



NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

ANNUAL REPORT

AGM 1997



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I have the pleasure of introducing to you the first Annual Report of the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association. When the notion of producing an annual report was conceived last year, it was felt to be a great opportunity to promote the Association and the teachers of Newfoundland and Labrador. I also believe it is a great vehicle for summarizing and reviewing the work of the Association.

For the 1996-97 year priorities were established for the Association and responsibilities were assigned to ensure the priorities were actioned. These priorities included pensions, collective bargaining, strategic plan, the Schools Act, classroom issues, release time/in-service/professional development, allocation of teachers/instructional time, and external/internal imaging. Each of these eight priorities will be discussed in this report under the appropriate division.

This Annual Report is aimed at our membership, new teachers, and members of the public who wish to know more about us. Sections like Who We Are, Our Values, and reports on our divisions allow the Association the opportunity to provide a unique approach to telling our story. I trust this will be the first of many annual reports of the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association and that it will be viewed by all as an important resource for the Association and for those interested individuals who want to know more about the teachers of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Art Baggs
NLTA President, 1995-97

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

The Annual Report of the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association chronicles the activities of your Association since AGM 1996. It summarizes the work, on your behalf, of the Association and provides a comprehensive breakdown of work accomplished for the teachers of the province.

The past year has been a demanding one for teachers as we attempt to deal with complex issues such as pensions, collective bargaining, cuts to education and limited resources within the teaching profession. It is also a year in which the Association has been redesigned in an attempt to better position itself to serve teachers.

I trust you will enjoy this first edition of our Annual Report and that you will use it to review the work of the Association on behalf of teachers.

Wayne Russell
NLTA Executive Director

WHO WE ARE

The heart and soul of the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association exists in the classrooms where teachers and students meet. It is this truth, together with the fact that our organization exists to contribute to the well-being of teachers, that must always direct any action NLTA takes.

Created just prior to the start of the 20th century, the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association has played a significant role in the development of the province over the past 100 years, and a major role in the design and implementation of its primary, elementary, and secondary school system.

The Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association has not only been successful during this period of time, but has also played a pivotal role in determining what the education scene would be. It used all of its resources and took whatever steps necessary, including political, to carry forward its agenda. It has always stepped boldly and found leaders to match its grit.

Primary, elementary, and secondary education is now undergoing a major revolutionary change, not only in this province but throughout Canada and in much of the developed world.

The membership of the Association is also undergoing a profound change. The baby boom generation, which completely filled the ranks during the 1970s and 1980s, is now retiring and will be almost completely replaced prior to the end of this decade.

Responding to these changes are the various volunteers who provide governance for the Association. There are various levels of governance of the NLTA from elected office at the Executive Council to Branch Presidents in the field. The groups that provide governance are:

Joint Council

The Joint Council is comprised of Branch Presidents and Provincial Executive. It began as a liaison/discussion group and has now evolved into a decision-making body that assists in directing the work of the Association between Annual General Meetings. Governance of the Association, in reality, has become a shared responsibility between the Annual General Meeting, Joint Council, and Provincial Executive.

Executive

The Constitution and By-Laws place full and complete authority for the direction of the Association between Conventions with the Provincial Executive Council. The Council is elected annually at the Convention and consists of a President, Vice-President, Past-President, and 12 members elected at large. In those years when the Past-President position is vacant, an additional member-at-large is elected.

Table Officers

The Table Officers is a senior committee of the Provincial Executive Council and consists of the President, Vice-President, Past-President, and one member elected at large by the Executive. In those years when the Past-President position is vacant, an additional member-at-large is elected. The role of Table Officers is to assist Provincial Executive in carrying out its mandate and to provide advice and assistance to the President.

Branches

No part of the Association's governance has been studied more thoroughly or given rise to greater challenges than its branches. It is widely accepted that an effective and efficient branch structure is essential to the success of the Association.

