Tuff

Stefanie Tuff has been appointed to the position of **Assistant Executive Director** effective September 1, 2016.

Stefanie holds B.A. and B.Ed. degrees from Memorial University, a LL.B. from the University of New Brunswick, and a Certificate in Industrial Relations from Queen's University.

She began her career with the NLTA in January 2002 as an Administrative Officer, Benefits and Economic Services Division. Before joining the NLTA staff, she practiced law with the firm Curtis Dawe in St. John's, prior to which she was a teacher at the junior and senior high levels.

NEW APPOINTMENTS

Ian Crewe

Ian Crewe has been appointed to the position of **Administrative Officer, Programs and Services**, effective August 29, 2016.

Ian holds a B.Sc. (Major in Math), B.Ed. (secondary), and a Masters Degree in Leadership. He has experience as a Mathematics teacher for 10 years (1994-2004), vice-principal for two years, program specialist in Mathematics 7-12 and Technology since 2006. From 2015-16 he was an SEO in Human Resources with the Newfoundland and Labrador Eastern School District.

Scott Jackson

Scott Jackson began working at the NLTA in a term replacement as IT Administrator on September 1, 2015. He was hired as **Systems Analyst, Corporate Services**, effective August 8, 2016.

Scott has over 15 years experience in delivering technology and business services on all levels from delivery, design, implementation and management. Prior to joining the staff of the NLTA he was Senior Regional Network Systems Analyst in charge of IT/IS and Senior Manager, IT – Maritimes and NL Region with the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation in St. John's.

Jeanine Warford

Jeanine Warford was hired as an **Administrative Assistant, Programs and Services**, effective September 16, 2015.

She graduated from Keyin College in 2012 with an Office Administration Diploma. Before joining the NLTA staff, Jeanine worked as an Administrative Assistant with AMEC Foster Wheeler Americas Limited in St. John's.

RETIREMENTS

The Association would like to wish the following NLTA staff members much happiness in their recent retirements:

Don Ash

Don Ash retired from the NLTA on August 31, 2016. Don began his career with the Association in 1998 as an Administrative Officer in the Benefits and Economic Services Division. In 2008 he was appointed Assistant Executive Director and Director for the Benefits and Economic Services Division. He was appointed to the position of Executive Director on August 1, 2013.

Linda Babstock

Linda Babstock retired from the NLTA on July 31, 2016 following 29 years of service. She began her career at the Association in 1987 as a replacement secretary and became Secretary to the Executive Director in 1988. Linda was appointed to Print Plant Manager in 1994 and later joined the Corporate Services Team in 2014 as Database Administrator.

Louise King

Louise King retired from the NLTA on August 31, 2016 following nearly 40 years of service. Louise began her career with the Association in 1977 as Layout/Paste-up Assistant in Printing Services. She became Assistant – Information Services in Communications in 1996.

Colleen Wade

Colleen Wade retired from her position as Senior Assistant, Programs and Services, on March 31, 2016 following 37 years of service. Colleen began her career with the Association in 1979 as a secretary in the Communications/Field Services Division. She subsequently moved to the Benefits and Economic Services Division in 1996 and became Senior Secretary of the Division in 2007.

2016 PRE-RETIREMENT SEMINAR

REGISTRATION FORM

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. 13-14** – Greenwood Inn & Suites, Corner Brook

☐ **Oct. 20-21** – Mt. Peyton Hotel, Grand Falls-Windsor

☐ **Nov. 17-18** – Hampton Inn & Suites, St. John's

☐ **Dec. 1-2** – Hampton Inn & Suites, St. John's

☐ **Dec. 8-9** – Hampton Inn & Suites, 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 2019) 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 Programs and Services and then Pre-Retirement Seminars.

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

SHANNON PITTMAN, 1975 – 2016**Shannon Pittman**

On April 20, 2016 family, friends, colleagues and students were shocked and deeply saddened by the sudden passing of Mr. Shannon Pittman. He was a father, husband, educator, colleague and a great friend. Shannon grew up in rural Newfoundland, and moved to St. John's shortly after high school in 1996. Before going back to school to become an Educator, he had a previous career as a Nutritionist, which remained one of his many passions in life. Only a couple of years into his teaching career, he joined our staff at the Newfoundland and Labrador Youth Centre in 2008.

Here he taught many subjects, but most recently he was the Skilled Trades and Science Teacher. He was, however, so much more than just a teacher. He not only taught our students how to wire a house, or the steps of the water cycle, but he taught them, as well as his colleagues, what it was to be a truly genuine person. He taught our students with his gentle manner, contagious smile, and giving soul. He was a role model and living proof that despite living a short life, you can still live a full life.

He enriched our staffroom with smiles, laughs and a genuine heart of gold. Shannon had the ability to stay calm and collected even during the most stressful of times. He radiated this onto those around him. When it came to teaching, he had a plethora of knowledge that was driven by his own thirst for learning. There were few topics, if any at all, that you could bring up that he wasn't well versed in. For students and staff alike, he was always there to lend an ear and offer encouragement. In the woodshop, he could build just about anything and was always willing to help anyone and everyone interested. He dedicated his career to improving the lives of each and every student he encountered over the years. He instilled within them a sense of resilience that he too possessed. He wanted his students to dream big, and never give up on their future. Shannon made the world a better place and he enriched the lives of all who knew him. Our loss is Heaven's gain. He will surely be missed.

(Submitted by Megan Greene, NL Youth Centre)

**Randy Ralph****RANDOLPH (RANDY) RALPH, 1963 – 2016**

On April 19, 2016, many people lost a family member, friend, coach and colleague. Randy, 52, passed away in a tragic car accident on the Trans Canada Highway. He left behind his best friend, soul mate and loving wife Frankie, whom he cherished and shared 26 wonderful years of marriage and his two children Victoria and Andrew, often calling them his best accomplishments ever.

Born in Grand Falls-Windsor, Randy was the son of David Ralph and Pearl Bowers (both deceased) and brother to Penny, Rhonda, and Rodney. He attended Memorial University and graduated with a Bachelor of Science, Bachelor of Education, and a Master of Education.

A lover of learning, Randy taught at many schools across the province, the most recent being Carbonear Collegiate and the Newfoundland and Labrador Youth Centre, Whitbourne. He gained immense satisfaction from his career, and impacted the lives of many students throughout his 25 years and quoted everyday "I love my job man".

He supported youth both inside and outside of the school. Every child is important and Randy just did not say this, he showed it. He was the first to try anything, but have fun with his students.

An active member of the community, Randy was a dedicated member of many sports groups. He enjoyed coaching a variety of teams including, but certainly not limited to, wrestling, hockey, track and field, basketball, rugby, soccer and Jiu Jitsu.

A proud member of the Qalipu Mi'kmaq First Nations, Randy was very engaged with the St. John's Native Friendship Centre and its members. He was a lover of nature and enjoyed hiking and jogging with his family and his loyal companions Rocky and Sandy.

Randy will be forever remembered for his good humor, kind nature, companionship, and his competitive streak. He will be deeply missed by all who were privileged to know him.

"Nmultis" my dear friend, fly with the eagles.

(Submitted by Randy's wife, Frankie Ralph)

BEN SNOOK, 1942 – 2016

Ben Snook, the eldest of eight children, was born to Emily and Albert Snook in Grand Bank on June 20, 1942. Ben came to Bonavista as a young vice principal at The Salvation Army school in 1960. He met and fell in love with Mervie Moulard. They married in 1962 and have three children – Eric, Glendene and Sharon.

Ben spent most of his teaching career in Bonavista, save a short stint in Lethbridge. In 1994, he retired from Matthew Elementary as vice principal. Within a couple of months, Ben began a new career path in the United Church ministry. He had charges in Raleigh, Fortune, Arnold's Cove, as Hospital Chaplain in St. John's and his final charge was in Bonavista. During his ministerial career, Ben was involved with several East District committees and served a term as President of the Newfoundland and Labrador Conference. Ben finally retired in 2009.

Ben was a tireless volunteer and spent many hours giving back to his community through the Masonic Lodge, BARDA and United Church Men's Fellowship group, to name a few.

Ben had a passion for hunting, fishing, his vegetable garden, flowers, reading Newfoundland marine history and watching wrestling. Ben loved Mervie's cooking and his favourite meals were food native to Newfoundland. Ben brought comfort to the lives of many – he loved to chat and story tell. He was just a positive social person who really enjoyed people.

Ben's favourite sayings were "Anything worth doing is worth doing well", "In the wood box of my memory, may you always be a chip" and "I'll lead you down the garden path, and then I'll clobber you".

Ben cherished his family above all. He passed away April 27, 2016. We will miss his kind, gentle and quiet presence immensely.

God has you in his keeping. We have you in our hearts.

There is a time to laugh, a time to cry, a time to live and a time to die.

(Submitted by Ben's daughter, Glendene)

ELIZABETH (BETTY) TOMS, 1925-2016

Mina Elizabeth Toms (nee March) passed away peacefully in Victoria, B.C. on June 12, 2016. While studying for Grade 11 exams in Green's Harbour, Betty was left responsible for her sole charge school when her teacher left mid-year, and so began a life-time in teaching. Following graduation, she went to Normal School at Memorial University College and then taught in Grand Bank and Windsor.

