

NSTU GUIDEBOOK 2023-2024

Constitution
Policy



Nova Scotia
Teachers Union



NOVA SCOTIA TEACHERS UNION

CODE OF ETHICS

CODE OF ETHICS

This Code of Ethics is a guide to Members in maintaining at all times the high integrity of their profession including professional conduct in relation to all communication whether verbal, written or via social media.

A. Member And Pupil/Parent/Guardian

- I. The Member regards as confidential, and does not divulge other than through professional channels, any information of a personal or domestic nature, concerning either pupils or home, obtained through the course of professional duties.
- II. The Member should be just, equitable, and fair in all relationships with pupils/parents/guardians.
- III. The Member should assume responsibility for the safety and welfare of pupils, especially under conditions of emergency.
- IV. The Member should avoid giving offence to the moral principles of pupils and/or their parents/guardians.
- V. The Member should be as objective and respectful as possible in dealing with controversial matters.
- VI. The Member should not accept remuneration for tutoring their pupils except under compelling circumstances and with the approval of their supervisor or principal.

B. Member and Member/Colleague

- I. The Member should not make defamatory, disparaging, condescending, embarrassing, or offensive comments concerning another Member or colleague.
- II. The Member shall not make derogatory remarks about the professional competence of another Member or colleague.
- III. The Member shall not accept a position arising out of the unsettled dispute between Members, and their employers.
- IV. The Member shall not sexually, physically, or emotionally harass another Member or colleague.

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NOVA SCOTIA TEACHERS UNION

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GUIDEBOOK



MISSION

*As the unified voice for the advocacy and support of all its members,
the NSTU promotes and advances the teaching profession and
quality public education.*

GUIDEBOOK



BELIEFS

We believe that

The NSTU serves as the primary advocate of its members by

- protecting and enhancing economic benefits
- improving working conditions
- supporting personal well-being
- keeping members informed
- promoting opportunities to participate

The NSTU is committed to leadership in educational change by

- maintaining and promoting excellence in teaching
- encouraging lifelong learning
- influencing educational trends through research and evaluation
- disseminating information

The NSTU promotes and enhances public education for all students by

- supporting a safe and healthy learning environment
- advancing the profession
- advocating social justice and unionism
- working with other organizations
- communicating our beliefs in order to affect public opinion and policy

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SECTION I

CHAPTER 462

AN ACT TO REVISE AND CONSOLIDATE THE ACTS RELATING TO THE NOVA SCOTIA TEACHERS UNION

SHORT TITLE

1. This Act may be cited as the *Teaching Profession Act*. R.S., c. 462, s. 1.

INTERPRETATION

2. In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires,
 - (a) "Council" means the Council of the Union as established pursuant to the by-laws of the Union;
 - (aa) "education entity" means an education entity as defined in the *Education Act*;
 - (b) "Executive" means the Executive of the Council;
 - (c) "local" means a local organization of members of the Union formed pursuant to the by-laws of the Union;
 - (ca) "manager" means a manager as defined in the *Teachers' Collective Bargaining Act*;
 - (cb) "member" means a member of the Union;
 - (d) "Minister" means the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development;
 - (e) "public school" means any school established or maintained pursuant to the *Education Act*;
 - (f) repealed 2018, c. 1, s. 42.
 - (g) "teacher" means a teacher as defined in the *Teachers' Collective Bargaining Act*;
 - (h) "Union" means the Nova Scotia Teachers' Union. R.S., c. 462, s. 2; 2018, c. 1, s. 42.

UNION CONTINUED

3. (1) The Nova Scotia Teachers' Union, as incorporated by Chapter 100 of the Acts of 1951, shall continue as a body corporate subject to the provisions of this Act.
- (2) The by-laws, members, Council, Executive, officers, committees, locals and local executives of the Union existing immediately prior to this Act shall continue in effect or in office until changed or replaced pursuant to this Act. R.S., c. 462, s. 3.

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4. The Constitution of the Union shall consist of
 - (a) this Act;
 - (b) the by-laws; and
 - (c) the standing orders of the Council. R.S., c. 462, s. 4.

LIABILITY OF MEMBERS

5. No member of the Union shall be liable for the debts or liabilities of the Union unless the member shall have made himself personally liable therefor. R.S., c. 462, s. 5.

MEMBERSHIP

6. The members of the Union shall consist of persons who are members pursuant to subsection 12(1) and, subject to subsection 12(1A), such other persons as the Council by by-law determines. R.S., c. 462, s. 6; 2018, c. 1, s. 43.

OBJECTS

7. The objects of the Union are to advance and promote the teaching profession and the cause of education in the Province. R.S., c. 462, s. 7.

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POWERS OF UNION

8. The Union shall have power to do all things necessary or desirable for the attainment of the objects of the Union or incidental thereto, including, but not so as to restrict the generality of the foregoing, power for such purpose to
- purchase, acquire, lease and hold real and personal property and sell, convey, lease, mortgage or transfer the same;
 - borrow money from any person or corporation and give security for any money so borrowed on any of the real and personal property of the Union by way of mortgage or otherwise;
 - accept all gifts, legacies or bequests which may be given to the Union;
 - expend any money of the Union;
 - fix membership fees and special assessments of members and collect such fees and assessments;
 - subject to this Act, suspend, expel or otherwise discipline any member and to re-instate any member so suspended or expelled. R.S., c. 462, s. 8.

EXERCISE OF POWERS

9. Unless otherwise provided in this Act or by by-laws of the Union, the powers of the Union may be exercised by the Council. R.S., c. 462, s. 9.

COUNCIL BY-LAWS

10. (1) The Council may make by-laws not inconsistent with this Act dealing with or providing for
- the management of the Union and its property;
 - the constitution of the Union and of locals, including the basis of representation of locals on the Council;
 - the officers, executive and committees of the Union and their respective powers and duties;
 - the government, discipline and control of members;
 - all other matters necessary or useful to carry out the objects and to exercise the powers of the Union.
- (2) Every by-law shall be passed by a vote of at least two thirds of the members of the Council present at a meeting thereof, notice of the intention to propose such by-law at such meeting having been given in writing by notice mailed postage prepaid at least thirty days before such meeting to each member of the Union at the members last recorded address.
- (3) In lieu of the notice provided for by subsection (2), notice of the intention to propose a by-law may be given by such notice being printed in an issue of a publication of the Union mailed to all schools in the Province at least thirty days before the meeting of the Council at which it is to be considered and a number of copies of the proposed resolution equal to at least ten per cent of the number of members of each local having been mailed to the respective secretary of each local at least thirty days before such meeting. R.S., c. 462, s. 10.

PROFESSIONAL COMMITTEE

11. (1) There shall be a Professional Committee of the Union, elected according to the by-laws.
- (2) The Professional Committee may, on the request of a local, the executive of a local or the Executive, inquire into any charge and determine if a teacher has been guilty of conduct unbecoming a member of the teaching profession.
- (3) When any such request is made by a local, a copy thereof shall be forwarded to the Executive at the time such request is made.

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- (4) Any member so charged shall be given at least thirty days notice in writing of the charge and shall be given full opportunity to be heard by the Professional Committee and to be represented by counsel.
- (5) The Professional Committee shall dismiss the charge or reprimand, suspend or expel the member.
- (6) The Executive shall transmit the decision of the Professional Committee to the teacher by prepaid registered post to the last recorded address of the teacher.
- (7) The Executive shall transmit to the Minister such recommendations concerning the certification of the teacher as the Professional Committee may make. R.S., c. 462, s. 11.

UNION MEMBERSHIP

- 12. (1) Every teacher who has a permanent contract, a probationary contract or a term contract, within the meaning of the *Education Act*, with an education entity in a teaching, supervisory or other professional capacity relating to education shall be an active member of the Union unless the teacher is expelled therefrom or unless the teacher resigns by written notice addressed to the Union at its head office and mailed by prepaid registered post.
- (1A) A manager is not a member of the Union and may not be determined to be a member of the Union by the Council pursuant to Section 6.
- (1B) Any manager who, immediately before August 1, 2018, was a member of the Union ceases to be a member on that date.
- (2) Subject to subsection (3), the resignation of a teacher from the Union shall take effect at the end of the school year in which the resignation is tendered and shall be effective for one year following such school year.
- (3) When a teacher is first employed in a public school, a resignation by the teacher from the Union shall take effect immediately if
 - (a) it is given before the first day of October when the teachers employment began on the first day of the school year; or
 - (b) it is given within one month after the teachers employment began.
- (4) A teacher whose resignation from the Union is in effect may continue not to be a member of the Union from year to year provided that during each school year following the teachers resignation the teacher gives written notice as provided in subsection (1) of intention not to be a member for the succeeding school year.
- (5) A teacher who has resigned or has been expelled from the Union and who continues to be employed as a teacher shall pay to the Union through regular deductions, in the manner provided in Section 14, an amount equivalent to the regular fees for membership as are prescribed by the Union. R.S., c. 462, s. 12; 2018, c. 1, s. 44.

REPORT ON MEMBERSHIP AND UNION FEES

- 13. (1) Not later than the fifteenth day of August in every year, the Union shall send to the Minister
 - (a) a list of the names and addresses of the persons who have resigned as active members of the Union and whose resignations are effective for the current school year; and
 - (b) a scale of the fees payable to the Union by its active members for the then current school year.
- (2) Within ten days after the effective date of the resignation, other than a resignation that is effective at the end of a school year, of a member from active membership in the Union or the expulsion of a member or the readmission of a member, the Union shall send the name and address of the member to the Minister.
- (3) The Minister shall cause to be kept a list of the names and addresses of all persons who have resigned as active members of the Union or who have been expelled from the Union and who have not been readmitted to the Union as active members.

- (4) The Minister shall cause to be sent to each education entity
 - (a) on or about the fifteenth day of September in each year, a list of the names of the teachers employed by it whose resignations as active members of the Union became effective at the end of the preceding school year or who were expelled from the Union during the preceding school year; and
 - (b) the name of each member employed by it who has resigned, been expelled or been readmitted to the Union, within ten days after receiving notice of the resignation, expulsion or re-admission pursuant to subsection (2). R.S., c. 462, s. 13; 2018, c. 1, s. 45.

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PAYMENT OF FEES

- 14. (1) Every member of the Union shall pay to the Union annually such fees as are prescribed by the Union and every teacher who has resigned or has been expelled from the Union and who continues to teach shall pay an amount equivalent to such fees.
- (2) On or about the fifteenth day of September in each year, the Minister shall cause to be sent to each education entity a copy of the scale of fees payable to the Union by its members as furnished to the Minister pursuant to Section 13.
- (3) Every education entity shall deduct from the salary of each member of the Union and each teacher employed by it who has resigned or has been expelled from the Union an amount equal to the fees payable by the person to the Union according to the scale furnished by the Minister, and shall make such deductions in twelve equal monthly instalments, or in such other number of equal monthly instalments as may be agreed upon by the board and the Union, beginning in the month of September or in the month following receipt of notice that the person has become or been readmitted as a member of the Union.
- (4) Every education entity shall remit each month to the Secretary-treasurer of the Union the amount of deductions made by it pursuant to subsection (3) within ten days after the end of the month in which the fees are deducted.
- (5) The Minister shall cause to be withheld, from the amount payable by the Minister under the *Education Act* to a [an] education entity in any year, an amount equal to the difference between the sum of the deductions made by the board pursuant to subsection (3) and the amount remitted by it to the Secretary treasurer of the Union pursuant to subsection (4).
- (6) The Minister shall cause all amounts withheld by the Minister pursuant to subsection (5) to be remitted to the Secretary-treasurer of the Union at such times and in such amounts as the Minister determines. R.S., c. 462, s. 14; 2018, c. 1, s. 46.

BENEFIT PLAN OR SERVICE

- 15. (1) In this Section, "benefit plan or service" has the meaning prescribed by the regulations.
- (2) Notwithstanding that managers are not members of the Union, the Union shall permit a manager to participate, on the same terms as a teacher, in any benefit plan or service established, sponsored or administered or otherwise provided by the Union for the benefit of teachers.
- (3) The Minister may, in accordance with the regulations, compensate the Union for the reasonable costs it incurs by allowing managers to participate in any benefit plan or service.
- (4) The Governor in Council may make regulations
 - (a) prescribing the meaning of "benefit plan or service";
 - (b) respecting the compensation of the Union for the reasonable costs it incurs by allowing managers to participate in the Union's benefit plans and services.
- (5) The exercise by the Governor in Council of the authority contained in subsection (4) is a regulation within the meaning of the *Regulations Act*. 2018, c. 1, s. 47.

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BY-LAWS OF THE NOVA SCOTIA TEACHERS UNION

ARTICLE I — MEMBERSHIP

1. DEFINITIONS

Members of the Nova Scotia Teachers Union (hereinafter referred to as the “NSTU” or the “UNION”) shall consist of Active Members, Reserve Members, Retired Members, Associate Members, Honourary Members, and Substitute Teacher Members.

2. ACTIVE MEMBER

- (a) An Active Member is a teacher:
 - (i) as described in Section 12 of the *Teaching Profession Act*; or,
 - (ii) employed by the Atlantic Provinces Special Education Authority (APSEA); and,
 - (iii) pays an annual Union Membership Fee as fixed from time-to-time by Council.
- (b) The rights of Active Membership shall include, but not necessarily be limited to the right to:
 - (i) benefits as provided through NSTU as bargaining agent;
 - (ii) request legal assistance in instances resulting from problems arising in the performance of duties;
 - (iii) professional counselling within education;
 - (iv) vote and hold office at the local and provincial level;
 - (v) attend Council as outlined in Article II of these By-Laws;
 - (vi) membership in Professional Associations, including the right to hold office;
 - (vii) membership in the NSTU Group Insurance Plan, in accordance with the provisions of the plan;
 - (viii) membership on NSTU committees, where elected or appointed;
 - (ix) access NSTU publications and materials, as assigned, on the NSTU website; and,
 - (x) an NSTU web mail account.
- (c) Failure to pay Union Membership Fees will not limit contractual rights as long as a contractual and legal relationship exists with the bargaining unit employer.