ADMINISTRATION

As an organization that not only represents the professional and economic interests of teachers, but also acts as a voice for schools and all that occurs within them, the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association currently requires an army of volunteers, a full-time staff of 30, and external consulting advice. Its operating divisions and sections include:

- Benefits and Economic Services (Teacher Welfare);
- Communications/Printing Services;
- Professional Development;
- Financial Operations and Administration;
- Legal Services and Research;
- Field Services.

The Association operates a full-service printing plant and a group insurance business which is one of the largest in the province; it also controls an extensive investment portfolio. It works with external consultants for legal work, financial investments, pensions, actuarial work, publications, group insurance and financial management, and requires contracts for transportation, accommodation, computer networking and banking.

BENEFITS AND ECONOMIC SERVICES (TEACHER WELFARE)

The [Benefits and Economic Services](#) (Teacher Welfare) activities of the NLTA are designed to advance the objectives of the Association and accomplish this by: promoting the welfare of Newfoundland and Labrador teachers through the establishment and administration of specified services; providing advice, assistance and legal protection in matters related to duties and responsibilities; and negotiating collective agreements which regulate salaries, working conditions and grievance procedures.

Group Insurance

- Communicate information directly to members;
- Oversee Plan operation through Group Insurance Trustees and Group Insurance Committee;
- Work with [Johnson Insurance](#), Administrators, to ensure the Plan is properly administered;
- Deal with appeals from teachers in cases where disagreement arises;
- Negotiate with government for continued improvements in Group Insurance program.

During the 1996-97 school year, Group Insurance Trustees have been actioning the recommendations from the Group Insurance Review Report which was approved at the 1996 AGM. Part of that activity is the development and printing of a new information kit for plan members which will be available some time shortly after the Easter break.

Pensions

- Communicate changes and improvements to pension plan to the general membership;
- Through the Administration Committee work with government to ensure consistent management of pension plan;
- Seek improvements through general negotiations and committee efforts;
- Intercede on teachers' behalf with departmental officials when problems arise.

Since early March, a considerable amount of Association time and resources has been directed towards resolving the pension funding problem. At the time of writing this report, the Provincial Executive is undertaking a comprehensive consultation with teachers concerning the status of a memorandum of understanding which represents a tentative agreement with government for a possible resolution to the pension funding issue.

Grievance/Arbitration

- Assist teachers in bringing concerns and disagreements to grievance;
- Move grievances on to arbitration and work with lawyers in presenting cases before arbitration boards;
- Ensure that outcomes of grievances and arbitration proceedings are used to further improve and consolidate rights with the [Collective Agreement](#).
- Since the 1996 AGM, the Division has handled 157 grievances, five of which have been moved to the arbitration stage.

Collective Agreement Administration

- Interpret articles of agreement;
- Intercede on teachers' behalf with boards and government departments;
- Attempt to clarify meaning of Collective Agreement and improve same in successive rounds of bargaining.

It is imperative that teachers have a copy of the Collective Agreements and become knowledgeable of the terms and conditions of employment. It is especially important for teachers to understand the grievance procedure and the applicable time lines concerning same.

This year we introduced a new publication entitled Benefits and Economic Services, designed to improve teacher awareness of the Collective Agreement and the fashion in which it functions.

Collective Bargaining

- Analyze components of current agreements;
- Work with committee and general membership in developing opening packages;
- Undertake the process of negotiating both the Provincial and Labrador West agreements.

This is a very time consuming procedure and, all too often, is perceived to dominate all other work in which the Association is involved.

Negotiations for a new Collective Agreement commenced in December 1996. At the time of writing this report, the Provincial Negotiating Team is actively pursuing all those issues brought forward in the NLTA opening proposals, with the hope that a new Collective Agreement will be in place prior to the commencement of the 1997-98 school year.

Legal Aid

- Made available to teachers for arbitration and EI Umpire appeals;
- Made available to teachers for advice and assistance in dealing with problems that arise from the teaching situation;
- Requests for legal services must proceed through the Benefits and Economic Services administrative staff at the NLTA office.

The Association has become more heavily involved over the past decade in dealing with increasing numbers of problems as they relate to court actions. There has been a large increase in the amount of time spent on legal problems and in the funding needed to address those problems.