In the late 1940s she went north for the isolation bonus (\$5 a month) to La Scie on the Baie Verte Peninsula, which in those days was accessible only by boat and frozen in during the winters. Here she met her husband of 54 years, Arthur Toms (deceased) and spent the next three decades. She took a break from teaching to raise four children (twins Max and Larry, Elaine, and Karen). In those years, she became adept at dealing with an endless stream of milk, clotted cream and eggs, and was an industrial-level berry and vegetable preserver with the harvest from "experiments" in their gardens and fields. In her spare time, she was active in the local community serving as a Girl Guide Commissioner, and noted for being the only adult who danced around the toadstool. She was a keen knitter and competitive Scrabbler, hobbies that she enjoyed throughout her life.

When her youngest started school in 1964, Betty returned to teaching and taught kindergarten with passion for the next 20 years. Her style of teaching

was informed by her own love of learning, which she tirelessly and passionately transferred to her young charges. She felt strongly that children should be introduced early to the three Rs, and worked resourcefully and creatively to engage children using her own poetry, innovative artwork and music. She believed that each student had special merits and it was her responsibility to uncover them.

In 1984, deteriorating mobility forced Betty into early retirement. She moved closer to family in Carleton Place, ON, and then to Victoria, BC where she spent the rest of her life. The NLTA awarded her an Honourable Retirement & Life Membership for her "24 years of dedicated service to the cause of education in this Province..." She was very touched in 1990 to receive an invitation to the high school graduation of her 1977 kindergarten class. Although unable to attend, she sent them a note: "My dream for you is to achieve success in whatever you endeavor." That statement represents the quintessence of Betty's positive nonjudgmental approach to teaching.

Generous, kind, considerate, diplomatic, with amazing fortitude, Betty will be missed by the many people who were fortunate enough to have met her on both sides of this country.

(Submitted by Betty's daughter Elaine Toms, a former teacher and NLTA member)



Elizabeth (Betty) Toms

In Memoriam

Submission Guidelines

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

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



You Cannot Improve Student Outcomes with Larger Class Sizes

by STEVE BROOKS

In 2014 the *Globe and Mail* reported that one of the major factors parents consider when deciding whether to enrol their children in private school is class size. “For parents considering enrolling their children in private school, class size has become synonymous with education quality. Ms. Axelsson says class size was a deciding factor for many other parents with children at her daughter’s school.” (Sept. 25).

As the father of five, I know first-hand the quality of our public education system. As a professional with 25 years of experience in the educational system as a teacher, school principal, school district manager and as an advocate for teachers, I know that the public education system has never been as stretched to its limits as it is today. It is a testament to school-based personnel that the system is as high achieving as it is. That being said, it is becoming unequivocally apparent that the parents opting out of the public education system are not wrong about class size and the impact it has on their children’s learning.

A review of the major research that has been conducted on class size by Dr. Diane Schanzenbach and published by the National Education Policy Center at the University of Colorado makes clear that class size does indeed matter. According to the report:

Small classes have been found to have positive impacts not only on test scores during the duration of the class-size reduction experiment, but also on life outcomes in the years after the experiment ended. Students who were originally assigned to small classes did better than their school-mates who were assigned to regular-sized classes across a variety of outcomes, including juvenile criminal behaviour, teen pregnancy, high school graduation, college enrollment and completion, quality of college attended, savings behaviours, marriage rates, residential location and homeownership. p.4

Interestingly one of the major studies reviewed

by Dr. Schanzenbach, the Tennessee Student Achievement Ratio Experiment, compared the educational and social impacts of small classes with 13-17 students with those of regular classes of 22-25 from kindergarten to grade 3. In Newfoundland and Labrador, the “soft” cap class limits are significantly higher than those of the regular classes cited in the research.

Dr. Schanzenbach’s report makes the following recommendation that policy makers in this province would be prudent to keep in mind:

“...parents opting out of the public education system are not wrong about class size and the impact it has on their children’s learning.”

- Class size is an important determinant of student outcomes, and one that can be directly determined by policy. All else being equal, increasing class sizes will harm student outcomes.

- The evidence suggests that increasing class size

will harm not only children’s test scores in the short term, but also their long-run capital formation. Money saved today by increasing class sizes will result in more substantial social and educational costs in the future.

- The payoff from class-size reduction is greater for low-income and minority children, while any increase in class size will likely be most harmful to these populations.

- Policymakers should carefully weigh the efficacy of class-size policy against other potential uses of funds. While lower class size has a demonstrable cost, it may prove the more cost-effective policy overall.

At the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers’ Association we know that parents are concerned about the public education system generally and class size specifically. In a recent study of Newfoundland and Labrador parent’s opinions and attitudes the following data was collected:

- 93% of parents believe that the recent budget will have a negative impact on education;

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

- 83% of parents believe that increasing class sizes will negatively impact quality of children's education.

Parents understand intuitively that reducing class sizes would be beneficial for children. When asked what they believed to be the acceptable maximum class size per grade level the response was as follows:

Parental Response	Current Provincial Class Size Caps (soft)
Kindergarten = 18	Kindergarten = 20-22
Grades 1-3 = 22	Grades 1-3 = 25-27
Grades 4-6 = 23	Grades 4-6 = 28-30
Grades 7-9 = 25	Grades 7-9 = 29-31
Grades 10-12 = 26	Grade 10-12 = No cap in place

It is not surprising that the recent Panel on the Status of Public Education in Newfoundland and Labrador, which did extensive consultation with educators, parents and community groups made the following recommendation:

That Government and the School District(s) in cooperation with the NLTA and other stakeholders establish a new class size cap for classes with a composition diversity of greater than 10% in primary, elementary, intermediate and senior high schools.

Increasing class sizes and inadequate resourcing of inclusive education are a major concern. This is particularly true when one considers that 21 violent incidents by students against teachers were reported last school year. If our teachers are not safe, how can they ensure the safety of their students, let alone enhance their learning experience.

It would seem that those with the financial ability and opportunity can ensure their children the benefits of small classes. Should children of the public education system be disadvantaged by larger class sizes? It is a public policy question.

.....
Steve Brooks is Executive Director of the NLTA.

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This workshop is designed to teach participants how to facilitate mindfulness-based strategies in their counselling work.

WORKING IN SOCIAL SERVICES-The Essential Skills

St. John's: March 16, 2017

This workshop will provide awareness and skill-building in core areas related to the helping role including: ethics, case management, communication, diversity, trauma and promoting helper resilience for those working in the Social Services field.

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This workshop will help participants understand the experience and motivations of adolescents who intentionally injure themselves, and provide practical strategies for working with youth.

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Sick Leave — Please Explain How It Works!

by PERRY DOWNEY

Throughout the school year we are often asked to explain how sick leave for teachers is calculated, and the circumstances when medical notes are and are not required. This article attempts to explain this often misunderstood article of the collective agreement through the following questions and answers.

Q. How much sick leave do I have?

A. TCASS is the on-line computer software package available in each school in Newfoundland and Labrador which is used to track, among other things, teacher attendance. A teacher can ask their school secretary or school administrator to look up the number of sick leave days he/she has available as of a certain date in the TCASS system. This is found next to the teacher's name under 'general attendance'.

Q. How is sick leave calculated annually?

A. A teacher's sick leave is calculated at the beginning of each school year based on the teacher's years of experience, the number of sick leave days previously used, and when the teacher first started teaching.

a) **For teachers who taught in Newfoundland and Labrador prior to September 2006**, sick leave is calculated based on the table below, less the total number of days used in the last four calendar years.

First year of service 18 days
Second year of service 36 days
Third year of service 60 days

Fourth year of service 89 days
Fifth year of service 117 days
Sixth year of service 146 days
Seventh year of service 157 days
Eighth year of service 168 days
Ninth year of service 179 days
Thereafter 195 days

Example: A teacher with 15 years of service would have 195 days sick leave available for 2016-17 minus the total number of days used in 2015-16, 2014-15, 2013-14, 2012-13. This type of calculation is repeated each September of a new school year.

To illustrate, this teacher uses the following number of sick leave days over the last six years:

2015-16: 5 days
2014-15: 3 days
2013-14: 10 days
2012-13: 2 days
2011-12: 35 days
2010-11: 4 days

Based on this data, sick leave availability for this teacher would be calculated each year as per the table below:

b) **For teachers with no previous teaching experience prior to September 1, 2006:** These teachers accrue sick leave at the rate of 12 days for every complete year of teaching service to a maximum of 240 days. The amount available in any particular year is:

[Number of years of service] times [12] minus [any days previously used]

Available Sick Leave		2016-17	2015-16	2014-15	2013-14	2012-13	2011-12	2010-11	Total
Sept 2014	195 days				- 10	- 2	- 35	- 4	= 144 days
Sept 2015	195 days			- 3	- 10	- 2	- 35		= 145 days
Sept 2016	195 days		- 5	- 3	- 10	- 2			= 175 days
Sept 2017	195 days	- ?	- 5	- 3	- 10				= ? days

Example: A teacher with four complete years of service would have 48 days of sick leave minus the total number of sick leave days used in their career to date.