3. RESERVE MEMBER

- (a) A Reserve Member is a teacher or other qualified person engaged on a day-to-day basis to take the place of a person regularly employed as a teacher by an Education Entity as defined by the *Education Act*, who has been employed as such for not less than fifteen (15) days in the preceding and/or the current school year, and who:
 - (i) is employed on a day-to-day basis by an education entity as defined by the *Education Act* to take the place of a regularly employed teacher;
 - (ii) pays an annual Union Membership Fee as fixed from time-to-time by Council; and,
 - (iii) pays per diem Union Membership Fees as fixed from time-to-time by Council.

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- (b) The rights of Reserve Membership shall include, but not necessarily be limited to the right to:
 - (i) benefits as provided through NSTU as bargaining agent;
 - (ii) request legal assistance in instances resulting from problems arising in the performance of duties;
 - (iii) professional counselling within education;
 - (iv) vote at the local and provincial level;
 - (v) attend Council as outlined in Article II of these By-Laws;
 - (vi) membership in Professional Associations, except the right to hold office;
 - (vii) membership in the NSTU Group Insurance Plan, in accordance with the provisions of the plan;
 - (viii) membership on NSTU committees, where elected or appointed;
 - (ix) access NSTU publications and materials, as assigned, on the NSTU website; and,
 - (x) an NSTU web mail account.

4. RETIRED MEMBER

- (a) A Retired Member may be a person who has retired under a provision of the *Teachers' Pension Act*.
- (b) A person included in the Faculty and Professional Support Bargaining Units of the Nova Scotia Community College who retires under a provision of the *Teachers' Pension Act* on or before June 30, 2018 may be a Retired Member.
- (c) A manager as defined in the *Teachers' Collective Bargaining Act* who retires under a provision of the *Teachers' Pension Act* after August 1, 2018 may be a Retired Member while the Public School Administrators Association of Nova Scotia (PSAANS) remains affiliated with the NSTU.
- (d) A person included in the Faculty and Professional Support Bargaining Units of the Nova Scotia Community College who has retired under a provision of the Public Service Superannuation Plan on or before June 30, 2018 may be a Retired Member.
- (e) The rights of Retired Membership shall include, but not necessarily be limited to the right to:
 - (i) membership in the Retired Teachers Organization (RTO);
 - (ii) attend Council as outlined in Article II of these By-Laws;
 - (iii) membership in the NSTU Group Insurance Plan, in accordance with the provisions of the plan;
 - (iv) access NSTU publications and materials, as assigned, on the NSTU website; and,
 - (v) an NSTU web mail account.

5. ASSOCIATE MEMBER

- (a) An Associate Member may be:
 - (i) an Active Member on a leave of absence;
 - (ii) a member of the faculty of a provincial university; or,
 - (iii) an education student at a university; and,
 - (iv) who pays an annual Union Membership Fee as fixed from time-to-time by Council.
- (b) The rights of Associate Membership shall include, but not necessarily be limited to the right to:
 - (i) membership in Professional Associations, except the right to hold office;
 - (ii) attend Council as outlined in Article II of these By-Laws;
 - (iii) membership in the NSTU Group Insurance Plan, in accordance with the provisions of the plan; and,
 - (iv) access NSTU publications and materials, as assigned, on the NSTU website.

6. HONOURARY MEMBER

- (a) An Honourary Member is a person upon whom the honour has been conferred by a resolution of Council.
- (b) The rights of Honourary Membership shall include, but not necessarily be limited to the right to:
 - (i) attend Council as outlined in Article II of these By-Laws;
 - (ii) access NSTU publications and materials, as assigned, on the NSTU website; and,
 - (iii) an NSTU web mail account.

7. SUBSTITUTE TEACHER MEMBER

- (a) A teacher or other qualified person who is employed on a day-to-day basis by an education entity as defined by the *Education Act* to take the place of a regularly employed teacher who is not a Reserve Member will be a Union Member as a Substitute Teacher Member on the day(s) they teach.
- (b) These Members pay a per diem Union Membership Fee as fixed from time-to-time by Council.
- (c) A Substitute Teacher Member, who can prove employment by an education entity to the satisfaction of the NSTU, shall have rights of Membership that include, but not necessarily be limited to the right to:
 - (i) benefits as provided through NSTU as bargaining agent;
 - (ii) request legal assistance in instances resulting from problems arising in the performance of duties;
 - (iii) access NSTU publications and materials, as assigned, on the NSTU website; and,
 - (iv) an NSTU web mail account.

8. APPEAL OF MEMBERSHIP

Persons who are not automatically members of the Union as defined may make application for membership to the Executive Director. Such applications shall be forwarded to the Provincial Executive. The Provincial Executive may approve such applications.

9. MEMBERSHIP REGISTRY

- (a) The Executive Director shall, under the supervision of the Secretary-Treasurer, maintain a Membership Registry containing a record of the names and contact information for each Union Member.
- (b) This Registry shall be the official record of Union Membership and shall be used for such purposes as determining Annual Council Delegates and Local Rebates.
- (c) Amendments to the Registry are permitted up to the first Monday in December to determine Annual Council Delegates and up to the last Monday in March to determine Local Rebates.

ARTICLE II — THE COUNCIL

1. DEFINITIONS

- (a) The Council as defined by the *Teaching Profession Act* is established pursuant to these By-Laws and shall be the supreme governing body of the Union.
- (b) The Executive of the Council as described in the *Teaching Profession Act* shall be the Provincial Executive.
- (c) Members of the Council as described in the *Teaching Profession Act* shall be the Voting Delegates of Council.

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2. COUNCIL DELEGATES AND OBSERVERS

- (a) Voting Delegates of Council shall be:
 - (i) the Provincial Executive;
 - (ii) Local Presidents as one (1) of the Locals' allotment of Voting Delegates;
 - (iii) Local Voting Delegates as determined by individual Local constitutions;
 - (iv) Chairs of Regional Representative Councils;
 - (v) Chairs of Regional Economic Welfare Committees; and,
 - (vi) Professional Association Voting Delegates from individual Professional Associations.
- (b) Pursuant to 2. (a) (ii) and (iii), each Local is entitled to one (1) Voting Delegate for every fifty (50) Members or major fraction thereof.
- (c) Notwithstanding 2. (b), each Local is entitled to a minimum of three (3) Voting Delegates.
- (d) Pursuant to 2. (a) (vi), each Professional Association is entitled to one (1) Voting Delegate.
- (e) Non-Voting Delegates of Council shall be:
 - (i) Local Alternate Delegates as determined by individual Local constitutions;
 - (ii) Chairs or designates of NSTU Standing Committees; and,
 - (iii) an invited Retired Teachers Organization representative as selected by the RTO.
- (f) Pursuant to 2. (e) (i), each Local is entitled to determine Alternate Delegates on the basis of a sliding scale where Locals entitled to:
 - (i) 3 to 10 Voting Delegates are entitled to 1 Alternate Delegate;
 - (ii) 11 to 21 Voting Delegates are entitled to 2 Alternate Delegates;
 - (iii) 22 to 31 Voting Delegates are entitled to 3 Alternate Delegates;
 - (iv) 32 to 41 Voting Delegates are entitled to 4 Alternate Delegates; and,
 - (v) 42 + Voting Delegates are entitled to 5 Alternate Delegates.
- (g) Non-Voting Delegates may address Council with the permission of the Chair, permission shall not be unreasonably withheld.
- (h) Non-Voting Delegates may not move, second, or vote on any resolutions or motions.
- (i) In the unavoidable absence of a Local Voting Delegate, Council may permit a Local Alternate Delegate to act as a replacement. The Local Alternate Delegate, when replacing the Local Voting Delegate, has all the rights and responsibilities of a Local Voting Delegate.
- (j) Observers of Council may be:
 - (i) Local Observers as selected by individual Locals; and,
 - (ii) Members.
- (k) Pursuant to 2. (j) (i), each Local is entitled to select one (1) Local Observer.
- (l) Local Alternate Delegates and Local Observers attend Council at the Local's expense or at the individual's expense.

3. GOVERNANCE OF COUNCIL

- (a) A majority of Voting Delegates shall constitute quorum of Council.
- (b) There shall be an Annual Meeting of Council at such time and place as determined by the Provincial Executive.
- (c) The President, with the consent of the Provincial Executive, may call a Special Meeting of Council for such time and place as determined by the Provincial Executive.
- (d) The President shall call a Special Meeting of Council when requested in writing by a majority of Locals.
- (e) When a Special Meeting of Council is called, delegates shall be restricted to the Voting Delegates of the Annual Meeting of Council immediately prior. A Voting Delegate unable to attend may be replaced by the affected Local, Regional Representative Council, or Professional Association.

- (f) Resolutions to Council amending By-Laws require a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote and at least thirty (30) days-notice.
- (g) Resolutions to Council amending Standing Orders require a majority vote provided thirty (30) days-notice has been given. In lieu of thirty days-notice, resolutions amending Standing Orders require a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote provided notice has been given at a preceding session of Council.
- (h) Resolutions to Council which have been costed at two percent (2%) or more of the budgeted expenditures require a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote.
- (i) Resolutions to Council which amend Policy or direct action require a majority vote.

4. COMMITTEES OF COUNCIL

Committees required for the efficient running of Council shall be appointed, constituted, and have their duties defined as the Council may from time-to-time provide through Standing Orders.

ARTICLE III — THE PROVINCIAL EXECUTIVE

1. COMPOSITION

- (a) The composition of the Provincial Executive shall be: the President, the First Vice-President, the Immediate Past-President, and twenty-one (21) Regional Members.
- (b) The number of Regional Members and the regions from which they shall be elected are as follows:

(i) Annapolis/Hants West/Kings	2 Members
(ii) Antigonish/Guysborough County	1 Member
(iii) Atlantic Provinces Special Education Authority (APSEA)	1 Member
(iv) Cape Breton District	2 Members
(v) Colchester/East Hants	1 Member
(vi) Conseil syndical acadien de la Nouvelle-Écosse (CSANE)	2 Members
(vii) Cumberland	1 Member
(viii) Dartmouth	1 Member
(ix) Digby/Shelburne County/Yarmouth	2 Members
(x) Halifax City	2 Members
(xi) Halifax County	2 Members
(xii) Inverness/Richmond	1 Member
(xiii) Lunenburg County/Queens	1 Member
(xiv) Northside Victoria	1 Member
(xv) Pictou	1 Member
- (c) A Provincial Executive Member must be an Active Member of the NSTU.
- (d) A Provincial Executive Member shall not concurrently hold office at the Local, Regional, or Professional Association Level.

2. TABLE OFFICERS

- (a) The Table Officers of the Union shall be:
 - (i) the President,
 - (ii) the First Vice-President,
 - (iii) the Second Vice-President,
 - (iv) the Secretary-Treasurer, and
 - (v) the Immediate Past-President.
- (b) Table Officers are Members of the Provincial Executive.
- (c) The Second Vice-President and the Secretary-Treasurer remain Regional Members while serving as Table Officers.

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3. GOVERNANCE

- (a) A majority of the Provincial Executive shall constitute quorum.
- (b) There shall be at least six (6) regular meetings of the Provincial Executive each year.
- (c) The President may call a Special Meeting of the Provincial Executive.
- (d) The President shall call a Special Meeting of the Provincial Executive when requested in writing by a two-third (2/3) majority of the Provincial Executive.
- (e) The Provincial Executive may determine its own procedure as set out in Operational Procedures which shall not be inconsistent with these By-Laws, NSTU Standing Orders, or the *Teaching Profession Act*.
- (f) Resolutions and recommendations being forwarded to Annual Council by the Provincial Executive require a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Provincial Executive.
- (g) Roll call votes are taken upon the approval of at least one-fifth (1/5) of the Members of the Provincial Executive.
- (h) The Executive Director shall be responsible for recording the minutes of Provincial Executive meetings. Minutes, once approved, shall be signed by the Secretary-Treasurer and President, shall be kept by the Executive Director as the official record of the Provincial Executives proceedings, and shall be posted to the NSTU website (NSTU web account log-in required).
- (i) Regular meetings of the Provincial Executive are open to Active and Reserve Members of the NSTU except for those portions of the meeting recommended by the Table Officers and confirmed by two-third (2/3) majority vote to be held in Closed Session.

4. ELECTIONS

- (a) The President shall be elected by a majority vote of the entire Active and Reserve Membership following the process outlined in Operational Procedures.
- (b) The First Vice-President shall be elected by a majority vote conducted at Annual Council following the process outlined in Operational Procedures.
- (c) The Second Vice-President and Secretary-Treasurer shall be elected by the Provincial Executive at a meeting prior to the commencement of the term of office from amongst the Regional Members who will be Members of the Provincial Executive on August 1st of that year. The election shall be by majority vote.
- (d) Regional Members shall be elected by a plurality vote of the entire Active and Reserve Membership of the regions defined in 1. (b), following the process outlined in Operational Procedures.

5. TERM OF OFFICE

- (a) The term of office for all Provincial Executive Members serving as Regional Members shall be two (2) years starting August 1st and ending July 31st.
- (b) No Provincial Executive Member serving as a Regional Member shall serve for more than two (2) consecutive terms as a Regional Member. A Regional Member may be re-elected as a Regional Member once absent from the Provincial Executive in this capacity for a full term of office.
- (c) The term of office for the Provincial Executive Member serving as President or First Vice-President shall be two (2) years starting August 1st and ending July 31st.
- (d) No President shall serve for more than two (2) consecutive terms as the President. A President may be re-elected as President once absent from the Provincial Executive in this capacity for a full term of office.
- (e) No First Vice-President shall serve for more than two (2) consecutive terms as the First Vice-President. A First Vice-President may be re-elected as First

Vice-President once absent from the Provincial Executive in this capacity for a full term of office.

