



# What is TESIC?

by TOM KENNEDY

Special Interest Councils (SICs) are established to (i) advocate for their respective memberships in matters relevant to education and (ii) offer a professional learning (PL) program which focuses on teaching and learning in it's specialized area.

The Technology Education Special Interest Council (TESIC) is an untiring advocate for all things technology related. Whether concerns are raised regarding the proper integration of technology at the school level or staffing to support 21st Century Learning, TESIC can offer a unified voice for the teachers of Newfoundland and Labrador.

At the NLTA Biennial General Meeting (BGM), TESIC advocates on behalf of its membership. SICs send representatives to the BGM, representatives that are authorized to submit resolutions; resolutions that can gain further support and affect change. One such resolution from the last NLTA BGM (2013) was the suggested formation of a committee to give teachers a voice regarding the mass integration of technology in our province, a resolution that led to the establishment of the NLTA Technology Education Advisory Committee.

Beyond it's advocacy mandate, TESIC endeavors to execute a strong PL program highlighting 21st Century Learning and technology integration. Through a partnership with the Newfoundland and Labrador English School District (NLESD), TESIC has been at the forefront of technology integration and associated PL throughout the province. The Council's dynamic catalogue of professional learning has grown to reflect an evolving classroom. Whether it is a session posted to NLESD's Member Services or a customized school-based event, TESIC has been successful in fulfilling a demand for technology-centered learning.



## TESIC CONFERENCE AND BGM 2013

The largest single event offered by TESIC is the Conference and BGM, a full day of professional learning available to any interested teacher in the province. Attendees travel from across the province to experience PL sessions focusing on either Technology Education or the integration of Educational Technology.

### Keynote

Similar to previous years, the keynote was selected based on current trends in education. With today's emphasis on 21st Century Learning and the integration of educational technologies, Mike Fisher was invited as keynote presenter and session facilitator. Specializing in the integration of instructional technologies and the transformation of curriculum design, Fisher engaged conference attendees with an interactive keynote address exploring the potential of online and device based apps, tools he considers to be a necessary toolbox for modern learning. After the opening evening of the conference, members were energized. TESIC's keynote had successfully set the tone for the conference.

### PL Sessions

The professional learning offered this past fall was a merger of sessions focusing on either Technology Education or the integration of Educational Technology. The mixture was well received, with many attendees welcoming the specialized learning opportunity often unavailable outside of the TESIC PL program. Overall, the breakout sessions formed a smorgasbord of tech related topics, including: skilled trades, intermediate technology education, teaching with *Comic Life*, teaching and learning with mobile technologies, and the advanced use of PowerTeacher Gradebook.

Attendees were also pleased with sessions being offered by extraprovincial facilitators. TESIC's keynote led breakout sessions entitled *TECHformations*, an exploration of student centered uses of technology that foster higher order thinking, and *Upgrade Your Curriculum*, a guided approach to transforming

units to reflect modern learning. Similarly, Apple Canada facilitated two sessions on *Using iPads for Differentiated Learning*, using the iPad to personalize learning, and *Manage and Share Docs with the iPad*, an exploration of how to share documents in the classroom. Ultimately, a fine compliment to an already strong PL breakout list.

### Election of Officers

As per the norm, the BGM and Conference marked the end of a two-year term for the incumbent executive, a culmination of a period of hard work and dedication to professional learning in the province. While not easily replaced, the conference luncheon provided the ideal timing to host the nomination of a slate of candidates to form the new Executive. Similar to previous years, conference registration gives all attendees TESIC membership and, as a result, empowers them to nominate other members for the slate of candidates and vote during the election.

An impressive number of nominations were put forth at the 2013 BGM, a genuine sign of the shared interest of all attendees. The election resulted in an excellent blend, a healthy combination of teachers from various grade levels, academic backgrounds and geographic locations. The following is a breakdown of the current TESIC Executive, serving for 2013-2015:

- **President:** Tom Kennedy, tom@tesic.org
- **Vice-president:** David Gill, david@tesic.org
- **Treasurer:** Charlene Reid, charlene@tesic.org
- **Secretary:** Brigitte White, brigitte@tesic.org
- **Communications:** Neal Tremblett, neal@tesic.org
- **Members-at-large:**
  - Eastern: Jason Aue, jason@tesic.org
  - Central: Corey Downey, corey@tesic.org
  - Western: Rick Collins, rick@tesic.org
  - Labrador: Tara Humber, tara@tesic.org

### A New Term

The new TESIC Executive has re-structured its digital presence with a rebranding of its website, TESIC.ORG. Using a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), teachers can become members of the SIC and access the various resources the site offers. TESIC's new website serves as a means to consolidate membership, host resources, communicate events and can even host discussion regarding technology integration through its forums. The nature of VLE enables active members to help create a go-to place for those looking for collegial support across the province. Council emails have been created to facilitate access to the Executive and serves as a medium for members and non-members to provide feedback.

A new term has begun and is already showing great promise. The Council's PL sessions are underway across the province, school-based events are being scheduled on a weekly basis and membership is growing exponentially. The Technology Education Special Interest Council is creating a community of teachers sharing a passion for technology, a community where there is always room for one more. Free TESIC membership is one click away @ TESIC.ORG

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*Tom Kennedy (B.A., B.Ed., Dip. Tech Ed, M.A. & Ed. (E.F.L.C.)) is a teacher at Carbonear Collegiate and President of the Technology Education Special Interest Council (TESIC).*

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