To illustrate, this teacher uses the following number of sick leave days over the last three years:

2015-16: 15 days

2014-15: 6 days

2013-14: 4 days

Based on this date, sick leave availability for this teacher would be calculated as follows:

Available Sick Leave	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	Total
Sept 2013	12 days				
Sept 2014	24 days	- 4			= 20 days
Sept 2015	36 days	- 4	- 6		= 26 days
Sept 2016	48 days	- 4	- 6	- 15	= 23 days
Sept 2017	60 days	- 4	- 6	- 15	- ? = ? days

Q. When is a doctor's note required (or not required)?

A. A medical certificate is required for sick leave in excess of four consecutive teaching days or in excess of seven days in total in any school year without a note.

Example: If a teacher is off work sick on Monday and Tuesday, and provides a doctor's note for these two days, then the teacher has NOT used any of the seven days for which a note is required. Thus, a teacher should always provide a note if they visit a doctor, dentist, or other medical specialist while off on sick leave, thereby preserving their seven days for which no note is required.

Q. Is the seven days without a note "extra" sick days?

A. No, all sick leave utilized, with or without a note, is deducted from the sick leave "bank" available to the teacher.

Any questions can be directed to an Administrative Officer in Programs and Services at the NLTA.

Perry Downey is an Administrative Officer in Programs and Services at the NLTA.

The New Eligible Educator School Supply Tax Credit

The NLTA maintains that schools and school districts should provide teachers with the materials and resources they need to meet their professional responsibilities in safe, engaging and adequately resourced learning environments. Teachers should not be out of pocket for the purchase of supplies that they and their students need for quality teaching and learning to occur. That being said, the Association recognizes, as supported by research, that many teachers do spend their own money on school supplies every year. Accordingly, this notice is provided to inform NLTA members of the new tax credit introduced in the 2016 federal budget, which is specifically targeted for teachers – the Eligible Educator School Supply Tax Credit. For 2016 and subsequent taxation years, this new refundable tax credit allows "eligible educators" to claim a tax credit calculated as 15% of up to \$1,000 in eligible school supplies expenses per year. **The maximum tax credit is \$150 per year.**

Who is eligible?

You can only claim this tax credit if you are a teacher or early childhood educator employed at an elementary or secondary school or a regulated child care facility:

- You must have a teacher's certificate that is valid in the province or territory where you are employed; or
- You must have a certificate or diploma in early childhood education that is recognized in the province or territory where you are employed.

What kinds of teaching supplies are eligible?

For your supplies to be eligible for this credit, they must be:

- purchased in the taxation year by an eligible educator;
- used in a school or in a regulated child care facility for teaching or helping students learn;
- not reimbursable and not subject to an allowance or other form of assistance (unless the reimbursement, allowance or assistance is included in the income of the teacher or educator and not deductible); and
- not deducted or used in calculating a deduction from any person's income for any taxation year.

Eligible teaching supplies include consumable goods and certain durable items. Some examples include: construction paper; flashcards; items for science experiments; art supplies; various writing materials; games and puzzles; books for the classroom; and educational support software.

Computers, tablets and items such as rugs/mats (for students to sit on) are not included.

Only eligible supplies purchased in a taxation year can be included in calculating the tax credit for that year.

If you claim this tax credit, the CRA may ask you to provide certification from your employer attesting to the eligible supplies expense. The school district, as the employer, would determine and delegate which official(s) can provide this certification. Teachers are advised to request the certification from your employer in a timely manner and keep it in your files, along with your receipts, in case the CRA requests it.

More information is available on the Government of Canada website:
www.cra-arc.gc.ca/gncy/bdgt/2016/qa03-eng.html

GOING ON LEAVE? *THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW*

Whether you are going on maternity leave, approved leave without pay, unpaid sick leave, educational leave, or deferred salary leave, **it is your responsibility** to ensure your desired benefits are maintained while on leave. The purpose of this article is to ensure teachers going on leave are aware of the steps which must be taken to maintain these benefits which include NLTA Membership, Group Insurance and Pension service. As well, we are often asked about the impact of such leaves with respect to pension and salary increments. The following table has been prepared to assist teachers in addressing these questions.

Type of Leave	NLTA Membership	Group Insurance	Pension	Salary Increments
Maternity/ Parental Leave	N1	G1	P1	S1
Approved Unpaid Leave	N1	G2	P1	S3
Approved Unpaid Sick Leave	N3	G2	P1	S3
Paid Educational Leave	N2	G3	P2	S1
Approved Unpaid Educational Leave	N1	G2	P1	S2
Deferred Salary Leave	N2	G3	P2	S1
Injury on Duty	N3	G3	P2	S3

NLTA Membership

N1: Payment of \$5.00 per month must be made to the NLTA to maintain membership rights and benefits as per NLTA policy. Normally, one cheque covering the entire period of leave is mailed to the NLTA, attention: Corporate Services, 3 Kenmount Road, St. John's, NL, A1B 1W1.

N2: Membership dues continue to be paid as normal via deduction from paid salary.

N3: Dues not required in order to maintain membership.

Group Insurance

G1: Teachers must arrange with the plan administrator, Johnson Inc., to pay their share of the group insurance premiums by bank deductions. Failure to do so will result in termination of insurance. If insurance is terminated, the teacher will be required to apply for coverage, and provide proof of medical insurability subject to policy limitations, should the teacher wish to resume coverage. Should a teacher take more than 39 weeks, they must arrange with Johnson Inc. to pay by bank deduction both their share and the government's share of the group insurance premiums for

the additional leave period. Otherwise, if insurance is allowed to lapse during a period of parenthood leave, medical proof of insurability may be required in order to be reinstated in the plan.

G2: Teachers must arrange with Johnson Inc. to pay by bank deduction both their share and the government's share (Life, Accidental Death and Dismemberment, and Health plans only) of the group insurance premiums. Failure to do so will result in termination of insurance. If insurance is terminated, the teacher will be required to apply for coverage, and provide proof of medical insurability subject to policy limitations, should the teacher wish to resume coverage.

G3: Payment of group insurance premiums continue to be paid via normal payroll deduction and government's contribution of their share continues.

Pension

P1: Pension premium is unpaid and no pension service accrues while on leave. Teachers may arrange with Pensions Division to purchase lost pension service within 180 days from return to work. If the service time is purchased within this window, the cost is at current contribution rates matched by government. After 180 days, the cost is at full actuarial value.

P2: Pension premium continues to be paid on the full salary, not the reduced salary, and full pension service accrues.

Salary Increments

Teachers' placement on the salary grid is reviewed and changes are made once per year at the beginning of the school year or at the date of initial employment of a teacher. To determine the number of teaching years for salary increments, all teaching days to the date of calculation are totalled and this total divided by 195, which is the number of days in a school year. A fraction of half a year or more is required to move to the next step on the salary grid.

S1: Credited fully as time taught for the period of leave (maximum 39 continuous weeks for maternity/adoption/parental purposes) for the purpose of salary increment.

S2: Most unpaid leave is not credited for salary incremental purposes; however, it is credited fully as time taught when leave is related to upgrading qualifications or experience.

S3: Not credited for the purpose of salary increment.

Inquiries should be directed to Programs and Services at the NLTA at mail@nlta.nl.ca or www.nlta.nl.ca.



Finding Time Teachers' Personal Time and the Collective Agreement

by MIRIAM SHEPPARD

Balancing our work commitments and personal lives can be difficult. Sometimes it feels like there is simply not enough time in the day to do everything we are expected to do. With the beginning of the school year comes an opportunity to set personal priorities, and to reflect upon the protections for teacher personal time found in the Collective Agreements. Article 29 and Schedule E are particularly important in that regard.

Article 29 (Article 17 in the Lab West Collective Agreement) provides that:

- No teacher can be required to participate in extra-curricular activities, or to be a member of school or Board based committees. Coaching a school sports team, supervising a school dance, or serving on a school development team are all voluntary for teachers, regardless of their teaching assignment. While such things are certainly worthwhile, the collective agreements are designed to give teachers the ability to focus on the job of teaching students and maintain control over their work and personal lives.
- The allocation of curricular and non-curricular duties to teachers must be done in consultative fashion, and in a fair and equitable manner. While the allocation of teaching assignments, home rooms, and duty does not have to be identical for all teachers in a school, no one teacher should be overloaded when compared to his or her peers.
- No teacher can be required to report to work on Saturday or Sunday.
- Teachers who teach in more than one building must have an uninterrupted period of 40 minutes for lunch, exclusive of travel time.
- The Board must make every effort to provide substitutes for teachers who are absent for valid reasons. In cases where a teacher is accompanying students on curricular related activities during regular school hours, the Board may, but does not have to, provide a substitute for that teacher.