- (f) The term of office for the Immediate Past-President shall be for one (1) year starting August 1st and ending July 31st of the year immediately following the presidency.
- (g) The term of office of the Second Vice-President as Second Vice-President shall be for one (1) year starting August 1st and ending July 31st. A Second Vice-President may have consecutive one (1) year terms as long as they are serving as a Regional Member.
- (h) The term of office of the Secretary-Treasurer as Secretary-Treasurer shall be for one (1) year starting August 1st and ending July 31st. A Secretary-Treasurer may have consecutive one (1) year terms as long as they are serving as a Regional Member.
- (i) Service by a Provincial Executive Member as a result of a by-election shall not be applied to the term of office when that same Member is elected through a regular election.
- (j) A Provincial Executive Member may resign; such resignation shall be effective once provided in a written letter to the President.

6. TEMPORARY ABSENCE

- (a) In the temporary absence of the President, the First Vice-President shall perform the duties of the President.
- (b) In the temporary absence of the First Vice-President, the Second Vice-President shall perform the duties of the First Vice-President.
- (c) In the temporary absence of the Second Vice-President or the Secretary-Treasurer, the duties will be performed by a fellow Table Officer.
- (d) In the temporary absence of a Regional Member the Provincial Executive may select a sitting Provincial Executive Member to perform the provincial duties of the absent Member.
- (e) A Regional Provincial Executive Member who becomes ill and is unable to attend regular meetings of the Provincial Executive shall be represented by an alternate Member selected by the region involved, and the alternate Member shall have all rights and privileges of a duly elected Regional Provincial Executive Member while serving in the role. Where the boundaries of the region are equivalent to the boundaries of a Local, the selection of the alternate Member shall be done by motion at a meeting of the Local Executive. Where the boundaries of the region overlap two or more Locals, the selection of the alternate Member shall be done by motion at a meeting of the Regional Representative Council.

7. VACANCY

- (a) A vacancy shall occur in the event of removal, resignation, or death.
- (b) For a vacancy in the office of President the following shall apply:
 - (i) If the vacancy occurs within the first fifteen (15) months of the term:
 - a. The First Vice-President shall assume the office as Acting President until a by-election is held.
 - b. If the First Vice-President is unable or unwilling to assume the office as Acting President, the Provincial Executive shall elect one (1) of its Members as Acting President until a by-election is held. The election shall be by majority vote.
 - c. The Chief Electoral Officer shall call the by-election within thirty (30) days of the effective knowledge of the vacancy.
 - (ii) If the vacancy occurs after the first fifteen (15) months of the term:
 - a. The First Vice-President shall assume the office as President for the remainder of the term.

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- b. If the First Vice-President is unable or unwilling to assume the office as President, the Provincial Executive shall elect one (1) of its Members as President for the remainder of the term. The election shall be by majority vote.
- (c) For a vacancy in the office of First Vice-President the following shall apply:
 - (i) If the vacancy occurs within the first nine (9) months of the term:
 - a. The Second Vice-President shall assume the office as Acting First Vice-President until a by-election is held.
 - b. If the Second Vice-President is unable or unwilling to assume the office as Acting First Vice-President, the Provincial Executive shall elect one (1) of its Members as Acting First Vice-President until a by-election is held. The election shall be by majority vote.
 - c. A by-election shall be held at Annual Council to complete the term of office.
 - (ii) If the vacancy occurs after the first nine (9) months of the term:
 - a. The Second Vice-President shall assume the office as First Vice-President for the remainder of the term.
 - b. If the Second Vice-President is unable or unwilling to assume the office as First Vice-President, the Provincial Executive shall elect one (1) of its Members as First Vice-President for the remainder of the term. The election shall be by majority vote.
- (d) For a vacancy in the office of Second Vice-President or Secretary-Treasurer, the Provincial Executive shall elect one (1) of its Members to serve for the remainder of the term. The election shall be by majority vote.
- (e) When a Regional Provincial Executive position becomes vacant in the event of removal, resignation, death, or other permanent inability to act, the vacated position shall be filled by an alternate Member selected by the region involved until such time as a by-election is completed. The alternate Member shall have all the rights and privileges of a duly elected Provincial Executive Member while serving in the role. Where the boundaries of the region are equivalent to the boundaries of a Local, the selection of the alternate Member shall be done by motion at a meeting of the Local Executive. Where the boundaries of the region overlap two or more Locals, the selection of the alternate Member shall be done by motion at a meeting of the Regional Representative Council.

8. DUTIES

- (a) The President shall:
 - (i) preside over all meetings of the Council and of the Provincial Executive, and shall have general oversight of the affairs of these bodies;
 - (ii) be an ex officio member of all NSTU committees;
 - (iii) perform such other duties as delegated by the Council or the Provincial Executive; and,
 - (iv) convene a minimum of two conferences per year of NSTU Local Presidents and Regional Representative Council Chairs.
- (b) Notwithstanding 8. (a) (i), the Provincial Executive shall appoint an individual to serve as an Independent Chair for the business sessions of Annual Council.
- (c) The Provincial Executive functions in the name of Council between sessions; it shall perform its duties in a manner that is consistent with the will of Council as expressed through resolutions passed by Council. In addition, the Provincial Executive shall carry out duties imposed specifically by the *Teaching Profession Act*, these By-Laws, Standing Orders, and Operational Procedures. The Provincial Executive will have, but not necessarily be limited to, carrying out the following duties:
 - (i) appoint and dismiss an Executive Director and such other paid employees of the Union as it may deem necessary and determine their duties, remuneration, and terms of employment, including bonding;

- (ii) provide suitable offices and equipment for carrying on the work of the NSTU;
- (iii) direct and supervise the business, property, and affairs of the NSTU between Council meetings, and all decisions that are deemed policy by the Provincial Executive shall be forwarded to the upcoming Council as resolutions;
- (iv) determine the place and date and make arrangements for workshops and special Council meetings;
- (v) issue a post-Council press release;
- (vi) provide assistance with organizing Locals, Regional Representative Councils, and Professional Associations;
- (vii) shall ratify constitutions of Locals, Regional Representative Councils, and Professional Associations by following regulations outlined in the NSTU Operational Procedures;
- (viii) determine the boundaries of the Locals;
- (ix) publish a magazine or other official publications;
- (x) cause the books and accounts of the Council to be audited annually by a chartered accountant and cause the report of the auditor to be submitted to Council;
- (xi) have the power to convene an emergency meeting of a Local or a meeting of the NSTU Members in a given area; and,
- (xii) is empowered to exercise on behalf of the Union, as the Provincial Executive deems advisable from time-to-time, the powers of the Union under the *Teachers' Pension Act* and report thereon to the Council at the next following meeting of the Council.

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9. COMMITTEES OF THE PROVINCIAL EXECUTIVE

Committees required for the efficient running of the NSTU shall be appointed, constituted, and have their duties defined as provided in Standing Orders and Operational Procedures.

ARTICLE IV — LOCAL GOVERNANCE

1. NSTU LOCALS

- (a) Active Members may, with the consent of the Provincial Executive, form a Local.
- (b) Every Active and Reserve Member shall belong to a Local and no Member shall belong to more than one Local.

2. OFFICERS

- (a) A Local shall elect a President, First Vice-President, and such other officers as the Local may determine.
- (b) The elected Executive of the Local shall be the governing body thereof.

3. GOVERNANCE

- (a) A Local shall be a committee of the NSTU, and shall be under the control of the Council and its Executive, subject to the *Teaching Profession Act*, these By-Laws, and NSTU Standing Orders.
- (b) A Local shall not deal directly in matters of policy with the Provincial Government, government departments, or other provincial organizations.
- (c) A Local shall determine the dates of its meetings and shall designate one (1) meeting each school year as its Annual General Meeting.
- (d) A majority of Officers will constitute a quorum of the Local Executive.
- (e) A Local shall have the right to submit resolutions to Council following the Resolution Procedures outlined in the Standing Orders.

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4. FINANCES

- (a) The Secretary-Treasurer shall, from annual Union Membership Fees received, pay to Locals a rebate in an amount as determined by Annual Council.
- (b) Rebates to Locals shall be made in two (2) installments. The first installment shall be made no later than November 30th in any given year, and the second installment shall be made no later than May 31st in any given year.
- (c) A Local shall submit to Central Office, by July 31st of each year, a budget for the ensuing school year.
- (d) A Local shall submit to Central Office, by October 31st of each year, the information required for its internal review, which will be conducted out of Central Office.
- (e) A Local may not permit the use of any part of its funds for the purpose of conducting a campaign in respect to any election whether within the Union or outside of the Union.

ARTICLE V — REGIONAL GOVERNANCE**1. REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL (RRC)**

- (a) There shall be seven (7) Regional Representative Councils (RRC) mirroring the seven (7) Regional Centres for Education (RCE) as follows:
 - (i) Annapolis Valley Regional Representative Council,
 - (ii) Cape Breton-Victoria Regional Representative Council,
 - (iii) Chignecto Regional Representative Council,
 - (iv) Halifax Regional Representative Council,
 - (v) South Shore Regional Representative Council,
 - (vi) Strait Regional Representative Council, and
 - (vii) Tri-County Regional Representative Council.
- (b) The mandate of the Regional Representative Council within the geographic boundaries of a Regional Centre for Education shall be to address NSTU Members' bargaining unit issues with their RCE.
- (c) A Regional Representative Council may choose to engage in regional initiatives related to professional development, public affairs, and/or public relations if there is a need identified.
- (d) The Regional Representative Council shall carry out the responsibilities as set out in the Teachers' Provincial Agreement, and applicable Regional Collective Agreement, between the RCE and the NSTU.

2. COMPOSITION AND OFFICERS

- (a) The Regional Representative Council Membership shall include the following from the Locals from within the RRC:
 - (i) Presidents of participating Locals;
 - (ii) First Vice-Presidents of participating Locals; and,
 - (iii) an equal number of additional Member(s) from each participating Local.
- (b) The Regional Representative Council Membership shall include the following Regional Members:
 - (i) Regional Representative Council Chair; and,
 - (ii) Provincial Executive Member(s) from the RRC.
- (c) The Regional Representative Council, from the RRC Membership in 2. (a) (i), (ii), and (iii), shall determine a Chair, Vice-Chair, Grievance Chair, Article 60 Chair, Regional Economic Welfare Committee (REWC) Chair, and a Treasurer and/or Secretary as set out in its constitution.

3. GOVERNANCE

- (a) A majority of the Regional Representative Council shall constitute a quorum.
- (b) All Members of the Regional Representative Council shall have voting privileges.
- (c) A Regional Representative Council shall be a committee of the NSTU, and shall be under the control of the Council and its Executive, subject to the *Teaching Profession Act*, these By-Laws, and NSTU Standing Orders.
- (d) A Regional Representative Council shall not deal directly in matters of policy with the Provincial Government, government departments, or other provincial organizations. However, it may deal directly with the Regional Centre for Education on behalf of the Union.
- (e) Subject to Article VIII of these By-Laws, the Chair of the Regional Representative Council shall be the spokesperson on regional matters for the NSTU.
- (f) A Regional Representative Council shall determine the dates of its meetings.
- (g) A Regional Representative Council shall have the right to submit resolutions to Council following the Resolutions Procedures outlined in the Standing Orders.

4. FINANCES

- (a) The Regional Representative Council shall be funded on an equitable basis by the participating Locals in the region.
- (b) If at July 31st, the cash balance of an RRC exceeds an amount necessary to fund the activities of the RRC until the November Local Rebate, then the excess monies shall be returned to the participating Locals of the RRC.
- (c) The Regional Representative Council shall submit to Central Office, by July 31st of each year, a budget for the ensuing school year.
- (d) The Regional Representative Council shall submit to Central Office, by October 31st of each year, the information required for its internal review, which will be conducted out of Central Office.
- (e) The Regional Representative Council may not permit the use of any part of its funds for the purpose of conducting a campaign in respect to any election whether within the Union or outside of the Union.

5. REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL COMMITTEES

- (a) The Regional Representative Council shall annually establish a Standing Committee called the Regional Economic Welfare Committee with Membership consisting of the First Vice-Presidents of participating Locals and other Members as determined by the Regional Representative Council to a maximum of ten (10) Members.
- (b) The Regional Representative Council shall annually appoint Members to committees as stipulated in Regional and Provincial collective agreements.

ARTICLE VI — PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION GOVERNANCE

1. PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION

- (a) Active Members may, following the procedure laid out in Operational Procedures and with the consent of the Provincial Executive, form a Professional Association.

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- (b) The mandate of Professional Associations shall be to encourage and assist Members in professional development activities in their respective fields.
- (c) The objectives of Professional Associations are to:
 - (i) improve professional practice by increasing Members' knowledge and understanding;
 - (ii) disseminate ideas, trends, and new developments;
 - (iii) advocate interests of Professional Associations, consistent with NSTU Policy and practice; and,
 - (iv) advise the Provincial Executive and NSTU Committees on matters special to the Professional Associations.
- (d) Membership in a Professional Association is open to Active, Reserve, and Associate Members of the NSTU, is voluntary, and is conditional on paying a Professional Association Fee as set by the individual Associations at their Annual General Meetings.
- (e) The NSTU shall assist in the organization and promotion of Professional Associations, and give financial assistance where necessary, in order to provide opportunities for Member-initiated professional development.

2. OFFICERS

- (a) A Professional Association shall elect a President, and such other officers as the Association may determine.
- (b) The elected Executive of the Professional Association shall be the governing body thereof.

3. GOVERNANCE

- (a) A Professional Association shall be a committee of the NSTU, and shall be under the control of the Council and its Executive, subject to the *Teaching Profession Act*, these By-Laws, and NSTU Standing Orders.
- (b) A Professional Association shall not deal directly in matters of policy with the Provincial Government, government departments, or other provincial organizations.
- (c) A Professional Association shall determine the dates of its meetings and shall designate one (1) meeting each school year as its Annual General Meeting.
- (d) A majority of Officers will constitute a quorum of the Professional Association Executive.
- (e) A Professional Association shall have the right to submit resolutions to Council following the Resolutions Procedures outlined in the Standing Orders..

