

NSTU Substitute Teachers Committee – Year End Report 2025–2026

Committee Members

- Chair: Desi Trott
- Liam Timmons
- Jess Wells
- Dan Bunbury
- Chahinez Moussa (resigned)
- Provincial Executive Member: Angela Ewing
- NSTU Staff Liaison: Tim MacLeod

Meeting Dates

- October 25, 2025 – In person
- January 20, 2026 – Virtual
- April 25, 2026 – In person

Committee Activities

The Substitute Teachers Committee met three times during the 2025–2026 school year in accordance with its mandate to advise the Provincial Executive on issues affecting and of concern to substitute teachers, support professional learning opportunities, consider matters related to Annual Council, and participate in the NSTU Policy Review Process as required.

A significant focus of the Committee's work was increasing awareness of and participation in NSTU Reserve Membership. The Committee developed a recruitment strategy using "buck slips" to be distributed through Local meetings and schools. The proposed materials include information about the benefits of Reserve Membership, contact information for Local Substitute Liaisons, and a QR code directing substitute teachers to relevant NSTU resources. The Committee also explored the possibility of electronic distribution through Regional Centres for Education. While the planned February/March recruitment drive and prize draw were not completed, the Committee established a framework that can be further developed by the incoming Committee.

The Committee also advanced work related to professional learning for substitute teachers. A memo was distributed to Local Presidents regarding professional learning opportunities and encouraged Substitute Liaisons to connect with their Regional Centre for Education to explore joint sessions. This initiative is intended to improve substitute teachers' access to relevant professional learning and strengthen their connection to Local and NSTU structures.

The Committee reviewed and provided input regarding NSTU resources for substitute teachers, including *Substitute Teaching in Nova Scotia: Popular Questions*. Work on updating this resource remains underway. The Committee also reviewed the NSTU Substitute Teacher micro-website and discussed incorporating its content into the main NSTU website. Updates will include

improved access to Reserve Membership information, contact information, relevant resources, and links to application materials.

Other matters considered included the *EECD Guide for Developing a Welcoming Culture for Substitute Teachers*, issues affecting substitute teachers, information related to classroom complexity and matters for consideration at Annual Council 2026. The Committee also reviewed its budget and began planning priorities for the 2026–2027 school year, including development of an action sheet and ideas for a future *Substitute Teacher Appreciation Week*.

Recommendations Adopted by Provincial Executive

No specific Committee-endorsed recommendations were made to the Provincial Executive.

Recommendations to the Incoming Committee

The incoming Committee is encouraged to:

1. Complete and implement the Reserve Membership recruitment strategy, including the buck slip and QR-code initiative and a future prize draw.
2. Continue efforts to update and consolidate NSTU's online resources for substitute teachers.
3. Complete the review and updating of *Substitute Teaching in Nova Scotia: Popular Questions*.
4. Continue promoting professional learning opportunities for substitute teachers in partnership with Local Substitute Liaisons and Regional Centres for Education.
5. Develop an annual action plan with measurable priorities and timelines.
6. Explore opportunities for Substitute Teacher Appreciation Week in March 2027.

Budget

The annual amount budgeted for the Committee was \$4,700. The actual amount spent during the 2025–2026 school year was \$2,221.

Overall, the Committee established several practical initiatives to improve substitute teacher engagement, access to information, professional learning, and connection to NSTU. Continued attention to these initiatives will provide a strong foundation for the incoming Committee.