The Collective Agreements also set limits on the


teacher workday. Schedule E, in particular, prohibits the employer from "altering conditions as they currently exist for teachers" with respect to the length of the workday for teachers, the length of the instructional day for students, and the hours of classroom instruction for teachers. This provision recognizes that teachers' jobs do not end when students leave for the day. Teachers still have to prepare for the next day, correct, meet with parents, attend staff meetings and a myriad of other responsibilities. All teachers should be vigilant against any initiative which lengthens the school day and undermines the intent of this Schedule. While every case is fact based, new mandatory meetings after school hours, an increase in the frequency of currently existing after school meetings, or an extension in the overall teacher workday could all constitute violations of Schedule E.

If teachers have concerns about the matters discussed above, or any collective agreement issue, they should contact an Administrative Officer in Programs and Services for specific advice.

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



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Developing Successful Schools (DSS) 2016

by GEORGE TUCKER

The Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association, once again this year partnered with the teacher associations in the three Atlantic Provinces to sponsor the DSS 2016 Institute. The event took place at Mount Allison University in Sackville, New Brunswick on July 5-8, 2016 and some 65 participants were in attendance. The Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association was represented by a delegation of eight educators.

The focus for the institute was "Visible Learning – Evidence to Action!"

Peter DeWitt, DSS 2016 Institute facilitator, opined, "Visible Learning is an in-depth school change model of professional learning and development. The Visible Learning research began with a simple question: what affects student learning the most? Visible Learning is based on the principles of Visible Learning that have developed from John Hattie's research and his two books: *Visible Learning* (2009) and *Visible Learning for Teachers* (2012). It takes the theory of this research and puts it into a practical inquiry model for schools to ask questions of themselves about the impact they are having on student achievement."

During the DSS 2016 Institute, participants explored the latest research from John Hattie while exploring how to build and develop visible learners in their respective schools. Participants also learned how to gather, collate and examine evidence from their schools and transfer this into action that will make a positive difference to the outcomes of students.

An important component of the Institute, based on the literature, was to look closely at the idea of "feedback" in helping make learning "visible". Consequently, time was spent defining what effective feedback is and how to get the greatest impact from the feedback that one gives. Participants also considered the feedback that teachers receive and how to make a positive difference to the outcomes for students in their school.

Participants were entrenched in the following core principles:

- **Know Thy Impact** – How do you know the impact on student achievement of what you are doing?
- **Visible Learners** – What are the characteristics of Visible Learners and how do you know if your students have these traits?
- **Visible Learning Schools** – How do you align



Peter DeWitt



DSS 2016 delegates on the steps of Hesler Hall at Mount Allison University.

your school's strategies and structures for what matters most in teaching and learning?

- **Inspired and Passionate Teaching** – What are the characteristics of inspired and passionate teachers and how do you know if your teachers have these traits?

- **Effective Feedback** – What type of feedback is being communicated between teachers, between students, and between teachers and students?

Feedback from the DSS 2016 Institute participants was once again very positive. A sampling of the feedback comments includes:

- *The session was very relevant to my job as principal. The presentation topic and delivery are relevant to students, teachers, and administrators. The resources are excellent with direct applications to our environment. Thanks!!*

- *This conference was the best one I have attended in my 20 years of teaching. It was my first DSS conference. I particularly liked the information provided on instructional coaching and how we can help colleagues grow and make an impact with authentic learning. The presenter was always available during breaks and after the daily sessions to answer our questions and provide clarity or further examples. Super knowledgeable!!!! Thanks for such an awesome experience.*

- *Peter was extremely knowledgeable, approachable and engaging. This was a fantastic professional learning opportunity and networking session.*

- *This was an extremely practical session that will support our work with teachers and leads. Networking opportunities were very productive and I learned a lot from around Atlantic Canada.*

- *This definitely was a worthwhile use of my time in the summer. I so enjoyed the presenter; all were friendly and accommodating. Content was fantastic. Thanks!*

- *Wonderful experience all around! Peter was a tremendous presenter.*

Developing Successful Schools (DSS) is an annual event made possible through a partnership between the four Atlantic Teacher Associations (NLTA, NBTA, PEITU and NSTU) and the New Brunswick Department of Education. DSS 2017 will be held once again at Mount Allison University. The tentative dates are July 4-7. More detailed information on DSS 2017 will be available in the New Year.

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

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Project Overseas 2016

Making a Difference in Sierra Leone

by RODNEY DROVER

Every summer, our NLTA has the opportunity to send one member through CTF (Canadian Teacher's Federation) to an Overseas International Program, Project Overseas, that supports developing education in the developing world. Its goal is "Knowledge Mobilization", allowing educators to transfer their practical expertise to local educators on the pillars of Education, Literacy, and Numeracy, while addressing country-specific educational issues such as girls' access to education. On December 12, 2015, while watching my school's choir singing Christmas carols for the NTV Christmas Sing Along, I received one of the greatest gifts I have ever received. Beverley Park informed me that I was selected as the NLTA representative for the 2016 program. Later, I learned that I would be one of four Canadians to travel to and work in Sierra Leone, Africa, in July.



Members of the team: Rod Drover, Debbie Payne, Mike Beetham and Brenda Knull in Waterloo market, Sierra Leone.

We quickly learned about the challenges that would face us in Sierra Leone. Sierra Leone had just surfaced from civil war, only to be crippled further from the epidemic devastation of Ebola, a disease that killed more than 11,000 people. Our team consisted of lead and mentor Mike Beetham from Ontario, Debbie Payne and Brenda Knull from Alberta, and me from Newfoundland and Labrador. We quickly connected and began to learn as much about the mission and each other as possible. Our

mission was to work with SLTU (Sierra Leone Teachers Union) teachers and head masters to provide professional development in Literacy, Numeracy, and Safe and Caring school environments, the pillars of our Canadian school system. This group of strangers quickly developed such a strong bond and friendship that a day still doesn't go by without the team communicating with each other. Our shared experience of the many positive aspects and challenges of working in this third world environment only strengthened our bond.

In July, our team met in Ottawa to strategize and to begin the bonding process, a necessity to get through many of the challenging visuals, cultural changes, and norms that would become our reality for the next month. The two days in Ottawa were well organized by CTF and certainly provided us with the tools to have a successful experience.

In addition to the devastation caused by war and disease, Sierra Leone lacks infrastructure. The lack of basics such as running water, electricity, sanitation, and safe road systems have certainly created many issues for the people there. Coming from a country of prosperity, I was shocked to see the lack of resources, particularly food, which many of us take for granted. My first week, I struggled to understand why a country sharing the same Atlantic Ocean, fishing the same sea, and swimming in the same waters, experiences the struggles and extreme poverty that I witnessed.



Primary/Elementary school playground in Freetown



Co-teacher Jinah presenting me with a traditional hand crafted African shirt.

Our team was sent to provide the educators knowledge and professional development, and the people of Sierra Leone in turn taught us the importance of living life to the fullest. Each morning, the educators began with prayer, song, and dance. The demographics were equally split between Muslim and Christian, but they prayed, sang, and danced together, supporting each other as one. The people of Sierra Leone are certainly a unified group, praising and being thankful for everything they have, not fighting about what they don't have.

The educators of Sierra Leone were dedicated beyond what we could have imagined, many walking an hour to arrive for our PD day that started at 8 a.m. and finished after 6 p.m. We began the day with prayer and song followed by center approach PD sessions. Each hour, the Sierra Leone teachers would move from one area to another, developing their skills in our four specific areas. It was an honor to work with this group of educators that have a passion to move their schools and Country forward; wanting what we all want – to move every child toward their potential in a safe and caring environment.

We worked in a secure area with high concrete walls and barbed wire. Even though we were offered a safe environment, we were eager to get outside to bond with the locals and particularly the children of Sierra Leone. The opportunities to teach children to throw a frisbee or provide them with new soccer balls were experiences we didn't want to miss.

We educators cannot alone solve the challenges of Sierra Leone, but education is empowerment and we are best equipped to share our wealth of knowledge to provide the foundation required to achieve a prosperous and safe Sierra Leone. It is the children of today's generations that will forge the future of this beautiful country. The work of CTF in this area is certainly a beginning and I can honestly say, the investment of our NLTA is making a difference to the educational system in Sierra Leone and throughout the world. The people of Sierra Leone have a hard

road ahead of them; however, organizations like CTF and the NLTA providing the funding toward education and working with people like Jinah M. Amara, Mr. Julius Fisher and Mary Hawa Turay is the strategy we must embrace.

Rodney Drover is Principal of St. Paul's Junior High in St. John's.



PROJECT OVERSEAS 2017 Teachers' Action for Teaching Volunteer for Project Overseas with CTF!

*Are you ready for something more in your professional life?
Are you looking for a larger, more global view of education?
As a teacher, do you feel you have more to offer, and more to learn?
Are you ready for a personal and professional adventure?*

If yes, Project Overseas (PO) might be for you!

CTF seeks English and French-speaking Canadian teachers who are interested in volunteering during July and August to offer in-services in a wide range of subjects and levels, in various developing countries.