During the 1996-97 school year, the NLTA has undertaken most of its legal work through the services of the NLTA's newly formed Legal Services and Research division. This initiative involved the hiring of in-house legal counsel for a one year trial period. The effectiveness of this approach will be assessed from the points of view of service to the Association, service to teachers and long-term cost implications. Since the 1996 AGM, 71 new legal cases have been activated. Further reference to the work of the Legal Services and Research division is found elsewhere in this report.

Employment Insurance

- Interpret Employment Insurance Act and Regulations;
- Report changes in the Act and Regulations;
- Act on behalf of teachers in appeals before the Board of Referees and the Umpire;
- Prepare Executive Policy statements.

Teachers should understand eligibility requirements and conditions for disentanglement of benefits, together with the process of appeal.

The 1996-97 school year has been a busy and problematic one for the application of employment insurance for teachers. The new Employment Insurance Act and Regulations came into effect on January 1, 1997. The

NLTA, along with other teacher affiliates in Canada, were instrumental through the [Canadian Teachers' Federation](#) in minimizing the negative impacts of the new Employment Insurance Act upon teachers. Early in 1997, the NLTA was successful in negotiating an arrangement with the Provincial government which clarified the hours which a teacher is deemed to have worked for employment insurance purposes.

Teacher Payroll

- Intercede on teachers' behalf where problems exist;
- Liaise with Department of Education on interpretation of payroll articles;
- Arrange regular meetings with respect to deductions and payroll computer programs;
- Utilize pay stubs for important messages to teachers regarding ongoing teacher welfare concerns.

It is essential that teachers check their pay stubs regularly to ensure not only that they are being paid the correct amount, but also that appropriate deductions are being made in a timely fashion.

Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

- This is a joint effort between NLTA, government and School Trustees;
- It provides assistance to teachers with regard to any number of problems that affect job performance. These include, but are not limited to, substance abuse, marital problems, financial problems and personal difficulties;
- The teacher is directed to professional help;
- Referral procedures are both voluntary and mandatory;
- Leave is available under the sick leave provisions of both collective agreements.

For the past couple of years, the Association has been attempting to develop and implement a proactive program approach to teacher "[wellness](#)", available to all NLTA members. Efforts are now well underway to achieving the objectives in this area. Pamphlets, workbooks and workshops have been prepared and delivered on a wide variety of issues, and school and school board sessions on "wellness" topics are becoming more and more frequent. Since the 1996 AGM, 156 new case files have been activated.

COMMUNICATIONS

The Communications division (including Printing Services) within the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association is responsible for the delivery of numerous programs and services that, on the surface, exist in isolation of the many programs and services offered by the other divisions. There is little (if anything), however, the Communications division is responsible for that doesn't, in some way, impact on these items or, conversely, that isn't impacted on by these items.

In the period covered in this Annual Report there have been many positive changes and growth within the Communications division. There has been a reassignment of duties among several support staff and a new graphic designer has been hired. Restructuring of duties and responsibilities has added to the efficiency of the operation and the output and volume of work. Several publications, normally printed outside, were brought inside to our own Printing Services at quite a substantial savings to the Association. As part of the long term planning process all existing publications are being evaluated to determine the efficiency of each. Changes will be made as needed.

Internal/External Imaging

In keeping with the strategic plan and the priorities of the Association, the Communications division has been working on the goals assigned to the division. It has been the responsibility of the Communications division to devise plans concerning internal and external imaging for the Association and its members. The division has developed initiatives to build a collective sense of ownership of the Association. The division has also incorporated the Public Education Works program in all parts of the imaging campaigns and has developed a continual presence in the media through these campaigns. A comprehensive public relations/communications plan is being developed that will maintain our presence in the media and promote the good things happening both in education and by teachers.