4. FINANCES

- (a) A Professional Association shall submit to Central Office, by December 1st of each year, a budget for the current school year.
- (b) A Professional Association shall submit to Central Office, by December 1st of each year, the information required for its internal review, which will be conducted out of Central Office.
- (c) A Professional Association may not permit the use of any part of its funds for the purpose of conducting a campaign in respect to any election whether within the Union or outside of the Union.

ARTICLE VII — PROFESSIONAL COMMITTEE

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1. PROFESSIONAL COMMITTEE

- (a) Pursuant to the *Teaching Profession Act*, Section 11 (1), there shall be a Professional Committee of the NSTU.
- (b) The mandate of the Committee is as described in the *Teaching Profession Act*.
- (c) The Professional Committee shall consist of six (6) Members elected by a plurality of votes cast by Voting Delegates at Annual Council.
- (d) Members of the Professional Committee shall serve a three (3) year term, with two (2) Members of the Committee having their term expire each year to maintain continuity on the Committee. Committee Members shall not serve consecutive terms on the Committee.
- (e) No Member of the Professional Committee shall concurrently be a Member of the Provincial Executive or a Committee of the Provincial Executive.
- (f) The Professional Committee shall meet at least once a year for professional development purposes and as required to consider complaints.

ARTICLE VIII — OFFICIAL SPOKESPERSON FOR THE UNION

The President is the official spokesperson for the NSTU and its negotiating team unless some other person has been specifically delegated with this authority.

ARTICLE IX — FINANCE

1. FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year of the NSTU shall be August 1st to July 31st.

2. BALANCED BUDGET

- (a) The Finance and Property Committee shall provide to Delegates of Annual Council, in advance of Council, a balanced budget for the upcoming Fiscal Year.
- (b) Where the Finance and Property Committee recommends a balanced budget to Delegates of Annual Council which requires an increase in Union Membership Fees and/or a transfer from the Reserve Fund the Committee shall also prepare an alternate balanced budget which decreases expenditures instead of increasing Union Membership Fees and/or transferring funds from the Reserve Fund.

3. RESERVE FUND

- (a) The NSTU shall set up a Reserve Fund which shall be administered by the Provincial Executive subject to the ratification by Council and shall be maintained by amounts voted annually by Council.
- (b) Council may also approve use of an amount from the Reserve Fund for operational purposes. Council shall review any such amount annually. Following such reviews, Council may vary the amount. Council's authority to establish and/or vary the amount from the Reserve Fund shall be exercised by a majority vote of the Council.
- (c) The Fund may be used:
 - (i) when the NSTU incurs reasonable costs while engaged in a legal strike;

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- (ii) as a source for loans within the NSTU for purposes of expansion or development; or,
 - (iii) for expenditures or loans in cases of emergency; and,
 - (iv) the amount of the Reserve Fund to be used to balance the operating budget shall not exceed \$350,000 per year.
- (d) The Reserve Fund shall be invested by the Provincial Executive in accordance with the principles of safety, marketability, and return.

ARTICLE X — RULES OF ORDER

The most current edition of Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, governs the NSTU in all parliamentary situations not provided for in Legislation, By-Laws, or Standing Orders.

ARTICLE XI — LEGAL ASSISTANCE

If legal action is being taken or threatened against any Member of the NSTU in matters arising out of the individual's professional duties or status, or if, in the opinion of the Provincial Executive, legal action should be taken by a Member in matters arising out of the individual's professional duties or status, then such Member may be granted such legal assistance as the Provincial Executive in its sole discretion may determine.

*Approved by the Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia in Council on the 3rd day of December 1968.
Gordon H. Davidson Deputy Clerk of the Executive Council Amended 1970 Council.
Amended at each succeeding Council 1971-2018.
Amended by substitution 2019-01.
Amended at each succeeding Council 2021-2023*

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STANDING ORDERS

1. UNION MEMBERSHIP FEES

- (a) The Union Membership Fee for Active Members, as defined by By-Law Article I, Section 2, pursuant to Section 12 of the *Teaching Profession Act* shall be as fixed from time-to-time by Council.
- (b) Notwithstanding 1. (a), the amount of the Union Membership Fee for Active Members employed under a term contract of less than an equivalent of sixty (60) days taught and claimed shall be determined on the basis of the number of days employed over a denominator of sixty (60) multiplied by eighty percent (80%) of the annual Union Membership Fee.
- (c) The Union Membership Fee for Reserve Members, as defined by By-Law Article I, Section 3, shall be thirty two dollars per year (\$32/yr).
- (d) A per diem Union Membership Fee in the amount of two dollars and eighty cents per teaching day (\$2.80/day) is applied to substitute teachers whether Reserve Members or not. This amount shall be deducted at source.
- (e) The Union Membership Fee for Associate Members, as defined by By-Law Article I, Section 5, shall be ten dollars per year (\$10/yr).
- (f) No teacher shall pay an annual Union Membership Fee greater than the current amount payable by a full time teacher in any one (1) school year.

2. ORDERS OF COUNCIL

- (a) On an annual basis, the Provincial Executive shall appoint an Independent Chair for the Council.
 - (i) The individual appointed shall:
 - a. have a demonstrated knowledge of parliamentary procedure;
 - b. not currently be holding elected office in the NSTU;
 - c. not currently be seeking elected office in the NSTU;
 - d. have no conflict of interest according to NSTU Standing Orders; and,
 - e. adhere to the principles outlined in the NSTU Code of Ethics.
 - (ii) In the event that the Independent Chair is unable to chair the meeting, the President will assume the chair.
- (b) The Executive Director shall be responsible for the recording of the minutes of the Council meetings.
- (c) The minutes of every meeting of the Council, when approved, shall be signed by the Secretary-Treasurer and by the President, and these shall be kept by the Executive Director as the official record of the Council proceedings.
- (d) All recommendations of the Provincial Executive of the NSTU and its committees which are to be presented to Annual Council for action, including resolutions to fix Union Membership Fees, shall be sent to the Locals at least thirty (30) days prior to the meeting of Council.
- (e) The Annual Council Workbook shall be available to all Council delegates at least fourteen (14) days prior to the Annual Meeting of Council.
- (f) The Treasurer's Report, including the proposed budget, shall be presented to the Council no later than the first business session of Council.

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- (g) All resolutions that are identified by the Finance and Property Committee to have an effect on the proposed operating budget shall be dealt with prior to the presentation of the budget.
- (h) Economic Welfare resolutions shall be debated at Annual Council in Closed Session.
- (i) In the final business session of Council the budget shall be presented in closed session for its adoption.
- (j) The reports presented by committees to Annual Council shall be received and reviewed at a session prior to the consideration of resolutions arising from them.

3. RESOLUTIONS TO COUNCIL

- (a) Resolution submissions shall be prepared into a document which is circulated to all Members prior to deliberations at Council.
- (b) Resolution submissions shall be available to Delegates in both official languages.
- (c) Resolution submissions shall be accompanied by supporting briefs at the time of submission and be presented to the Membership in the same order as they are to be deliberated during Annual Council proceedings.
- (d) All resolutions submitted for consideration to Annual Council shall be studied beforehand by the appropriate committee and/or the Provincial Executive. The findings and recommendations, if any, from such study shall be available to the delegates at Annual Council.
- (e) Submitted resolutions categorized as Economic Welfare and Working Conditions which relate to Provincial Negotiations shall be automatically referred to staff for consideration by the Provincial Economic Welfare Committee.
- (f) A resolution adopted at Annual Council becomes effective immediately upon adoption unless the resolution itself specifies a particular time frame or unless the resolution affects the NSTU budget.
- (g) (i) Resolution submissions identified by the Resolutions Committee as an NSTU Operational Procedure shall have that submission returned to the Local, RRC or Professional Association for redirection to the Provincial Executive for action.
- (ii) Should the Local, RRC, or Professional Association not agree with the decision of the Provincial Executive concerning the issue, the affected Local, RRC, or Professional Association is able to resubmit that same resolution to the next Annual Council. The brief accompanying the resolution shall contain information concerning the Operational Procedure status of the submission as well as the decision of the Provincial Executive concerning the issue.
- (h) All resolutions to Annual Council shall be designated constitutional, policy, or action.
- (i) Resolutions adopted at Council designated constitutional are recorded in the NSTU Constitution.
- (j) Resolutions adopted at Council designated policy are recorded in NSTU policy documents and are subject to the six-year (6-yr) cycle review.
- (k) Resolutions adopted at Council designated action are removed from NSTU documents when action has been taken.
- (l) A full report of the action taken on each resolution passed by Council shall be presented at the following Council in the Disposition of Resolutions Report.

4. COMMITTEES OF COUNCIL

(A) STEERING COMMITTEE

- (i) Before each Council meeting the Provincial Executive shall appoint from amongst the registered Voting Delegates a Steering Committee consisting of three (3) people.
- (ii) The Steering Committee shall monitor the progress of Council and make recommendations to Council concerning the appropriateness of time in relation to the business agenda.

(B) THE ANNUAL COUNCIL ELECTIONS COMMITTEE

- (i) Before each Annual Council meeting the Provincial Executive shall appoint from amongst the registered Voting Delegates an Annual Council Elections Committee consisting of four (4) people.
- (ii) The Annual Council Elections Committee shall:
 - a. receive nominations from candidates wishing to run in elections held at Annual Council, following the Elections Conducted at Annual Council Guidelines as provided in NSTU Operational Procedures;
 - b. ensure potential candidates are eligible to run;
 - c. report to Council regarding nominations;
 - d. monitor candidates regarding expenses, following the Expense Guidelines as provided in NSTU Operational Procedures;
 - e. report to the Executive Director (or designate) and/or the Independent Chair of Council any candidates suspected of violations of campaign guidelines as provided in NSTU Standing Orders and Operational Procedures; and,
 - f. report to the Provincial Executive, within thirty (30) days from the conclusion of Annual Council, any concerns regarding Annual Council elections.

(C) RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE

- (i)
 - a. The Resolutions Committee shall consist of five (5) Members.
 - b. Annual Council shall elect, by a plurality of votes cast by Voting Delegates, four (4) Members from amongst the Voting Delegates. Two (2) Members of the Committee having their term expire each year to maintain continuity on the Committee. All such Members elected shall serve a two (2) year term. Committee Members shall not serve consecutive terms on the Committee.
 - c. The Provincial Executive shall elect one (1) of its Members to serve as Chair of the Resolutions Committee. The Chair shall serve for a renewable one (1) year term.
- (ii) Members of the Resolutions Committee who are not Voting Delegates to Annual Council are empowered to move and second resolutions presented through the Resolutions Committee at Council; however, they are not permitted to vote.
- (iii) The Resolutions Committee shall:
 - a. Designate each resolution by topic (Governance, Curriculum, Economic Welfare and Working Conditions, Government, Professional Development, General); by category (Constitutional, Policy, Action); by intent (Amend, Rescind, New); and by eligibility (majority or two-third (2/3) majority Vote).
 - b. Ensure that resolutions affecting the NSTU's budget are costed by the Finance and Property Committee and make such costing information available at the time of deliberation.
 - c. Consult the sponsor of a resolution to clarify the costing specifics of any resolution classified as a costed resolution.
 - d. Combine resolutions of similar intent without altering the substantial intent of any resolution.
 - e. Consult the sponsor of a resolution on rewording of a submission.

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- f. Inform and report to the sponsor of a resolution at least thirty (30) days prior to Council if a proposed resolution is out of order, and include suggestions on how to improve it so it could be submitted to Annual Council the following year.
- g. Supply the sponsor of a resolution, upon request, a written summary of legal advice regarding submitted resolutions if available.
- h. Determine the eligibility of submissions received during Council proceedings for consideration under New Business.
- i. Coordinate compilation of Reports; the Disposition Report, which includes the URL of an electronic compilation of memos and letters regarding adopted resolutions, and Reports to Council.

5. COMMITTEES OF THE PROVINCIAL EXECUTIVE

- (a) At a meeting following Annual Council the Provincial Executive shall appoint such committees of the NSTU as it from time-to-time is authorized to do so by Council and such other committees as it may find useful or necessary to carry out the NSTU program. All such committees shall report to the Provincial Executive.
- (b) Committees of the NSTU are advisory bodies to the Provincial Executive and responsible to the Provincial Executive for their programs. Committees of the NSTU are not program-administering committees except as specifically authorized by the Provincial Executive. Committees are not authorized to spend money or to commit the NSTU to the expenditure of monies, acts, or engagements except as authorized by the Provincial Executive.
- (c) The Provincial Executive shall establish terms of reference for committees appointed by the Provincial Executive and shall make these terms of reference available to all Active and Reserve Members.
- (d) All committees appointed by the Provincial Executive shall serve from August 1st to July 31st of any school year unless otherwise directed by the Provincial Executive.
- (e) Voting privileges on NSTU committees shall be confined to Active and Reserve Members of the NSTU, others to act only in advisory or consultative capacity.

6. DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE

- (a) Pursuant to the *Teaching Profession Act*, Section 10 (1) (d), there shall be a Discipline Committee of the NSTU.
- (b) The mandate of the Committee is to consider complaints regarding Member action(s) inimical to the interests of the NSTU, which would not come before the Professional Committee.
- (c) The Discipline Committee shall consist of five (5) Members elected by a plurality of votes cast by Voting Delegates at Annual Council.
- (d) Members of the Discipline Committee shall serve a three (3) year term. Term expirations shall be staggered in order to allow for continuity on the Committee. Committee Members shall not serve consecutive terms on the Committee.
- (e) No Member of the Discipline Committee shall concurrently be a Member of the Provincial Executive or a Committee of the Provincial Executive.
- (f) The Discipline Committee shall meet at least once a year for professional development purposes and as required to consider complaints.