Application criteria include:

- membership in a provincial or territorial teacher organization that supports PO
- a valid teachers' certificate
- at least five full years teaching in Canada by July 2017
- Canadian citizenship
- excellent health and ability to work in developing country conditions
- flexibility, mature judgment, skills and a strong willingness to put a team and project's needs above personal needs
- Canadian passport valid until at least March 2018 (proof that a passport application has been made will be accepted)

PO is a volunteer experience. Administrative, travel, and living expenses are borne by CTF, provincial and territorial teachers' organizations (which are CTF members). No salaries or honoraria are paid.

TO APPLY:

If you are considering applying, please contact
Beverly Park, bpark@nlta.nl.ca, Tel: 726-3223 ext. 244 or 1-800-563-3599

Application forms are available by calling the NLTA or online at
www.nlta.nl.ca; Click "FORMS", then P – Project Overseas

Please forward application to:

Beverly Park, Programs and Services
Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association
3 Kenmount Road, St. John's, NL A1B 1W1
Tel: 726-3223 or 1-800-563-3599

Deadline for applications: **November 10, 2016**



School Administrators' Council Distinguished School Administrator of the Year Award Winner 2015-16

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 vigorous 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 2015-16 recipient of the SAC Distinguished School Administrator of the Year Award was Denise Francis. Denise is the Principal at St. James Elementary in Port aux Basques. Denise's nomination form stated the following background information.

Denise is a transformative leader with extensive experience as a high school and elementary school administrator. Denise places a strong emphasis on tracking student achievement using a variety of data and encourages teachers to systematically use targeted effective practices and interventions to build students' capacity to learn. Currently, over 80 per cent of students in Grade 3 score at Level 3 in Creative Writing and Persuasive Writing. There are similar improvements in students' results for Grade 6. Denise has spearheaded the development and use of a Math Assessment Framework and has encouraged the sharing of best practices among her colleagues. She provides the time,

support and resources required for staff to grow professionally and her impact on changing culture and practices, while improving outcomes, is evident in all aspects of student life at St. James Elementary.

The photo below shows the 2015-16 SAC Distinguished School Administrator of the Year Award recipient, Denise Francis, receiving the personal plaque from her colleague and NLTA Executive member, Colin Short. Denise's mom, Mrs. Helen Meade, is holding the SAC perpetual plaque. The award was presented at a special assembly held at St. James Elementary on behalf of the sponsor, Ruby Manuel, a Realtor with Royal LePage, Atlantic Homestead.



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 2016-17 award, please contact George Tucker, NLTA Administrative Officer, Programs and Services, at gtucker@nlta.nl.ca.

Beverley Park Honoured with CTF Special Recognition Award

This past July, Beverley Park, Senior Administrative Officer, Programs and Services with the NLTA, was honoured with the CTF Special Recognition Award at the Canadian Teachers' Federation Annual General Meeting in Montreal.

Although Beverley came from a small community in Newfoundland and Labrador she made her way internationally through her interest in education and in social issues.

She won a scholarship to attend the Lester B. Pearson United World College of the Pacific (Pearson College UWC), in British Columbia, an experience she describes nothing short of "serendipitous". Her experience in the international school helped shape the direction of her career.

"I came from a modest family so winning the scholarship was really a turning point for me," Beverley says.

Attending the international college really broadened her view. "It was a learning place not only academic-wise, but also in exposing me to a vast array of cultures, a chance that I did not get in my small community in Newfoundland," she explains.

As Beverley took on the teacher profession, her

experience at Pearson College UWC resonated with her. She got involved in international education programs in various places, such as Kuala Lumpur, Togo, Guinea, Burkina Faso, Uganda, Sierra Leone, Mauritania, Mali, India, and Afghanistan. Internationally, she first got involved through the Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF), advocating for access to education, particularly for girls' education and giving leadership training for teachers.

Beverley stresses the importance of building rapport and strengthening relationships with the people with whom you meet and work. "You're interacting with a group of committed people, and you're building within them not only the capacity and the skills they need, but you're also building up confidence," she explains. "That's why when it comes to resources, human capital is so important: you need to invest in people and in relationships."

By working overseas with teachers and teacher organizations, she had the opportunity to help teacher colleagues develop the skills they might be lacking to provide a better quality education.

As a major human rights advocate, Beverley took part in the Association's Committee on Equality Rights when she first joined the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association (NLTA) as a member. Once she joined the NLTA as staff, she became the staff consultant for the committee, now known as the Equity Issues in Education Committee. As well, in her first year as a teacher, Beverley was a founding member of a local Status of Women Council in Channel-Port aux Basques, Newfoundland.

"We have the potential to attract change. We can't just ignore what's going on around us and in the world," she says. "You need to know your place in the world and take responsibility for your actions," she concludes.

Beverley was nominated by the NLTA for her leadership, work and initiatives.



HATS OFF!

Have you recently won an award or know of a teacher who has been recognized for their contribution to the education of children in Newfoundland and Labrador? If so, we'd like to hear from you. Please send information on the award as well as a profile of the award winner(s) to:

Lesley-Ann Browne, Editor, *The Bulletin*
Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association
3 Kenmount Road, St. John's, NL A1B 1W1
E-mail: labrowne@nlta.nl.ca



Meditation – Training the Mind

by JUDY BERANGER

This past school year I had the privilege of facilitating sessions with 38 schools across Newfoundland and Labrador. As educators we are always hungry for new tools to add to our toolbox of ideas – striving to add that special something to our repertoire of skills, not only for our students but also for our own self-care. In my travels, I learned that many teachers have some form of “meditation” as part of their resource kit of self-care.

Like any other tool, meditation takes practice and commitment before we come to understand how it can make a difference in our lives. It is well understood that integration time is necessary to truly embody any new learning. In the words of a teacher who is committed to practising meditation: *I find meditation and focusing to be very helpful tools in accessing my inner knowing. I find less balance in my life when I do not take daily quiet time. This focus keeps me from reacting to situations and leads me to responding from a wiser place. It has increased my productivity and helped clear my mind.*

Ironically I often used the excuse that I do not have time for meditation, I am just too busy. However, the opposite has proven true in that when I take the time I am much more effective in everything I do.

Inner peace practices that have been around for thousands of years include prayer, yoga, Tai Chi, Qigong, mindfulness, mantras, focusing and transcendental meditation. What do they have in common? They all have components and elements that will promote and create a relaxed state of well-being.

David Rome, in his book: *Your Body Knows the Answer* says: *Accessing the body's more holistic knowing can bring us back into accurate relationship with our life situations. This often involves acknowledging aspects of our lives that are not as we would like them to be, or as we would like others to see us. But knowing ourselves as we really are, and seeing things as they really are, provide the only basis for a wholesome, genuine, and truly productive life. "Know thyself" the ancient Greeks taught.*

Meditation is the art of training our mind and ensuring mind and body integration. With this practice our mind can connect to greater awareness and acceptance of who we are, how and why we act and react the way we do, and how we want to evolve. It can lead to an ability to grow even stronger relation-

ships along with more effective problem solving skills.

The curious paradox is that when I accept myself as I am, then I can change. ~ Carl Rogers

Who can do meditation?

Anyone with the desire. What does it involve? Meditation includes the essentials of keeping focused attention on deep breathing, checking in for increased awareness of body discomfort, tension or pain, followed by breathing through any discomfort, tension or pain and moving into relaxation. It takes a little time and focused attention and pays off in dividends. Some people like to use mantras and there are endless examples of meditations free online with YouTube.

The more skilled we become, the more flexible we can be as to where we are able to meditate – such as long waits in the car or practically anywhere we can carve out a few uninterrupted moments. The regular practice of meditation can help us deal with stressful situations like being around people who exhibit high conflict personality symptoms, long traffic delays, people keeping you waiting for inordinate amounts of time, or even waiting in grocery line ups. Regular practice can also activate the resilience and ability necessary to remain strong and respectful in what can sometimes be disrespectful situations. The actual time spent per day can be as little as a few minutes and up to ten or twenty minutes and longer depending on work/life schedule. As teachers, we spend so much time doing things, trying to meet all the expectations within our numerous roles, that it is not uncommon to feel overwhelmed with responsibility. Meditation is an opportunity to increase energy, peace, calm and balance that would not otherwise present itself.

David Simon says, “Meditation is like a bath for the mind. It clears and refreshes our windows of perception, allowing more light, love, and happiness to flow into our lives.”

Evidence-based Research

It is worthy of note that there is evidence-based research available as to the value of meditation in classrooms as well. Waters, et al in the *Educational Psychology Review*, (2015) reported on the effect of meditation interventions in schools. They reviewed

studies to determine how meditation affected middle school, high school, and college students in regards to academic achievement and well-being. They also compared the effectiveness of different forms of meditative programs on student outcomes. Their research indicates that meditation programs have significant positive effects on well-being and social competence, stress reduction, and cognitive enhancement.