Technology

Several key areas of communication have been quite successful and have proven that paper is not the only means through which the communication process occurs at the NLTA. Through our new web site and various intranets, we can more effectively communicate with our members. Many written publications can now be accessed through our web site which allows for alternate forms of communication to various audiences. In the coming months, it is anticipated that we will be providing more information through our home page and will have more of our publications available online. Since the introduction of our home page at the 1996 AGM, the site has grown to include various links to other teacher associations throughout Canada. We recently added a counter to the web site and are pleased that we had over 650 visitors to our home page in one month. There will be further growth in this area for next year as we continue to monitor various communication technologies.

Printing Services

During the past year, Printing Services has faced many challenges (high paper prices, declining volumes from outside groups when profit margins were being emphasized, restaffing/restructuring, and outdated equipment). In addition, competition from non-print media such as the Internet provided new challenges. Considering that these challenges have been met, it is anticipated that the printing service to teachers will grow. Costs are being tracked, staff is being educated, and Printing Services is prepared for the challenges of the new year.

Printing Services has been restructured, fine-tuned and re-tooled. It has become more strategic in its attempt to meet the needs of the teachers of this province and has instituted new methods for meeting the changing needs of the printing industry.

Going Into Business

The past year has seen Printing Services expand to go into business for profit. Besides printing, the following services are offered by the Printing Services section of the Communications division:

- Layout/graphic design
- Logo design/translation to PC and other formats
- Photocopying
- Scanning logos, photographs/pictures, signatures

Products/Services Offered

The Communications division (including Printing Services) provides the following services and products designed to ensure necessary and important information is provided to teachers and members of the public, and the channels of communication are open.

Publications

- The Bulletin
- PRISM
- Special Interest Council Newsletters

Branch and Council

- Certificates of Appreciation
- Logos
- Materials
- Membership Cards
- Posters
- Stationery
- Special Events Programs

External Relations

- Advertising
- Media Relations
- Public Relations

Other Products and Services

- Act, By-Law and Code of Ethics Booklet
- Bargaining Briefs
- Benefits and Economic Services Infosheets
- Collective Agreement
- Computer File Translation Services
- Distribution Services
- Education Week Materials
- Information Pamphlets
- Literacy for Life Resource Material
- NLTA Folders
- Pocket and Wall Calendars
- President's Digest
- PrinciCals

FIELD SERVICES

Commencing with the 1996-97 school year, the Field Services program was moved from within the Benefits and Economic Services division to the Office of the President through the Assistant to the President.

The main focus of the Field Services program is the providing of services to teachers through the Association's local branch structure. This involves all aspects of branch organization as well as many membership services not directly related to the branch structure. The maintenance and improvement of services to the 54 branches is the immediate aim of the Field Services program and its primary concern.

Major areas of involvement in the Field Services program include:

- Branch organization and services, including the monitoring of branch financing and allocating of funds to branches for active and substitute teachers and the registration and financial audits of branches;
- Monitoring of the branch visitation program;
- Appointing members to school board-teacher liaison committees and assisting in committee operations;
- Processing requests regarding the various membership categories within the Association;
- Coordinating many activities relating to the Annual General Meeting including all activities relating to resolutions to the AGM and proposed By-Law and NLTA Act changes, and receiving and processing nominations for the positions of President, Vice-President, and Provincial Executive Council;
- Planning for Joint Council meetings;
- Ongoing communications with branch executives through the Branch Operations Manual, published annually, and the Branch Update, published three times per year;
- Honoring of retiring teachers through the branch structure;
- Recommending to the Provincial Executive nominees for the Bancroft, Allan Bishop, and Special Recognition Awards, which are presented annually by the Association.

LEGAL SERVICES AND RESEARCH

Legal Services and Research is a new division of the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association as of September 1996. The division is staffed by one legal counsel/researcher and one secretary.

Legal Counsel provides services to individual members in areas such as:

- Collective Agreement interpretation and application, and arbitrations;
- Teachers' Pension, Employment Insurance, Workers' Compensation and certification appeals;
- Advice concerning human rights, young offenders, defamation, harassment, child welfare, Schools Act.

Legal services are also provided to the Association in areas such as group insurance, collective bargaining and By-Law changes.