7. EQUITY AND AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

- (a) The NSTU is committed to equity and affirmative action.
- (b) This commitment shall manifest itself in NSTU Operational Procedures regarding the selection process for: NSTU Committees, the John Huntley Memorial Internship Program, and the NSTU delegation to the Nova Scotia Federation of Labour's Biennial Convention.
- (c) This commitment shall be assessed during each NSTU hiring or secondment.

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8. CAMPAIGN GUIDELINES

- (a) These guidelines apply to any election campaign within the NSTU.
- (b) Active campaigning within Council Chambers is prohibited except for the normal address to Delegates by Presidential and First Vice-Presidential Candidates. Passive campaigning within Council Chambers is permitted.
- (c) Active or passive campaigning for elections or activities not related to the structure or operations of the NSTU are prohibited within Council Chambers.
- (d) Active campaigning shall be considered any display or action that involves the presentation of partisan information in a manner that is difficult for a group of Delegates to avoid. Examples of such active campaigning include, but is not limited to, the display of campaign posters, the shouting of campaign slogans, shouting out in support of a candidate other than during the normal address to delegates, distributing materials throughout Council Chambers including the placing of campaign materials anywhere within Council Chambers prior to, during, or following a Council session, and demonstrations in support of a given candidate.
- (e) Passive campaigning shall be considered any display or action that is observable only by people in the immediate vicinity of the campaign material and involves no explicit action to promote or advance those materials at the time at which the material is seen or heard. Examples of such passive campaigning include the use of written materials containing references to a candidate, the wearing of campaign clothing, buttons, or ornaments, and the presence of a single copy of a candidate's campaign literature at delegates' seats and table spots.
- (f) A candidate or representative of the candidate is permitted to place up to one (1) item per delegate per session at the tables in Council Chambers prior to the start of the session. This would replace campaign material distribution at other times. A candidate would still be permitted to greet delegates as they enter Council Chambers.
- (g) Paid advertisements in any medium (press, radio, TV, *The Teacher*) are prohibited.
- (h) The use of employer email is prohibited for campaigning purposes.
- (i) The use of the Membership Registry is prohibited for campaigning purposes by individual candidates.
- (j) The number of campaign posters/banners on display in the hotel(s) at Annual Council may be controlled by the hotel(s). If the hotel(s) do limit the number of posters/banners candidates will be informed of such limitations the week prior to the start of Council. A campaign poster shall include any poster, banner or sign posted by or for a Member running for an elected position that makes a reference to the candidate and/or the position being sought.

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9. CONFIDENTIALITY

Individuals in an elected or appointed leadership role of the NSTU, its employees, and others acting on the organization's behalf are obligated to hold confidential information in strict confidence and shall not disclose or use any confidential information except in the course of carrying out authorized activities on behalf of the Union; as expressly authorized by the Executive Director, NSTU President, or Provincial Executive in writing; or where required by law.

10. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Individuals in an elected or appointed leadership role of the NSTU, its employees, and others acting on the organization's behalf have the obligation to avoid conflicts of interest; the perception of conflict of interest; and to ensure that their activities and interests do not conflict with their responsibilities to the Nova Scotia Teachers Union.

11. DIRECTIVES OF THE PROVINCIAL EXECUTIVE

When the Provincial Executive enacts changes during the year which impact in a negative way on Local/Regional Representative Council finances, the Provincial Executive will also direct additional funds to Locals/Regional Representative Councils to carry out these changes.

12. EXECUTIVE STAFF

- (a) The Executive Director and Executive Staff of the NSTU must be eligible to hold valid Nova Scotia teacher professional numbers.
 - (b) The number of full-time Executive or similar positions shall be increased only with the prior consent of Annual Council.
-

13. PRIVACY – MEMBER DATA AND PERSONAL INFORMATION

The NSTU fully respects the rights of its Members to security and privacy with regards to the data and personal information supplied to it by its Members. To that end, the following guidelines shall apply:

- (a) all Member data and personal information, collected by the NSTU, shall solely be used for the legitimate purposes of the Union and its Members;
- (b) collection of Member data and personal information shall be limited to that which is necessary for the purposes identified in (a) above;
- (c) Members' personal information shall be protected by security safeguards appropriate to the sensitivity of the information.
- (d) no individual Member data or personal information will be released to anyone, other than for legitimate Union use, unless individually and explicitly authorized by the Member;
- (e) the Union, upon request, shall supply individual Members these guidelines related to the management of Member data and personal information;
- (f) the Union, upon request, shall inform a Member of the existence and use of an individual Member's personal information;

- (g) aggregate Member data may be released to affiliate organizations or academic institutions for research purposes with approval of the Provincial Executive;
- (h) aggregate Member data may be released to news media with approval of the Provincial Executive; and,
- (i) no Member data or personal information will be released to commercial interests.

14. AWARDS

- (a) The Provincial Executive may from time-to-time recognize outstanding contributions of Members by the means and under the conditions, which follow:
- (b) Life Membership Award which shall be:
 - (i) a certificate and pin;
 - (ii) awarded for displaying consistently high qualities of leadership, performance and service to education, the teaching profession or to the Nova Scotia Teachers Union; and,
 - (iii) awarded at the sole discretion of the Provincial Executive.
- (c) Special Award which shall be:
 - (i) a certificate and gift;
 - (ii) awarded for particularly outstanding service to education, the teaching profession, or the Nova Scotia Teachers Union; and,
 - (iii) awarded at the sole discretion of the Provincial Executive.
- (d) Local Service Award which shall be:
 - (i) a certificate and special pin;
 - (ii) awarded for displaying, at the Local level, a consistent and continuing involvement in Local leadership, professional development or long term service to education or the teaching profession;
 - (iii) awarded for particularly outstanding service to the Local, to education or to the teaching profession;
 - (iv) awarded to Active Members and Retired Members or individuals who have ceased being NSTU Active Members and,
 - (v) awarded by the Provincial Executive only on the recommendation of a Local Executive.

15. CHIEF ELECTORAL OFFICER

- (a) There shall be a Chief Electoral Officer of the Union who shall be the Solicitor of the Union.
- (b) The duties of the Chief Electoral Officer shall be:
 - (i) to advise on the conducting of any election described in the Constitution of the Union;
 - (ii) to decide the meaning of the Constitution in respect of elections; and,
 - (iii) to decide matters of complaint concerning elections presented by interested parties.

16. DELEGATES TO CANADIAN TEACHERS' FEDERATION

Delegates to the Canadian Teachers' Federation Annual General Meeting shall be: the President, or another CTF Director as chosen by the Provincial

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Executive from the Members of the Provincial Executive; the Executive Director as a member of the CTF Board; and a number of other delegates defined by the Canadian Teachers' Federation who shall be elected by a plurality of votes cast by Voting Delegates at Annual Council. Delegates elected by Council shall serve a three (3) year term and shall not serve consecutive terms. The First Vice-President or, in the absence of the First Vice-President the Second Vice-President, shall attend as an alternate.

During a presidential election year, the NSTU President-elect will be included in the delegation to CTF as an observer at the AGM. The costs incurred will be covered by the NSTU as per CTF guidelines.

17. DELEGATES TO NOVA SCOTIA FEDERATION OF LABOUR

Delegates to the Nova Scotia Federation of Labour Biennial General Meeting shall be a number of delegates as defined by the Nova Scotia Federation of Labour who shall be selected by the Provincial Executive through a nomination process.

18. NSTU PROVINCE-WIDE VOTING

The results of all NSTU province-wide voting shall be published in *The Teacher* or another equivalent publication on a Local-by-Local basis within fifty (50) days of such voting.

19. CONSTITUTION

The Provincial Executive shall ensure that the Constitution of the Nova Scotia Teachers Union is available to each Member of the NSTU.

Approved 1967 Council.

Amended at each succeeding Council 1968-2018.

Amended by substitution 2019-02.

Amended at each succeeding Council 2021-2023

NSTU POLICY

APRIL 2023



Introduction

NSTU policy provides the context for effective decision-making and action on issues. The Provincial Executive has established the following operational principles for the development, implementation, and evaluation of the organization's policy.

NSTU POLICY SHALL BE:

- the Unions official position on issues of significant weight to the Membership,
- formulated with input from the Membership,
- set by an Annual Council Resolution,
- stated in clear and concise language,
- recorded as a Resolution in the official minutes of an Annual Council,
- published and updated as necessary,
- supplemented with position papers where appropriate, and
- reviewed in a six-year cycle rotation.

NSTU POLICY IS CLASSIFIED AND REVIEWED ACCORDING TO THE FOLLOWING SCHEDULE:

- 2024 Economic Welfare & Working Conditions
- 2025 Government
- 2026 Professional Development
- 2027 General
- 2028 NSTU Governance
- 2029 Curriculum

REFERENCES TO POLICY STATEMENTS:

References to Policy Statements are as accurate as could be cited back to Council 1997. Many Policy Statements pre-date 1997, references have not been tracked to earlier Resolutions. References cite Resolutions that create, reaffirm, or amend Policy and Provincial Executive Meeting dates where Policy was reaffirmed.

SECTION I

NSTU GOVERNANCE

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1. MISSION

As the Unified voice for the advocacy and support of all its Members, the NSTU promotes and advances the teaching profession and quality public education.

Reference: Introduced 1990s; Reaffirmed 2023-27

2. BELIEFS – WE BELIEVE THAT

A. THE NSTU SERVES AS THE PRIMARY ADVOCATE FOR ITS MEMBERS BY:

- I. protecting and enhancing economic benefits
- II. improving working conditions
- III. supporting personal well-being
- IV. keeping members informed
- V. promoting opportunities to participate

B. THE NSTU IS COMMITTED TO LEADERSHIP IN EDUCATIONAL CHANGE BY:

- I. maintaining and promoting excellence in teaching
- II. encouraging life-long learning
- III. influencing educational trends through research and evaluation
- IV. disseminating information

C. THE NSTU PROMOTES AND ENHANCES QUALITY PUBLIC EDUCATION FOR ALL STUDENTS BY:

- I. supporting a safe and healthy learning environment
- II. advancing the profession
- III. advocating social justice and unionism
- IV. working with other organizations
- V. communicating our beliefs in order to affect public opinion and policy

Reference: Introduced 1990s; Reaffirmed 2023-28

3. CODE OF ETHICS

This Code of Ethics is a guide to Members in maintaining at all times the high integrity of their profession including professional conduct in relation to all communication whether verbal, written or via social media.

A. MEMBER AND PUPIL/PARENT/GUARDIAN

- I. The Member regards as confidential, and does not divulge other than through professional channels, any information of a personal or domestic nature, concerning either pupils or home, obtained through the course of professional duties.
- II. The Member should be just, equitable, and fair in all relationships with pupils/parents/guardians.
- III. The Member should assume responsibility for the safety and welfare of pupils, especially under conditions of emergency.
- IV. The Member should avoid giving offence to the moral principles of pupils and/or their parents/guardians.
- V. The Member should be as objective and respectful as possible in dealing with controversial matters.
- VI. The Member should not accept remuneration for tutoring their pupils except under compelling circumstances and with the approval of their supervisor or principal.

B. MEMBER AND MEMBER/COLLEAGUE

- I. The Member should not make defamatory, disparaging, condescending, embarrassing, or offensive comments concerning another Member or colleague.
- II. The Member shall not make derogatory remarks about the professional competence of another Member or colleague.
- III. The Member shall not accept a position arising out of the unsettled dispute between Members, and their employers.
- IV. The Member shall not sexually, physically, or emotionally harass another Member or colleague.

C. MEMBER AND ADMINISTRATION

- I. The Member should maintain a reasonable and professional level of support to internal administration of the school/educational site and regional office.

D. MEMBER AND PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATION

- I. The Member who in their professional capacity is a Member of a committee, board, or authority dealing with matters affecting the educational program of Nova Scotia as a whole should be elected, appointed, or approved by the Nova Scotia Teachers Union.
- II. The Member, or group of Members, should not take any individual action in matters which should be dealt with by their Local, Regional Representative Council, or by the NSTU.
- III. The Local or Regional Representative Council should not take any individual action in matters where the assistance of the NSTU has been sought, or in matters requiring the authorization of the NSTU.

E. MEMBER AND PROFESSION

- I. The Member's conduct should advance and promote the teaching profession and the cause of education in the province.
- II. The Member should maintain their professional learning which will keep them abreast of the trends in education.
- III. The Member should engage in no gainful employment, outside of the contract, where the employment affects adversely their professional status, or impairs their standing with pupils, colleagues, and the community.

F. MEMBER AND COMMUNITY

- I. The Member should so conduct themselves in their private life that no dishonour may befall them or through them to the profession.

Reference: Amended 2009-6, 2009-7, 2009-8, 2009-9, 2009-10, 2009-11, 2009-12, 2009-13, 2010-9, 2016-15, 2021-01, Reaffirmed January 2022

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4. COLLEGIAL RELATIONSHIP AMONGST EDUCATIONAL SITE STAFF

The NSTU recognizes the key role of public school administrators as educational leaders. The NSTU believes in the value of the collegial relationship between administrators and teachers. The collegial approach removes barriers to teachers who aspire to become instructional leaders assuming administrative roles. The NSTU believes that the classification of administrators as managers fundamentally changes the nature of the administrator-teacher relationship, and is a barrier to the collegial relationship. Further, the NSTU believes that the collegial relationship is strengthened by having administrators who are:

- A. full, Active Members of the NSTU;
- B. able to access NSTU Professional Development;
- C. modeling life-long-learning;
- D. exemplary and compassionate teachers with a deep understanding of instructional practice; and,

- E. focusing on their primary role as lead teachers as opposed to being managers.

Reference: Resolution 1998-4, Reaffirmed 1999-48, Amended 2000-4, Reaffirmed 2002-25, 2005-29, Amended 2010-22, 2016-21, 2019-4, Reaffirmed January 2022

5. DIVERSITY IN THE TEACHING PROFESSION

- A. The NSTU is committed to equity and affirmative action.
- B. The NSTU recognizes the importance of having people, who have traditionally been marginalized, enter the teaching profession.
- C. The NSTU supports organizations and programs that encourage students from under-represented groups to enter the teaching profession.