In the words of a high school teacher here in Newfoundland and Labrador: *In the school where I teach we are building on the concept of quiet time and have offered meditation during lunch hours and received the following feedback: relaxing; helpful for stress release; calmed the mind; gave personal time not usually available. We have also offered daily meditation cards and I was pleasantly surprised how several of our participants wanted access to these cards once they had graduated. Many have been using them on a daily basis.*

Benefits of Meditation

There are hundreds of research studies on Transcendental Meditation that document its effectiveness in relieving stress and anxiety, improving brain function, cardiovascular health, and general well-being. The Mayo Clinic, along with many recognized experts such as Roger Gabriel and Deepak Chopra, quote a growing body of research on the scientific benefits of meditation. They say it produces immediate and long term benefits for both body and mind.

Physical benefits:

- Decreases inflammation and strengthens the immune system
- Stimulates the body's self repair mechanisms and self regulation
- Relaxes breathing, assists us in properly breathing, lowers blood pressure and decreases heart rate
- Increases levels of the enzyme telomerase, which helps slow the aging process
- Turns off the genes that contribute to diseases such as diabetes, dementias, autoimmune illnesses and some types of cancer
- Turns on the genes responsible for good health

Psychological benefits of meditation:

- Reduces feelings of stress and increases feelings of relaxation and peace
- Expands experience of healing emotions such as love, compassion, joy, calmness and gratitude
- Decreases experience of painful emotions that constrict awareness, e.g. fear, anger, guilt, shame, depression
- Enables a more conscious response rather than a reactive response in tense situations, thus lowering our participation in dramatic situations
- Boosts better relationships
- Improves sleep
- Decreases addictive behavior

Deepak Chopra so eloquently captures the essence of meditation: *the true purpose of meditation isn't to get away from it all but to get in touch with the all... to find the source of all peace, joy, love, creativity and bliss.*

As a start, consider just practicing being mindful and associate meditation with pleasing things that give you joy like fresh air, nature, music, a welcoming smile, appreciation from a student or colleague, savoring a hot drink, noticing the gift of your voice and your ability to hear, hanging out with someone you love, thinking about how resilient you have been/or are when times are tough.

Meditation is not just one more thing to fit into an already jam-packed day. We may be able to squeeze a few minutes when we first awake in the morning or last thing at night. Early morning meditation may help you focus throughout the day, and late night meditation may help you sleep more deeply.

There are an endless array of trained people and modes of meditation including numerous phone apps available to choose from. Find one that works for your personality, schedule and life. Making meditation a part of your lifestyle and selecting the type of meditation that's best for you can go a long way to increasing quality of life and safeguarding optimal health.

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).

As a start, consider browsing these examples of the many websites available:

- www.chopra.com/ccl/guided-meditations
- marc.ucla.edu/body.cfm?id=22
- www.davidlynchfoundation.org/
- www.macleans.ca/society/health/bringing-mindfulness-to-the-school-curriculum/
- www.edutopia.org/stw-student-stress-meditation
- greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/research_round_up_school_based_mindfulness_programs
- www.youtube.com/watch?v=Oj0ewBvr6zM



Becoming Reggio-Inspired

by CATHY BAKER

In August 2015, I decided to transform my classroom into a Reggio-inspired play-based learning environment. After attending the Summer Institute on FDK and doing some research into the Reggio-Emilia approach, I reflected on my current classroom practice, and decided it was finally time for a change. Little did I know that setting up my classroom would be the first step on a year-long path that has truly transformed me as an educator.



A child checks and records the weather outside.



Children mix coloured water over a light table.

How has the physical environment transformed?

The classroom constantly evolves with the children and their interests... one day it's a garden, the next, a hospital, the next, a NASCAR track. I have come to understand that it is the children's space, not mine. Each day, I enter with my ears ready to listen, my eyes seeking evidence of learning and my mind open and flexible enough to just "go with the flow."

What is the "flow"? I can honestly say that, a year ago, I wouldn't have been able to describe it. I had seen it on occasion in my classroom over the past 10 years, usually as a result of me "letting" children play. The children were happy and engaged when it happened, and I often found myself feeling relaxed and reassured that they were creating, collaborating, cooperating.

These days, the "flow" is a tangible presence in my classroom. Capable children collaboratively construct their learning in the process of everyday experiences and projects. The curriculum "emerges" and I respond – extending, encouraging, and documenting the pro-

cess with photos, videos, and written notes. The learning is "visible" in the children's context; it bubbles up out of their play, flowing naturally all around us. The mood is comfortable, happy, relaxed. Children are able to learn better and are also more able to self-regulate their emotions in this environment.

How are the children different?

After many years with young children, I can honestly say that, deep down, I knew that the children in my class were not happy. Sure, they were compliant, eager to listen, hardworking, and productive. As I write those words now, I remember saying them many times over the years with a sense of pride and accomplishment about what I had "achieved" in my classroom, how "well" I had taught them.

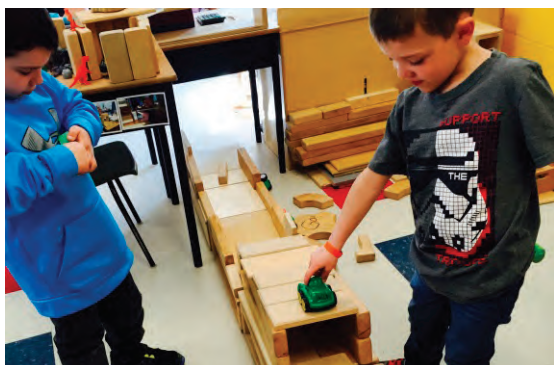
The children who greet me each morning are strong, capable, and resilient. They are rich with wonder and knowledge. They are curious, talkative, and confident. They know I am listening to WHAT they say and noticing WHO they are. Because of this, they are eager to share their ideas, experiences, and feelings. Our communications with each other are respectful, understanding, and patient.

Do they sometimes make poor choices or react with frustration at a situation? Of course. During those moments, I remember that I have had 40+ years to learn how to behave, and they have had 5 or 6. They are not "little adults." They are learning, and learning typically involves making mistakes.

Most of all, as the curriculum "emerges" from their play, I notice that the children are independent and critical thinkers, innovative creators and builders, and compassionate carers and helpers, they blossom and grow beyond the limits of the "curriculum" and I am most often AMAZED at what they know and who they are.

How am I different?

I am more "me" than I ever was before. As I interact with each child on a more individual basis, I am more respectful, less dismissive, more engaged. I am now present in each moment, purposeful and focused on the emerging curriculum, and much more patient than ever before.



A bridge with a ramp and covered tunnel.

I am happier at work, more relaxed in my classroom, and feeling a greater sense of efficacy and accomplishment than ever before. I am less stressed, less frantic, less worried. Trusting children is hard and trusting yourself is harder. Believing that who they are and who I am is enough for us to embark on a daily learning journey together fills me with a sense of overwhelming relief. I no longer push and they no longer push back.

We flow together each day, living, learning, and growing more connected.

Assessment and documentation gets easier as time goes by. I realize that by truly KNOWING them, I am able to respond to their needs seamlessly and effortlessly.

Where do I begin?

This year I have been asked the same question many times – where do I begin? The problem is that there is no easy answer – no model of “best practice” that you can adopt. To become Reggio-inspired is to accept that there is no “best practice” other than what emerges from the children in your classroom. According to Loris Malaguzzi, above all, you must possess a “willingness to question all your own abilities, your knowledge, to become humble. Only then will you be able to listen to the child, to set off on a common search, to ‘educate each other together.’”

So, embrace uncertainty. Let go of what you “know.” Listen humbly to your children and listen to your heart. Take that first step, and watch and listen as your own journey begins to unfold.

Cathy Baker is a passionately curious, Reggio-inspired Kindergarten teacher in rural central Newfoundland. Follow her journey on Twitter @ Ms. Baker's K. She can also be reached at cathybaker@nlesd.ca.

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I am confident that Dean will make an excellent choice for President of the NLTA. As a classroom teacher, I would have confidence in Dean's leadership to represent all teachers in our province.

Pamela Williams – Teacher, Upper Gullies Elementary, CBS.