Teachers who are being investigated for, or charged with, a criminal offence relating to their work are referred to the Association's legal firm. This law firm also provides services in other matters which are referred to it by the Legal Services division.

The Research Centre houses all historical NLTA documents, journals and texts in areas such as professional development, employee benefits, school law, leadership and women's issues. Teachers may also visit the Research Centre and use its materials on site.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The NLTA has a commitment to the promotion of the professional excellence and personal well-being of teachers. Whether just entering the profession, in mid-career or near retirement, increased societal expectations of teachers, major restructuring of educational programs and reduction in educational funding are now combining to make teaching a more challenging and perhaps a more exciting endeavour than it has ever been. The Association is responding to the personal, professional and informational needs experienced at each career stage so that teachers can remain healthy in this profession. The Professional Development programs of the Association are designed to assist teachers in this endeavour while restoring individual and collective pride in the teaching force of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Having voiced its commitment to professional development, the Association must deal with the challenges it faces in delivering programs to a scattered and diverse population with needs that may be as variable as the number of members in its ranks. Nevertheless, we cannot lose sight of the fact that education is first and foremost a human enterprise and that high quality education will result from people working effectively together. It is these interactions that professional development programs must be designed to improve and enhance.

Professional development has to be a cooperative venture, an endeavour shared by the individual, the NLTA, and the employer the School Board and the Department of Education. To that end, common solutions are being sought to overcome the challenges before us in the development and delivery of professional development programs. Our affiliation with other teacher organizations in the Atlantic provinces has been strengthened and programs for beginning teachers, mid-career teachers and late-career teachers have been implemented. New partnerships with Memorial University and the newly formed school boards have been created and the use of alternative methods of delivery, among them technology, are being explored.

Change is continually occurring in the restructuring and redefining of school boards, schools and classrooms. We are keeping abreast of these changes and the ever increasing demands that are placed on teachers. The Association recognizes that professional development goes beyond curriculum concerns and also moves into areas such as development of collaborative school cultures, classroom issues, effective stress and time management and the management of change and transitions.

Teachers are experiencing change at a previously unprecedented rate. Renewing the commitment to what has traditionally been one of the Association's foremost objectives, to provide quality professional development for its members to support them in meeting the challenges of change, is a major focus.

The Association's Professional Development division has responsibility for the following:

- Professional Issues in Teaching Committee
- Special Interest Councils
- Centennial Funds and Awards:
 - Centennial Study Award
 - Centennial Project Award
 - Educational Research Program
 - International Conference Presenters Program
 - International Programs

- Project Overseas
- T-4 Program
- Roy C. Hill Award

- Barnes Award
- Johnson Bursaries
- NLTA Scholarships
- CONTACT Conferences
- Professional Relations Commission
- Teacher Induction Program
- Modules for Mid-Career Teachers
- Planning Transitions for Late Career Teachers
- Developing Successful Schools
- Workshops on a variety of identified needs at the school, district and Branch level.

Special Interest Councils

For three decades, Special Interest Councils have spearheaded professional development in this province. During this past year, these councils were once again poised to continue this tradition. Unfortunately, with the announcement by government of a moratorium on professional development activities, all council plans were stymied.

While this meant the cancellation of a number of AGMs which would normally have been hosted by some Councils, the time was utilized by Councils to review, reorganize and refocus activities. During the year, three meetings were held with Council Presidents to discuss the strategic plan of the Association and to plan for implementation in line with the goals of all our Councils.

During the year, seven of our current Councils decided to explore the concept of consolidation. Five of the Councils blended together to form two new Councils. Two others are now actively exploring another union into a single Council. These amalgamations are occurring in an effort to better serve the teachers of this province and to reflect certain new realities that are impacting on the professional development of the teachers in this province.