Reference: Resolution 1999-145, 1999-146, 1999-163, Reaffirmed 2002-109, 2005-52, Amended 2008-51, Reaffirmed November 2013, amended 2022-20

6. GENDER IDENTITY, GENDER EXPRESSION, AND SEXUAL ORIENTATION DISCRIMINATION

We strive for a safe, welcoming, and inclusive education system that recognizes and respects all people, regardless of their gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation. As such, the NSTU will promote, support, and protect the rights of students, families, and Members to:

- A. be treated with respect and acceptance, free from discrimination and oppression;
- B. freely and collectively express their gender identity and sexual orientation;
- C. be provided safe, welcoming, and inclusive learning content, spaces, and facilities;
- D. have diversity and inclusion in the NSTU, in schools, and within system priorities and programs; and,
- E. affirm and deliver sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression education.

Reference: Resolution 2004-NB1, Amended 2009-NB1, 2011-11, 2014-50, 2019-59, 2022-22

7. HUMAN RIGHTS

The Membership of the Nova Scotia Teachers Union reflects the diversity of our province. We rejoice in this diversity and believe that we are all entitled to work in an environment free from discrimination.

- A. The NSTU, in recognition of its support for the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, acts to protect the fundamental human rights and freedoms of its Members.
- B. The NSTU, in recognition of its support for the Nova Scotia Human Rights Act, lends full support to its Members who face discrimination or harassment with respect to their employment as defined in the Act.
- C. The NSTU is committed to being unbiased towards its Members in its structure and its delivery of programs and services.
- D. The NSTU Human Rights Statement reads:
 - I. The Nova Scotia Teachers Union rejoices in diversity and fully supports the Nova Scotia Human Rights Act;
 - II. Because we believe all members are entitled to work in an environment free from discrimination, we strive to govern and serve our members without bias;
 - III. Because everyone's rights matter, we will create a respectful environment in all our activities that fosters goodwill and trust and is free from harassment;

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- IV. Because we know positive, healthy relationships empower us to grow and lead, we do not tolerate or condone behaviour that undermines individual dignity or worth;
- V. Because every member's voice and vote is equally important, we interact through mutual respect, understanding and cooperation as a lived expression of solidarity supporting full democratic privilege free of harassment and intimidation.

Reference: Reaffirmed 1999-40, 2002-19, 2005-19, Amended 2010-11, 2016-16, 2021-13, 2022-23, 2023-38

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SECTION II

CURRICULUM

1. ASSESSMENT, EVALUATION, AND REPORTING OF STUDENTS' PROGRESS

Classroom Teachers have the primary responsibility for assessing, evaluating, and reporting student progress, using a variety of approaches entrenched in their regular practice, which takes into account the diverse student population. As such, the NSTU holds the following beliefs regarding assessment, evaluation, and reporting of students' progress:

- A. student information should be collected, stored, reported, and used in a manner respectful of the student's rights regarding protection of privacy;
- B. assessment and evaluation instruments and methodologies must:
 - I. be consistent with educational goals and learning theory,
 - II. be fair, just, and equitable,
 - III. motivate students, instilling confidence in success,
 - IV. cover an assortment of skills and skill levels,
 - V. provide continuous measurement of progress, and
 - VI. enable teachers and specialists to diagnose learning difficulties and design strategies to overcome them; and,
- C. the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and Education Entities have a responsibility to provide:
 - I. adequate time and resources for teachers to accurately assess, evaluate, and report student progress; and,
 - II. ongoing appropriate opportunities for inservicing teachers regarding assessment, evaluation, and report instruments and methodologies as required.

Reference: Resolution 2023-30

2. ASSESSMENT OF STUDENTS – STANDARDIZED TESTING

The NSTU recognizes the authority of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development to mandate standardized student assessment tools. However, the NSTU believes that student evaluation instruments created by individual teachers, using their professional judgement in regards to their specific classroom and students, are the most effective and accurate means of assessing student achievement. As such, the NSTU holds the following beliefs regarding standardized assessments:

- A. the NSTU, as the professional voice of teachers, must be directly involved in all policy decisions regarding large scale provincial student assessment tools;

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- B. classroom teachers from across the province/region must be involved in the design, implementation, and marking of standardized assessments;
- C. standardized assessments must be used solely to inform instruction and support student learning;
- D. standardized assessments are not intended for, nor should they be used for, evaluating individual teachers, administrators, or schools;
- E. the compilation of assessment scores must never be permitted for ranking; and,
- F. the administration and marking of exams, used in the formulation of final grades, must remain the prerogative of individual classroom teachers.

Reference: Resolution 2001-B, Reaffirmed 2004-97, Amended 2011-16, 2017-20, 2023-29

3. CENSORSHIP

Censorship occurs whenever and wherever governments or special interest groups are able to impose their personal, political, or moral values on others to suppress words, images, or ideas that they deem offensive. The NSTU does not condone censorship in any form and believes that:

- A. students have the right to free access to various and diverse learning materials readily available to them at their school;
- B. the education entities must recognize the right of Members, using their professional judgement, to select learning material in accordance with current educational practices; and,
- C. Education entities must have procedures in place for the reconsideration of learning materials deemed appropriate by Members.

Reference: Resolution 2001-41, Reaffirmed 2004-99, Amended 2011-18, 2017-21, 2023-31

4. COMPREHENSIVE MATERIALS FOR FRENCH INSTRUCTION

Members teaching Core French, French Immersion, French First Language, or French as an additional language should have access to comprehensive French materials, including texts and library resources.

Reference: Reaffirmed 1999-59, Amended 2004-100, Reaffirmed February 2011, March 2017, Amended 2023-32

5. CONFLICT RESOLUTION

As a microcosm of society, conflict within classrooms and the greater school environment is inevitable; employing constructive conflict resolution practices can create an emotionally safe learning environment where students learn to live responsibly, respectfully, compassionately, cooperatively, and effectively. As such, the NSTU holds the following beliefs regarding constructive, non-violent conflict resolution practices:

- A. Students can acquire the attitudes, knowledge, and skills to enable them to cooperatively resolve conflict within their classroom, schools, families, and communities.
- B. It is the responsibility of educators to continually expose students to lessons and experiences in conflict resolution and problem-solving.
- C. It is the responsibility of regional education entities to provide inservicing on conflict resolution practices.
- D. It is the responsibility of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development to incorporate conflict resolution into the Nova Scotia public school curricula.

Reference: Resolution 2023-47

6. CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT, IMPLEMENTATION, AND REVIEW

The NSTU recognizes the authority of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development to develop, implement, and review the curricula of the public school program. However, the NSTU believes that the Department should:

- A. ensure that the public school program is a true continuum, from primary through to high school completion;
- B. establish and maintain long-range policies and procedures for evidence-based curriculum development, implementation, and review;
- C. clearly and concisely communicate a curriculum implementation model, components of the model to include but not be limited by pilots, field tests, and evaluation standards;
- D. involve Members as equal partners in the development, implementation, and review of curricula;
- E. ensure that curriculum is inclusive and diverse, free from bias and discrimination, empowers students to think critically, promotes respectful relationships, challenges negative stereotyping, and motivates students to meet their full potential;
- F. provide for curricula ensuring a balance between academics, technical skills, and specialized subjects at every appropriate grade level, including but not limited to, guidance, performing arts, visual arts, libraries, music, physical education, languages (Mi'kmaq, French, Gaelic, English, and others as appropriate), family studies, social studies, sciences, mathematics, and technology education;
- G. ensure appropriate funding is provided for the implementation of curricula, including but not limited to preparation time, professional development, and learning resources; and,
- H. ensure that curriculum development and implementation is free from the influences of for-profit corporations.

Further, the NSTU believes it is incumbent upon Members to:

- A. be fully aware of and familiar with the particular set of curricula guidelines and other Departmental publications that are of direct concern to their teaching assignment; and,
- B. bring to the attention of the Department any concerns they have with Departmental curriculum documents.

Reference: Reaffirmed 2001-44, Amended 2002-41, 2002-43, 2003-30, 2004-101, 2011-20, 2013-65, 2017-23, 2023-33

7. DISTRIBUTED LEARNING

The NSTU acknowledges that high quality distributed learning programs must be carefully designed and planned, be integrated into the public school program, be adequately funded, and be implemented by NSTU Members.

Further, the NSTU believes that:

- A. teachers engaged in distributed learning programs must have equal access to teaching resources, professional development, and peer support as their colleagues teaching in the regular public school program;
- B. students must not be required to take courses by distributed learning in order to graduate;
- C. distributed learning programs must encompass a full range of student services, including but not limited to student advising, guidance, counselling, support staff, and appropriate technological training;
- D. the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development must ensure that all students enrolled in public school have equal access to distributed learning courses, including but not limited to access to required resources and devices;

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- E. the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development must develop clear indicators for evaluating the quality of credit courses offered through distributed learning; and,
- F. the introduction of distributed learning programs must not have a negative impact on the workload, job-security, or funding levels of the regular public school program.

Reference: Reaffirmed 2001-42, 2004-103, Amended 2011-22, Reaffirmed March 2017, Amended 2023-35

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8. HISTORY OF CANADIAN LABOUR

The NSTU recognizes the importance of teaching the history of the Canadian labour movement and recommends its inclusion as a component of the junior high school social studies curriculum.

Reference: Reaffirmed 2001-35, Amended 2002-48, Reaffirmed 2004-107, February 2011, March 2017, Amended 2023-37

9. LEARNING RESOURCES

It is the position of the NSTU that resources required to learn the curricula of the public school system should be fully funded and provided for by the Nova Scotia Government. Moreover, the NSTU believes that:

- A. Members must be involved in the creation of learning resources supplied by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development;
- B. Members must be allowed to use their professional judgement in selecting appropriate learning resources and materials;
- C. any classroom materials or resources required by students should be supplied without charge;
- D. sufficient funding should be provided to supply school libraries with a rich diversity of learning resources and appropriate staffing;
- E. sufficient funding should be provided to support schools in acquiring learning resources outside of the School Book Bureau allotment;
- F. sufficient funding should be provided to supply equivalent learning resources throughout the province in the language of instruction for each school;
- G. learning resources should support and be consistent with the educational goals and objectives of the province as articulated by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development;
- H. learning resources should be high quality, factual, and appropriate for the emotional and social development and ability level of every student;
- I. learning resources should support the fundamentals of global education, enabling students to acquire responsible attitudes and behaviours regarding issues, including but not necessarily limited to, human rights, social justice, peace, ecological sustainability, and global interdependence; and,
- J. learning resources should support a variety of learning and teaching styles, including but not necessarily limited to, active learning, constructivism, cooperative learning, enquiry-based learning, experiential learning, and outcome-based learning.

Reference: Reaffirmed 2001-48, Amended 2004-109, Reaffirmed February 2011, March 2017, Amended 2023-41

10. MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION

Schools of Nova Scotia reflect a pluralistic, multi-ethnic society, which influences the teaching/learning styles represented in our schools. The values and behaviour patterns present and presented in our schools differ among cultural groups. Citizens in a democratic society need ethnic and cultural literacy (adequate understanding of ethnic groups, ethnicity, and culture).

Members, because of their role in society, have a major responsibility to contribute to the development of ethnic and cultural understanding. As such, the NSTU believes that:

A. THE CURRICULUM SHOULD:

- I. provide students with continuous opportunities to develop positive self-identities;
- II. recognize the ethnic and cultural diversity of students within the school community;
- III. describe the development of Nova Scotia and Canada as a multi-faceted society; and,
- IV. explore and clarify ethnic and cultural alternatives and options within Nova Scotian and Canadian society and make maximum use of local community resources.

B. THE EMPLOYER SHOULD:

- I. set policies and procedures that foster positive multi-ethnic interactions and understandings among students, teachers, administrative, and other support staff; and,
- II. provide information to Members about the implications of multiculturalism in Nova Scotia and about services, programs, materials, and developments relating to multiculturalism.

C. THE NSTU SHOULD:

- I. foster and stimulate a higher level of Member awareness and a deeper understanding of the relationships between social behaviour, learning styles, and cultural differences and their implications;
- II. encourage and promote the cooperation of Members with organizations, groups, and individuals involved with multiculturalism;
- III. encourage the development of a curriculum that reflects the ethno-cultural similarities and differences within the province; and,
- IV. promote an anti-homophobic, anti-heterosexist, anti-sexist and anti-racist approach to educational strategies, materials, and attitudes within the provincial schools.

D. EDUCATORS SHOULD:

- I. accept their responsibility to educate themselves and to reflect upon their own attitudes and behaviours in modeling respect, understanding, and affirmation of diversity.

Reference: Reaffirmed 2001-46, Amended 2004-110, 2011-24, 2017-24, Reaffirmed February 2023

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11. PEACE EDUCATION

The NSTU recognizes the obligation of public education to help provide our youth with the knowledge, understandings, attitudes, and skills to transform our world to one without combat; where they may live fully and authentically in a world of peace, democracy, and justice. To this end, the NSTU believes that:

- A. international peace and individual freedoms are both rational premises and viable objectives for education;
- B. justice, mutual respect, and respect for differences can be taught and learned;
- C. students must be assisted in acquiring skills to make choices related to world concerns;
- D. educators must support students' understanding of peace; and,
- E. peace education must concern itself with teaching cooperation at every level.

Reference: Resolution 2001-49, Amended 2004-114, Reaffirmed February 2011, March 2017, Amended 2023-45

12. SEX EDUCATION

The fundamental responsibility to inform children regarding human relationships and sexuality rests with the family; however, the public school system must support this through appropriate curriculum for teaching the physiology of human sexuality and reproduction but also the emotional, social, and ethical issues associated with sexuality. Research indicates a strong correlation between the delivery of high-quality sex education with the positive health effects on people's lives, including but not necessarily limited to:

- A. delayed initiation of sexual activity;
- B. reduced sexual risk-taking;
- C. increased use of condoms and other forms of contraceptives;
- D. increased knowledge of sexuality, safe-sex behaviours, the risks of pregnancy, the risks of contracting sexually transmitted infections; and,
- E. improved attitudes regarding sexual and reproductive health.