ON DECEMBER 6TH

ELECT DEAN INGRAM AS NLTA PRESIDENT

Contact Information

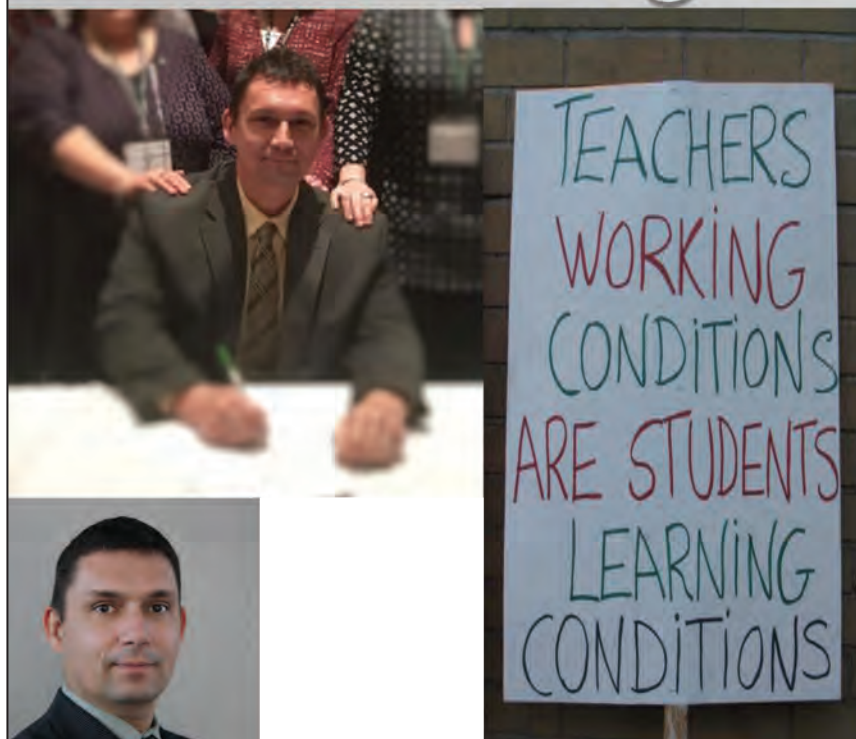
Email: d Ingram@nlta.nl.ca

Phone: 427 2250

Website: users.eastlink.ca/~deaningram

I truly believe that Dean Ingram would make a great NLTA President! Dean has the commitment, knowledge, character, determination, and exemplary work ethic to be a great NLTA President. I would highly recommend Dean Ingram for the next NLTA President. Dean, you have my vote!!!!

Tracey Payne - President of Humber Branch, Classroom teacher – Corner Brook Regional High, Corner Brook





Looking to Ignite Curiosity and Excite the Mind? Host a STEM Expo!

by STEPHANIE COLLINS

At the end of each school year, I often find myself reflecting back on the year that was; the personal triumphs of our students, the implementation of new curriculum, and the various activities and field trips that were so carefully planned to ensure student engagement and meaningful learning. Many times my heart is filled with pride, sometimes there is a tinge of frustration or even melancholy, but this year was different! This year I closed the year feeling excited, ignited and proud; proud to have been part of a team that planned and delivered the first ever Morris Academy STEM Expo!

What is STEM? Why a STEM Expo? STEM stands for Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics. For the last three years, many Morris Academy teachers have been heavily involved in completing action research in the area of STEM education. Through involvement in the Teachers In Action (TIA) program at Memorial University, and under the guidance of Dr. Karen Goodnough and the TIA team, teachers have received funding and substitute leave time to engage in teacher inquiry focused on personally significant areas of STEM education. As part of this year long professional learning opportunity, Morris Academy teachers have researched a variety of topics including:

- the 5-E Learning Model
- inquiry-based teaching and learning processes
- design thinking and creativity in Mathematics and Science curricula
- numeracy blocks
- the impact of technology on student motivation and engagement
- coding and computer programming
- investigating growth from seed to plant

STEM and inquiry-based methodologies have become a way of life at Morris Academy. Through a series of carefully scaffolded lessons that utilize hands-on/minds-on activities to access grade level curriculum, students are constantly engaged in questioning, observing and investigating. "I Wonder..." questions are constantly generated, investigated, tested and refined. When the idea of hosting a STEM Expo arose at a meeting of the 21st Century Teaching and Learning Committee, the discussion was not

about what or how, it was about when.

On June 22, 2016, the second last day of school, Morris Academy held its first ever STEM Expo. What an amazing day of learning for all Kindergarten to Grade 5 students as children became junior scientists, engineers, programmers and mathematicians for the day! During the morning session, students rotated with their grade level every 30 minutes through six different presentations. Volunteers from Let's Talk Science engaged the children in six hands-on inquiry-based centres, Bricks 4 Kidz provided opportunities for students to build and test Lego designs, Physical Education teacher Sharon Brophy taught students about coding through a Kinesthetic approach while substitute teacher Sarah Lawlor engaged groups with BeeBot coding challenges. Mr. David Gill from the Faculty of Education introduced students to 3D printing and Lisa Breen from Science Rendezvous excited the senses with mixtures, concoctions and explosions, not to mention gasps, oohs and aahs.



Let's Talk Science ignited student curiosity.

The afternoon session proved to be just as exciting! For our primary students, rotations with MMSB and Agriculture in the Classroom were hands on and informative. Tom Walsh from the Teachers In Action group engaged children in designing, building and testing their very own Rube Goldberg machine. For our elementary students, NL Coders visited and engaged children in completing a Scratch programming project and Kathryn Hong's outreach team from the Faculty of Engineering helped students to inves-

tigate the science behind paper airplanes, robots, and structures. The day was complete with a trip to outer space in the huge Digital StarLab.



Grade One students learning to code! Will their script be successful in getting the Beebot home?


Our very first Morris Academy STEM Expo was an amazing success! The community response from presenters and volunteers was overwhelming and the engagement and learning of our students was awesome! For me, one of the highlights of the day came from a little girl in Kindergarten who looked up and excitedly said, "I want to be a Scientist when I grow up!" I knew at that point that all the planning, preparation, and time that our School Development committee devoted to making this day a reality, was worth every minute. As you begin a new year, consider engaging your students in STEM activities and inquiry-based learning. You will be sure to ignite curiosity and excite the mind in both your teachers and your students.

To learn more about the Morris Academy STEM Expo visit our school Twitter page @MorrisAcademy1 #MASTEMExpo. To learn about STEM projects at Morris Academy visit www.stemsistersnl.com or www.mun.ca/tia.




Grade 4 students creating simple machines using Lego.

Stephanie Collins is a Grade Two Teacher at Morris Academy in Mount Pearl. She is an active member of the NLTA Math and Science Special Interest Council, a third year participant of Teachers In Action and one of the STEM Sisters.



ELECT
Derek Drover
NLTA VICE-PRESIDENT
Integrity...Experience...Perseverance!

ddrover@nlta.nl.ca or derek.drover@yahoo.ca
 (709) 293-0383 [@DroverDerek](https://twitter.com/DroverDerek)





Supporting Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder

by KENDRA LANE

Randy Lewis is an American businessman who, as Senior Vice-President of Walgreens, built the logistics network for 8000 stores and 20 distribution centres across the United States. More than that, Lewis pioneered an inclusive, hiring model that resulted in over 10% of Walgreens workforce having a disclosed disability. Inspired and motivated by his son with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Lewis became a passionate advocate who led by example and changed the landscape of disability employment.

Lewis shares his remarkable story in his book "No Greatness without Goodness", and also in person with audiences around the world. During his presentations, the charismatic Lewis shares a 'secret weapon' to his success employing individuals with disabilities. "ATP", he says; "Ask the Person."

Just like professionals in human resources, professionals in education spend countless hours brainstorming and problem solving about the best ways to support individuals based on their performance, behaviour, and what is observed. We read resources and discuss with colleagues to determine how to help individuals reach their potential, achieve their goals, and define success. But how often do we ask the person directly? Lewis challenges those who are working

with individuals with disabilities to make sure they do just that.

So that is what I did! In previous articles I shared numerous resources, strategies, and perspectives to use when supporting students with ASD. Now we can hear from students themselves. We asked current students and recent graduates on the spectrum to answer the following question: "What was the most meaningful or helpful support you received in school?" Below are some of their responses:

- *It was better when (my student assistant) explained the things I didn't understand. I liked it when the teachers took the time to help me catch up on school work and stay after school to help.*
- *In school, I had help with taking and organizing notes. My IRT teacher also helped me with assignments and showed me ways to study for tests. Most times I wrote my tests in a quiet room. She also helped me with listening and speaking skills. She showed me ways to lower down my anxiety.*
- *The most important help (from teachers) came from having someone scribe for me and allowing me to go outside the class to take deep breaths.*
- *The bell at my Jr. High school was very loud. I have hypersensitive hearing, which means that noises are*

Autism Society, Newfoundland Labrador presents: Coping with Anxiety & Autism Spectrum Disorder: Techniques That Help

Monday, November 7th, 2016 at the Holiday Inn, St. John's

New and Current ASNL Member Registration: \$219

Non-Member Registration: \$259

Deadline to Register: Friday October 28th, 2016

Presented by: Adriana Karka, Training Institute Faculty

This workshop is designed for teachers, parents/caregivers and other professionals working with individuals with ASD – in the school, home and/or community. Participants will learn about the impact of mild to severe anxiety in the daily lives of individuals with an Autism Spectrum Disorder.

**For more information, and to register, contact ASNL at
(709) 722-2803 | www.autism.nf.net | info@autism.nf.net**



amplified in my ears, so therefore, the school bell was even louder to me. It frightened me every time it went off. There was a bell directly across the hallway from my math classroom. As the last few minutes of class would approach, I'd become anxious knowing the bell was soon going to ring and I had trouble concentrating on my work because my brain was more focused on the bell. The teacher understood how much it bothered me and made sure to always close the door 5 minutes before the bell so it wouldn't be as loud. I really appreciated that.

- The teachers and assistants helped me by putting me in small groups instead of big ones and giving me breaks when I got overwhelmed.