As in the past, the work of Special Interest Councils is predicated on the commitment of a dedicated group of volunteers from the ranks of teachers. In very trying times, these volunteers continued to work diligently on behalf of their members. Their efforts took a different focus but were equally demanding during this year. As a result of the review, a reorganization and refocusing, teachers in the province should see a stronger, more efficient and more accessible programming from the Councils.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

General Fund

Year Ended August 31	1996	1995
REVENUE		
Membership fees	\$ 3,391,497	\$ 3,503,079
Contribution from group insurance fund	200,976	215,614
Contribution from special programme fund		240,510
Government grant employee assistance program	120,932	91,136
Interest on investments	44,423	25,871
Advertising and subscriptions	3,785	3,977
Miscellaneous	35,685	45,882
	3,797,298	4,126,069
EXPENSES		
Administration	1,711,690	1,609,932
Communications	527,332	596,544
Field Services	317,156	336,285
Professional Development	385,504	411,461
Benefits and Economic Services	672,669	639,422
	3,614,351	3,593,644
Excess of revenue over expenses	\$ 182,947	\$ 532,425
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Unappropriated equity, beginning of year	\$1,413,159	\$ 880,734
Excess of revenue over expenses	182,947	532,425
Transfer to emergency fund	(221,356)	
Unappropriated equity, end of year	\$1,374,750	\$1,413,159
ASSETS		
Current		
Cash	\$ 662,042	\$ 637,554
Receivables	88,853	200,262
Prepaid expenses	37,322	49,881
	788,217	887,697
Trust fund		
Emergency fund	3,598,341	3,221,221
Investments	558,080	548,678
Academic loans	65,718	79,587
Property and equipment	1,026,631	1,119,231
	\$6,036,987	\$5,856,414
LIABILITIES		
Current		
Payables and accruals	\$ 262,026	\$ 196,109
Trust fund		
Emergency fund payable	3,598,341	3,221,221
Payable to emergency fund		237,556

	3,860,367	3,654,886
Deferred severance pay	233,272	238,200
MEMBERS' EQUITY		
Unappropriated	1,374,750	1,413,159
Centennial fund	568,598	550,169
	1,943,348	1,963,328
	\$6,036,987	\$5,856,414

Emergency Fund

REVENUE

Interest on investments	\$ 192,982	\$ 183,705
Contributions	178,387	184,105
	371,369	367,810

EXPENSES

Grievances and arbitrations	47,721	113,554
Negotiations and other lock-out	167,169	76,054
Strike assistance		1,792
Teachers' pensions	715	1,345
	215,605	192,745
Excess of revenue over expenses	\$ 155,764	\$ 175,065

Unappropriated equity, beginning of year	\$3,221,221	\$3,046,156
Excess of revenue over expenses	155,764	175,065
Transfer from general fund	221,356	
Unappropriated equity, end of year	\$3,598,341	\$3,221,221

ASSETS

Current		
Cash	\$ 86,082	\$ 128,461
Receivables	54,036	206,592
	140,118	335,053
Receivable from general fund		237,556
Investments, at cost (market value of \$3,543,543; 1995 \$2,750,814)	3,495,384	2,725,595
	\$3,635,502	\$3,298,204

LIABILITIES

Current		
Payables and accruals	\$ 36,960	\$ 39,433
Payable to general fund	201	37,550
	37,161	76,983

MEMBERS' EQUITY

Unappropriated	3,598,341	3,221,221
	\$ 3,635,502	\$3,298,204

Reserve Fund

REVENUE

Interest income	\$ 20,202	\$ 8,405
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EXPENSES

Professional fees	803	
Excess of revenue over expenses	\$ 19,399	\$ 7,602
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Unappropriated equity, beginning of year	\$ 420,804	\$413,202
Excess of revenue over expenses	19,399	7,602
Unappropriated equity, end of year	\$440,203	\$420,804
ASSETS		
Current		
Cash and term deposits	\$ 441,275	\$421,876
	\$441,275	\$421,876
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LIABILITIES		
Current		
Payables and accruals	\$ 800	\$ 800
Payable to general fund	272	272
	1,072	1,072
MEMBERS' EQUITY		
Unappropriated	440,203	420,804
	\$441,275	\$421,876
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