As such, the NSTU believes that sex education should:

- A. be responsive to the age and developmental stage of every student, presenting sexuality in a positive way;
- B. emphasize the values of mutual responsibility, respect, and consent;
- C. alert students to the consequences of sexual activity, sexual irresponsibility, and sexual exploitation;
- D. inform students regarding the physiology of human sexuality and reproduction including appropriate contraceptive use;
- E. inform students regarding sexual orientation and gender identity, and challenge attitudes of discrimination;
- F. challenge attitudes that perpetuate sexual violence; therefore, promoting sexual equality and the safety of all; and,
- G. provide for health counselling, including referrals to outside agencies, as appropriate.

Further, the NSTU believes the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development must ensure appropriate:

- A. pre-service and inservice professional development for teachers regarding sex education; and,
- B. resources and reference materials for teaching sex education are readily available.

Reference: Resolution 2023-51

13. TECHNOLOGY INTEGRATION IN EDUCATION

Technology is inextricably integrated into education as a learning resource in today's classroom; however, the teacher-student relationship is the most important element in the learning process. As such, the NSTU holds the following beliefs:

- A. Technology integration must consider equity in regards to student access.
- B. Technology is a learning resource, not a replacement for a student's access to a teacher.
- C. The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development must establish a long-range vision for the integration of technology into the curriculum.
- D. Technology integration requires that appropriate technology and infrastructure must be: in place, maintained and upgraded, and supplied with sufficient consumables; further, funding is required for increased preparation time and professional development of Members. The responsibility to ensure these elements happen rests with individual education entities.
- E. The Nova Scotia education system must not be influenced by inappropriate for-profit corporate pressure to place technology in educational sites.

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- F. Technology integration must incorporate teachings on appropriate online conduct.

Reference: Resolution 2002-50, Reaffirmed 2004-120, Amended 2011-28, 2015-32, 2017-27, 2023-49

SECTION III

ECONOMIC WELFARE & WORKING CONDITIONS

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1. ABUSE, BULLYING, INTIMIDATION, AND HARASSMENT

Optimal learning and teaching occurs in safe environments; therefore, the NSTU believes:

- A. Employers are responsible for protecting Members and ensuring a safe workplace, free from abuse/harassment. Abuse and harassment include, but are not limited to:
 - I. physical, verbal, emotional, and mental abuse;
 - II. sexual harassment;
 - III. bullying, including cyberbullying; and,
 - IV. intimidation.
- B. The employer shall recognize that Members may experience abuse/harassment by students, parents/guardians, or staff.
- C. Members subjected to abuse/harassment shall receive full support from the employer and the NSTU.
- D. The employer, in accordance with the *Nova Scotia Human Rights Act* and in consultation with the NSTU, shall establish policies and procedures to ensure incidents of abuse/harassment are mitigated (as much as possible), reported, documented, and dealt with efficiently and effectively.

Reference: Resolution 2000-30, Reaffirmed 2003-42, Amended 2004-21, 2006-67, 2012-76, 2019-26

2. ASSOCIATE TEACHER

The NSTU recognizes and supports the important role our Members play as Associate Teachers in mentoring Student Teachers (Teacher Candidates); however, also recognizes the additional workload inherent in participation. Specifically, the NSTU believes that:

- A. Participation as an Associate Teacher be voluntary;
- B. Associate Teachers should hold a permanent contract;
- C. the selection process for Associate Teacher be developed in consultation with teachers;
- D. Associate Teachers be granted release time for participation;
- E. planning, supervising, and conferencing time be provided to the Associate Teacher during the instructional day;
- F. professional learning, evaluation procedures, and curriculum be provided to the Associate Teacher during the instructional day; and,
- G. placements be limited to one (1) Teacher Candidate per practicum with a maximum of two (2) placements per year.

Reference: Resolution 2021-23

3. CLASS SIZE AND COMPOSITION

- A. It is the policy of the NSTU that class size and composition be considered primary components in organizing for effective instruction.
- B. To foster effective instruction, class sizes should not normally exceed the following maxima:

I. Secondary	25 Students
II. Elementary	20 Students
III. Primary	15 Students
IV. Special	10 Students
V. Combined Elementary Classes/ Multi-Age Elementary Classes	15 Students
- C. The NSTU believes that all those involved with determining class size and Member workload should recognize the additional demands entailed by the students with special needs integrated within a classroom:
 - I. class size should decrease; and,
 - II. personnel supports should be allocated to support class composition.
- D. The NSTU believes that designated human support(s) allocated to a classroom due to exceeded class caps should be directed to that classroom.

Reference: Resolution 2000-57, Amended 2003-43, 2006-68, 2012-77, 2013-51, 2015-20, 2015-21, 2018-37

4. COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

- A. The NSTU believes in and is firmly committed to the principle of full collective bargaining rights for all bargaining units within its jurisdiction. Full collective bargaining rights means the absence of any government legislation restricting wages and benefits, the right to strike, or legislation designed to intimidate or threaten the Union for the purposes of achieving a favourable bargaining result.
- B. The NSTU is committed to the integrity of its Membership and will vehemently oppose any attempt to remove any portion of the Membership from the NSTU.
- C. The NSTU believes that all courses for which students receive academic credit, including pilot courses, must be taught by teachers who are Members of the NSTU. The Union will continue to oppose the contracting out of duties performed by professional and support staff and any attempt to replace an NSTU certified teaching position with a non-NSTU position.
- D. All negotiated contracts for consideration be released regionally on the same day.

Reference: Reaffirmed 1999-31, 1999-69, Amended 1999-64, 2000-37, 2000-38, 2000-47, 2001-9, 2001-10, Reaffirmed 2003-44, 2006-69, 2013-20, Amended 2018-12, 2018-13, 2019-27

5. EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES – RENOVATIONS, OPENINGS, OR CLOSINGS

The NSTU recognizes educational site renovations, new openings, and closures are necessary to create and maintain quality educational opportunities for students; however, they can also be disruptive to teachers, students, and parents/guardians. The NSTU believes that when a new construction or major renovation of a school site is planned, NSTU Members should be involved in the development and design of the project. Further, the NSTU holds the following beliefs regarding the closing or opening/reopening of an educational site:

- A. Members should not perform duties of other bargaining unit or non-unionized workers; however, Members should assist and cooperate with the process. Specifically:
 - I. Members should pack/unpack personal items;

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- II. Members may be expected to supervise the packing/unpacking of sensitive, fragile, and/or dangerous equipment and materials;
- III. Members should be given time, free from their duties related to students, to assist in these duties; and,
- IV. Members should only be expected to participate in these duties during the school day/school year.
- B. The employer is responsible, and specifically, they should:
 - I. provide packing containers for Members' personal effects; and,
 - II. allot sufficient time within the 195-day school year.
- C. Student should not be in attendance, nor should they assist in packing, unpacking, or moving of materials.

Reference: 2022-33

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6. FUNERAL ATTENDANCE

Any staff member of a school who wishes to attend the funeral of a staff member should receive permission to do so.

Reference: Reaffirmed 1999-80, Amended 2003-45, Reaffirmed 2006-70, Amended 2012-78, 2018-14

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7. INDIVIDUAL PROGRAM PLANS

Members teaching students with programming needs be given a minimum of one-half day per month to plan for, set up, and assess each Individual Program Plan and complete documentation.

Reference: Resolution 2002-60, Reaffirmed 2003-46, 2006-71, Amended 2012-79, 2018-23

8. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

The NSTU believes that intellectual property created by the Member must remain the property of the Member.

Reference: Resolution 2002-76, Reaffirmed 2004-106, February 2011, March 2017, February 2023

9. JOB-SHARING

- A. Job-sharing in the teaching profession is a viable and effective staffing option. Implementation of this option is encouraged by the NSTU.
- B. A shared position is that which requires the services of a member full time, which is then divided among two or more persons who share the performance and the discharge of the responsibilities of that position on a part-time basis.
- C. Salary is prorated, and benefits are either full or prorated.
- D. Job-sharing involves working on a part-time basis but is to be distinguished from part-time members who are not job-sharers.
- E. The teaching schedule of each sharing member shall be arranged in consultation with the school principal.
- F. Appropriate job-sharing patterns are:
 - I. a.m./p.m.;
 - II. alternate day;
 - III. specific day;
 - IV. alternate time periods;
 - V. partial service as a part of the pupils' regular daily program; or,
 - VI. half year split.
- G. It is necessary that teaching strategies and compatibility of partners be established between or among those participating in job-sharing agreements. The process of selection must involve all participants (members, principal, and supervisor).

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- H. The impact of job-sharing on pupil, parent, and member relationships is one that must be considered and planned for by the job-sharers.
- I. Job-sharing must ensure consistency in approach and communication.
- J. Job-sharing demands special planning and preparation, as these relationships are central to the positive operation of the classroom program.
- K. Each job-shared position shall be represented at inservices, parent visitations, and staff meetings.
- L. The articulation and coordination of a shared teaching position is not confined to the delivery of instruction. Institutional demands must be addressed. The areas to be considered are: time tabling, preparation time, extracurricular, pupil evaluation, accessibility to pupils and parents, program development and continuity, and professional development.
- M. The matter of relationships is to be dealt with during the selection process.
- N. The relationship between the job-sharing members shall be set out in written agreements prior to beginning shared teaching.
- O. The relationship between the job-sharing members and the Regional Centre for Education/School Board should be set out in written agreements among the parties prior to beginning the shared teaching.
- P. Regions are encouraged to negotiate an article on job-sharing with provisions that are in keeping with NSTU policy.

Reference: Resolution 2000-44, Reaffirmed 2003-47, 2006-72, Amended 2012-80, Reaffirmed March 2018

10. MEDIA BLACKOUT ON NEGOTIATIONS

The NSTU supports fair collective bargaining; therefore, the NSTU believes:

- A. the Union and employer should agree to a media blackout from the time negotiations open until a tentative agreement is ratified; and,
- B. during negotiations, items negotiated or to be negotiated, should not be discussed in public by either the Union or the employer.

Reference: Reaffirmed 1998-23, Amended 2003-49, 2006-73, 2021-24

11. MEMBER ABSENCES**A. PROCEDURES FOR FULFILLING DUTIES OF ABSENT STAFF MEMBERS**

When a Member is requested to fulfill the duties of an absent staff Member, the following practices shall be adhered to:

- I. requests to fulfill the duties of the absent staff Member(s) shall be made on an equitable basis;
- II. an official record of such requests shall be compiled and maintained by the school administration on a continuing basis and be made available to the Member(s) upon request; and,
- III. the Member referred to in I and II shall accumulate time to be used for the purpose of marking and preparation when a substitute is available for hire to fulfill the duties of this Member.

B. REGIONAL CENTRE FOR EDUCATION/SCHOOL BOARD PROCEDURES FOR SUBSTITUTE TEACHING ASSIGNMENTS

The Nova Scotia Teachers Union expects Regional Centres for Education/School Board to comply with the following practices on addressing substitute teaching assignments:

- I. hire permanent substitute teachers under term contract status; and,
- II. utilize the Early Retirement Incentive Plan to bolster a roster of substitute teachers.

C. EVALUATION OF PERMITS TO TEACH

The monitoring and evaluation of Permits-To-Teach as substitutes, which are strategically employed by employers to address the substitute teacher shortage, should be ongoing by the organization.

D. WAGES OF SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS

The NSTU believes that substitute teachers' wages should be based on the salary grid.

Reference: Resolution 2004-C, 2004-D, 2004-E, 2004-F, Reaffirmed 2006-79, Amended 2018-40

12. MEMBER ACCESS TO COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY

- A. Each Member requires direct access to a computer with an Internet connection with appropriate software in order to do the necessary planning, preparation, and evaluation required as part of the job. The NSTU therefore believes that it is the responsibility of the government to provide these tools for each Member and that the computers should be updated every two years.
- B. Members require access to appropriate, comprehensive professional development in the use of technology, web-based applications, and social media.
 - I. Implemented and mandated technological initiatives require appropriate professional development opportunities.
 - II. Responsibility for professional development shall rest at the appropriate Department level. Consideration must be given to Members' technological competence and additional professional development be provided when required.
- C. Such professional development opportunities should be available both formally and informally, in ways which provide Members with flexibility and choice and which encourage Members to become comfortable with the use of the new technology. These opportunities should be conducted during the regular instructional day and should be consistent province-wide.

Reference: Resolution 1998-65, Amended 2000-93, 2002-116, 2005-59, 2008-58, 2014-68

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13. MEMBER IMAGES, VIDEOS, AND AUDIO RECORDINGS

With the predominance of devices capable of recording audio, video, and images of members, often without their knowledge, the NSTU holds the following beliefs:

- A. prior to the audio or video recording or photography of a member, permission must be received from the Member; and,
- B. any use, publication, posting, or distribution of audio or video recordings or images of Members must be authorized by the individual Members.

Reference: Resolution 2023-50

14. MENTAL HEALTH IN THE WORKPLACE

The NSTU believes:

- A. Alleviating psychological hazards in the workplace is an extension of the Employer's responsibility to ensure teachers have a safe place to work.
- B. The Employer, in accordance with the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* and in consultation with the NSTU, shall establish policies, procedures, and practices which:
 - I. demonstrates the Employer's willingness to champion mental wellness;
 - II. allows teachers access to internal health and wellness programs and resources;
 - III. creates a culture of respect and trust;
 - IV. alleviates the stigmatism regarding mental illness; and,
 - V. mitigates psychological harm.

- C. The factors which must be addressed to improve mental health in the workplace include, but are not limited to:
 - I. work overload;
 - II. challenges with work-life balance;
 - III. lack of trust and transparency; and,
 - IV. access to tools and resources regarding health.