- The most important things that helped me cope through high school were: being allowed to work alone during group work, or being put in preselected groups; being allowed to read or listen to music to focus and block out noise; having permission to move and bring objects (acupressure rings) into tests and exams; doing presentations one on one with the teacher; being exempt from attending assemblies/having permission to wear headphones during assemblies; and leaving class a minute early to avoid the crowded hallways.

- That (determination and perseverance to overcome many challenges), combined with the teachers' kindness and willingness to sometimes lend a hand if necessary, is ultimately the sum of what helped me get through school successfully.

- When I told my teacher I have Asperger's, he asked a lot of questions. He asked me to explain it and how it affected me. I liked that a lot because it showed he wanted to learn how to better teach me...if I don't understand something, he takes the time to explain it to me in a way that I can understand.

An autism diagnosis can present significant communication challenges; having discussions like these may not always be reasonable. Lewis' point, however, is not lost. Even individuals who have limited or no language still have some general basic communicative abilities – actions, expressions, or even behaviours. What is most important is that we, as professionals, take the time to stop and clear our minds of assumptions; to make an effort to ask every student, including those with ASD or any other diagnoses, what they need to succeed. Please visit www.autism.nf.net to register for the Geneva Centre Training Institute's Coping with Anxiety & Autism Spectrum Disorder: Techniques That Help on November 7, 2016, at the Holiday Inn, St. John's.

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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This Is A True Story.

The only thing that will save us now, is, LOVE.

I am a Teacher.

I faithfully serve an Education system that is flawed and compromised and on it's way to being broken. I serve every day in the trenches with others who are asked to do more and more with less and less. But it is wrong and ultimately self defeating for a UNION of TEACHERS to permit this to continue. Why would you possibly think that the 'top' deserve more and more?

**Candidate for
NLTA President
2017-19**

**LORI
JACKMAN**
Mom. Teacher. Advocate.

To learn more visit my website: VoteLoriJackman.com

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Take heart – with 5% Cash Back on any first-time mortgage, your house can become a home very quickly. It's your cash to do with as you please, so add some bling to any room in the house. You can even take care of some expenses you've accumulated along the way. It's up to you. The FastTrack 5% CASHBACK Mortgage gets you the home you want and the things you need. Come into one of our branches today. We'll show you how a new home earns you cash right now.

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2016 Financial Information Seminars

Registration Form

(please print)

Name:

Mailing Address:

.....

Postal Code:

Home Telephone:

Social Insurance Number*:

School Name:

School Telephone:

E-mail:

** 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.*

Have you attended a previous financial information session? ☐ Yes ☐ No

The session will be held:

December 3, 2016

Hampton Inn & Suites, St. John's

Please submit registration form

by November 18, 2016 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)

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

NEWS & EVENTS

RESONATE 2016 MUSIC EDUCATORS' CONFERENCE

October 14-15, 2016

MUN School of Music, St. John's. The NLTA Music Special Interest Council is pleased to offer sessions on many different topics relating to music education. As well, our friends from the Canadian Music Educators' Association will be joining us. Come hang out with your colleagues, have a chat, share resources, and reconnect. It'll be a time! To register for RESONATE 2016, please visit www.nlmsic.com.

While you're in town, check out the MUN School of Music 40th Reunion. We have collaborated to throw a big bash. For more information visit www.mun.ca/music.

TLC – TEACHER LIBRARIANS CONNECTING WORKSHOP

October 21, 2016

Waterford Valley High Library, St. John's, 8:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. TLNL SIC (Teacher Librarians of NL Special Interest Council) is hosting a PD workshop. Are you responsible for the running of your school library? Do you have questions? We will be offering Teacher Librarians a Professional Learning day that will include discussions on leadership, technology, collaboration, and library organization. Our special guest speaker will be Beth Maddigan, Education Librarian, MUN Faculty of Education. **Please register by October 16** in the PD Calendar of the NLESD Website.

PLEASE NOTE: This PL opportunity will need to be approved and covered by your school administration from their bank of days for teacher PD. For more information contact Beth Power, bethpower@nlesd.ca.

PHYSICAL & HEALTH EDUCATION 2017 NATIONAL CONFERENCE – PHE CANADA & PESIC CALL FOR PRESENTERS

May 4-6, 2017

St. John's. Theme: *Rock Solid Foundations... Energizing Futures*. Presentation proposals are now being accepted for the 2017 National Conference. The Conference provides an opportunity for delegates to network with colleagues and increase their knowledge and skills to foster healthy active living for children and youth in the school community. Share your ideas and expertise at www.phecanada.ca/events/2017-national-conference/call-presenters. **Submission Deadline: October 18, 2016.**

CCPA CONFERENCE (CANADIAN COUNSELLING & PSYCHOTHERAPY ASSOC.)

May 16-19, 2017

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

2017 Convention and Province-Wide Vote Deadlines

November 6, 2016

- Mailing of Election issue of *The Bulletin*.
- Final deadline for receipt of nominations for offices of President and Vice-President.

December 6, 2016

Province-wide vote for the election of President and Vice-President.

December 19, 2016

Run-off ballot for the election of President and Vice-President (if required).

January 19, 2017

Proposed changes, amendments or repeal of NLTA By-Laws to be actioned by Convention must be presented in writing to the NLTA.

February 19, 2017

- All nominations for Provincial Executive for publication in the Convention issue of *The Bulletin* must be postmarked or hand delivered to NLTA Office.
- Names of elected delegates and alternates to Convention should be forwarded to the NLTA Office for printing in the Convention issue of *The Bulletin*.
- Resolutions to Convention must be received at the NLTA Office.

March 19, 2017

Mailing of Convention issue of *The Bulletin*.

April 18-21, 2017

Biennial General Meeting.

April 20, 2017

Final deadline for receipt of nominations for Provincial Executive.

Dates to Remember

October 2016

- Oct 13-14 Pre-Retirement Seminar, Corner Brook
- Oct 14-15 School Rep Seminar, Grand Falls-Windsor
- Oct 20 **Deadline:** PD Fund applications
- Oct 20-21 Pre-Retirement Seminar, Grand Falls-Windsor
- Oct 21-22 School Rep Seminar, St. John's
- Oct 27 NLTA Provincial Executive Meeting
- Oct 28-29 NLTA Joint Council Meeting

November 2016

- Nov 4-5 School Rep Seminar, Corner Brook
- Nov 10 **Deadline:** Project Overseas Applications
- Nov 17 **Deadline:** PD Fund applications
- Nov 17-18 Pre-Retirement Seminar, St. John's

December 2016

- Dec 1-2 Pre-Retirement Seminar, St. John's
- Dec 2-3 NLTA Provincial Executive Meeting
- Dec 3 Financial Information Seminar, St. John's
- Dec 8-9 Pre-Retirement Seminar, St. John's
- Dec 15 **Deadline:** PD Fund applications

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Amendment to the Teachers' Pension Plan

Effective September 1, 2016, a teacher who resigns from teaching with less than 24.5 years of pension service shall be entitled to receive a reduced pension benefit on the first day of the month following their 55th birthday. However, the amount of reduction will be calculated based on an actuarially calculated percentage reduction per month for each month that a teacher's age is short of reaching their 62nd birthday. The actuarial calculation is completed as of the date that the teacher elects to receive their pension. The actuarial reduction is estimated to be approximately 6% to 7% per year.

For example, a teacher who resigns at age 48 with 20 years of pension service and elects to receive their pension at age 55 (7 years prior to their 62nd birthday) would have their pension reduced by approximately 42% to 49%, depending on the actuarial assumptions applicable at the time of election. If the same teacher waited until age 60 (2 years prior to their 62nd birthday), the actuarial reduction would be approximately 12% to 14%.

Any teacher who might consider this option is advised to seek the services and advice from a Certified Financial Planner before deciding.

If you have any questions regarding this amendment, please contact officials at the Department of Finance, Pensions Division at 709-729-3931 or 3932 or an Administrative Officer in Programs and Services at the NLTA at 709-726-3223 or 1-800-563-3599.

Notice for Substitute Teachers

Information for Substitute Teachers is available on the NLTA website at www.nlta.nl.ca. Click "**Programs and Services**" and then "**Substitute Teachers**".

For any questions re substitute teacher issues please contact:

Ian Crewe

Administrative Officer

NLTA Programs and Services

726-3223 or 1-800-563-3599, ext. 230

icrewe@nlta.nl.ca

ATTENTION! NEW TEACHERS

Information for New Teachers is available on the NLTA website at www.nlta.nl.ca. Click "Programs and Services" and then "Beginning/Early Career Teachers"

If new teachers wish to receive any of the information on the website on a flash drive, please email:

newteachers@nlta.nl.ca



APPLYING FOR EDUCATIONAL LEAVE?

Applications for Educational Leave for the 2017-18 School Year
will be posted on the NLTA website at www.nlta.nl.ca.

Application is made to the District. Districts deadlines are as follows:

NLESD: January 13, 2017 • **CSFP:** January 13, 2017