Reference: Resolution 2019-28

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15. MERIT PAY

The NSTU vehemently opposes “merit pay” for teachers.

Reference: Resolution 2010-NB1, Reaffirmed January 2015

16. OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Optimal learning and teaching occurs in safe environments; therefore, the NSTU believes:

- A. Health and safety in the workplace is a shared responsibility.
- B. Employers are responsible for protecting Members and ensuring a safe workplace, free from occupational health and safety hazards.
- C. Members are responsible to work safely and to report hazardous conditions to their supervisor.
- D. Occupational hazards include, but are not limited to:
 - I. situations which may cause an immediate illness or injury;
 - II. situations where prolonged exposure may cause illness or injury; and,
 - III. environments which may aggravate existing ailments.
- E. A Member who becomes ill or is injured due to occupational hazards in the workplace shall receive full support from the employer and the NSTU.
- F. The employer, in accordance with the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* and in consultation with the NSTU, shall establish policies and procedures to ensure incidents of workplace injury and illness are mitigated (as much as possible), reported, documented, and dealt with efficiently and effectively.

Reference: Resolution 2000-29, Reaffirmed 2004-81, Amended 2009-14, 2009-88, Reaffirmed January 2015, Amended 2018-51B, 2019-29

17. A. PART-TIME MEMBERS

- I. The NSTU recognizes part-time employment as a staffing option. A part-time member works:
 - a. for the full school year on a part-time basis; or,
 - b. for one-half of a year in a job-sharing situation.
- II. Part-time members shall be entitled to time free from teaching, on a pro-rated basis, for the purpose of marking and preparation.
- III. The working hours of part-time members shall be scheduled consecutively and mutually agreed upon.
- IV. Part-time members, if requested and with reasonable notice, are expected to attend parent-teacher meetings and staff meetings.
- V. Part-time members shall receive salary pro-rated to scale.
- VI. Part-time members are encouraged to attend inservice sessions and special events like open houses. A schedule of days to be taught shall be negotiated with the employer before the commencement of service in each school year.

B. CIRCUIT MEMBERS

- I. The NSTU recognizes circuit positions as a staffing option. A circuit Member works on a full-time or part-time basis in more than one educational site.

- II. Circuit Members shall be allowed ample time for travel from site to site. Such time shall be exclusive of the lunch and noon hour break and of time allowed for marking and preparation.
- III. Circuit Members shall be guaranteed a lunch period of not less than thirty (30) minutes, excluding travel time between sites.

Reference: Resolution 1999-68, 2000-45, Amended 2003-50, Reaffirmed 2006-74, Amended 2012-81, 2018-30

18. PENSIONABLE EARNINGS

Pension benefits paid under the Nova Scotia Teachers' Pension Plan shall be based on salary scales negotiated by the NSTU or by other employers covered under the Nova Scotia Teachers' Pension Plan.

Reference: Resolution 2002-71, Reaffirmed 2003-51, March 2018

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19. REPORTING OF MEMBER EARNINGS

The NSTU requires that any Member receiving salary in excess of negotiated scales shall report such to the NSTU.

Reference: Resolution 2003-B, Reaffirmed 2006-78, March 2018

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20. SCHOOL COUNSELLORS

It is the position of the NSTU that school counsellors are essential to the Public School System and the delivery of the Comprehensive Guidance Program in Nova Scotia. Specifically, the NSTU believes:

- A. school counsellors are teachers first, and that the duties of a school counsellor must be delivered by an NSTU Member;
- B. there should be a minimum of one full-time school counsellor in every public school in Nova Scotia;
- C. the responsibilities for a school counsellor should not exceed a ratio of one (1) counsellor to two hundred fifty (250) students;
- D. counselling programs should be delivered by qualified teachers who have graduated from a minimum one-year university level program in counselling; and,
- E. in order to successfully do their job, school counsellors require an onsite private office with resources including, but not limited to: a telephone, locking filing cabinets, and a secure computer.

Reference: Resolution 2006-37, Amended 2019-42

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21. SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS

It is the position of the NSTU that school psychologists are essential to the Public School System and the delivery of specialized mental health supports to students. Specifically, the NSTU believes:

- A. school psychologists working in the Public-School System should be NSTU Members;
- B. the responsibilities for a School Psychologist should not exceed a ratio of one (1) Psychologist to seven hundred (700) students (the student count to include the entire school populations from the School Psychologists' assigned schools); and,
- C. in order to successfully do their job, school psychologists require a private office with resources including, but not limited to: a cellular telephone, a lockable filing cabinet, and a secure portable computer (laptop) with appropriate technology capabilities.

Reference: Resolution 2021-27

22. SENIORITY – TEACHING ASSIGNMENTS

Teaching assignments in individual sites shall take into consideration and respect the seniority of Members.

Reference: Resolution 2006-44, Reaffirmed March 2018

23. SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGISTS

It is the position of the NSTU that speech-language pathologists are essential to the Public School System and the delivery of specialized supports to students.

Specifically, the NSTU believes:

- A. speech-language pathologists working in the Public School System should be NSTU Members;
- B. speech-language pathologists are school-based specialists with training and competencies unique to a school setting; and,
- C. in order to successfully do their job, speech language pathologists require a private office with resources including, but not limited to: a cellular telephone, a lockable filing cabinet, and a secure portable computer (laptop) with appropriate technology capabilities.

Reference: Resolution 2021-26

24. TEACHER ASSISTANTS

The complex nature of the inclusive classroom may necessitate non-teacher support personnel for individual students with special needs. Because of this the NSTU holds the following beliefs:

- A. only teachers may teach in the public schools of Nova Scotia;
- B. teachers are responsible for the planning and implementation of the Public School Program;
- C. non-teaching tasks may be performed by teacher assistants (regardless of the title given to them by the employer); and
- D. teacher assistants should be:
 - I. assigned to an individual student(s) with special needs who requires distinct services and supports,
 - II. qualified in childcare, personal care, health care, or childhood development,
 - III. under the direction of the teacher, and
 - IV. under the overall supervision of administration.

Reference: Resolution 2000-17, Amended 2003-53, Reaffirmed 2006-80, Amended 2012-84, 2021-25

25. TEACHERS EVALUATION

The NSTU acknowledges the obligation of regional employers to evaluate their staff and the responsibility of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development to ensure appropriate and consistent evaluation policies and practices exist. The NSTU recognizes teacher evaluation is only reliable if factors such as learning facilities; access to instructional material, program support, and professional learning; and class size and composition are considered. Further, the NSTU believes:

- A. The evaluation program's goal should be to:
 - I. develop and maintain an optimal learning environment for students;
 - II. recognize and reinforce effective teaching; and,
 - III. promote professional growth.
- B. The evaluation program should:
 - I. emphasize formative evaluation;
 - II. be cooperatively planned and carried out following a collegial model;
 - III. clearly state the purpose and process;
 - IV. allow time to effectively carry out evaluations;

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- V. allow time and support for the member to incorporate training and professional development to inform their practice
- VI. provide training to evaluators; and,
- VII. provide for summative evaluation in extreme circumstances.
- C. The summative evaluation process should:
 - I. only be initiated after attempts have been made by the teacher and administrator to remedy the area(s) of concern and a reasonable amount of time has been afforded the teacher to improve;
 - II. only be used in circumstances where an employment decision may be required (retraining, transfer, or termination);
 - III. not be conducted by the same evaluator who conducted the formative evaluation;
 - IV. be conducted by an evaluator not attached to the same educational site;
 - V. not rely on previous formative evaluation reports;
 - VI. allow for all possible professional learning;
 - VII. consider transfer as a reasonable step towards remedy; and,
 - VIII. only consider termination as a last resort.

Reference: Resolution 2023-07

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26. TEACHER-INITIATED INSERVICE

The NSTU promotes the concept, through negotiation and lobbying, that each teacher be allowed to attend one or more inservice day each school year that the teacher has personally designed, organized, or selected based upon the teacher's professional needs, but not to fall on the Provincial Conference Day in October.

Reference: Resolution 2000-32, Amended 2003-54, Reaffirmed 2006-81, March 2018

SECTION IV

GOVERNMENT

1. ACCOUNTABILITY PRINCIPLES

The NSTU believes in the accountability of public education. Any accountability model must adhere to the following principles:

- A. An effective accountability model:
 - I. recognizes that each partner (government, regional centre for education, school board, teachers and administrators, parents/guardians, and students) has a responsibility to be accountable for those aspects of education over which it has control and jurisdiction. They also have a responsibility for working collaboratively so that the system as a whole operates well.
 - II. acknowledges that the public has a right to know how well the education system is meeting its goals. Parents/guardians have a right to comprehensive information about their child's progress.
 - III. fosters trust in the education system and promotes improvement.
 - IV. acknowledges that there is a standard of practice for both conduct and competence.
 - V. respects the autonomy of professionals to establish and uphold professional standards of conduct and competence.

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- VI. accepts the central role of quality classroom-based assessment using a broad range of indicators to demonstrate student learning.
- B. Within this model of educational accountability, teachers are responsible for knowledge, decisions, working collaboratively, maintaining currency, and engaging in ongoing professional learning.
- C. Within this model of educational accountability teacher organizations are responsible for developing programs to assist teachers in pursuing their professional learning, establishing, and promoting standards of professional practice, and responding to concerns relating to teacher competency.
- D. Within this model of educational accountability, in partnership with the Nova Scotia Teachers Union, the Government, and Regional Centres for Education/School Boards are responsible for developing programs to assist teachers in pursuing their professional learning, establishing, and promoting standards of professional practice and responding to concerns relating to teacher competency.

Reference: Resolution 2004-121, Reaffirmed February 2011, Amended 2017-19

2. CLOSURE (OR RESTRUCTURE) OF EDUCATIONAL SITES

- A. The Nova Scotia Teachers Union recognizes that the closure or restructure of a school within a community is a matter of such consequence to that community that the closest cooperation between school authorities and the community is necessary. Alternatively, the Nova Scotia Teachers Union recognizes that the reorganization of school districts is necessary to promote the efficient instruction of pupils.
- B. The Nova Scotia Teachers Union recommends the following principles to be considered when an educational site(s) is considered for closure (or restructure).
 - I. The school is an essential part of the identity of a community.
 - II. The sense of belonging to a local community is an important part of the quality of life in the province of Nova Scotia.
 - III. Schools should not be declared surplus solely on the basis of declining enrollment.
 - IV. It should be recognized that excess capacity may be temporary, given that changes in school enrollment patterns can be anticipated in the future.
 - V. The utilization of surplus schools for additional educational purposes should be given serious consideration.
 - VI. Schools with excess capacity could be modified to accommodate appropriate community needs and purposes.
 - VII. Modification of excess educational facilities should be temporary in design to allow for ready reconversion to school purposes.
 - VIII. Municipal authorities and the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development should actively cooperate with other government departments such as the Department of Health and Wellness and the Department of Business for the conversion of excess school capacity.
 - IX. When the closing of a school is being considered, public notice of the projected closing should be given at least two years in advance.
 - X. Both past and projected enrolment patterns should be examined.
 - XI. Provide necessary support to the school and its programs during the period of review.
 - XII. Consider the effects of closure (or restructure) on programs.
 - XIII. Consider the effects of closure (or restructure) on the distance students must travel to get to school.
 - XIV. Regular communication should be made with all stakeholders throughout the school review process.

- XV. Teachers should be provided with adequate time and support to transition from a closing school to a receiving school.

Reference: Resolution 2001-100, Amended 2004-75, 2009-82, 2015-59

3. **EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT**

The NSTU believes early childhood development is an essential component of the social services that should be provided to all Nova Scotians. Effective Early Childhood programming improves the life chances of children in the areas of health, wellness, education, and economic outcomes. Further, well-designed Early Childhood Development services promotes health, advances women's equality, addresses child and family poverty, deepens social inclusion, and grows the economy. Early Childhood Development services should be:

- A. publicly funded, high-quality, equitable, universal, inclusive, and accessible;
- B. inclusive of the time from a child's birth to school entry;
- C. inclusive of prenatal counselling for families;
- D. play-based, discovery-based, experiential, and interactive;
- E. delivered by qualified professionals in early childhood development; and,
- F. appropriately funded to allow for early diagnosis and treatment of physical, behavioural, and learning disabilities.

Reference: Resolution 2009-NB2, Reaffirmed January 2015, Amended 2018-63

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4. **EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION**

The NSTU believes that early childhood education is a vital component of a quality, universal, public education system. Well-designed early childhood education programs enrich young children's lives and create a foundation for their growth and development throughout their education. Early Childhood Education programs should:

- A. be part of a high-quality, equitable, universal, inclusive, and accessible public education system from pre-primary (four-year old as of December 31 of the school year) to grade 12 and returning graduates;
- B. fall under the jurisdiction of Regional Centres for Education/School Board;
- C. be appropriate developmentally in terms of:
 - I. following well-developed play-based, discovery-based, experiential, and interactive curricula,
 - II. meeting the children's needs academically, socially, emotionally, and behaviourally,
 - III. responding to a range of individual developmental needs and learning styles, and
 - IV. responding to cultural diversity;
- D. be appropriately funded to provide for:
 - I. early diagnosis and treatment of physical, behavioural, and learning disabilities,
 - II. teacher education programs for early years at both the preservice and inservice levels,
 - III. program supports such as library, guidance, and other student services,
 - IV. adequate physical resources to ensure a safe and healthy learning and teaching environment, and
 - V. appropriate staffing to accommodate all of the students' health and wellness requirements; and
- E. be delivered by qualified teachers.

Reference: Resolution 2018-64

5. **EDUCATION POLICY – TEACHER INPUT**

The NSTU believes that teachers' professional voice is an essential component in the formation of meaningful educational policy created by Regional Centres for Education/Boards, governmental departments, and government.

Reference: Resolution 2000-84, Amended 2003-82, 2007-95, 2019-40

6. FINANCIAL STATEMENTS OF SCHOOLS – PUBLIC RECORD

The NSTU believes that Regional Centres for Education/School Board should require all schools to prepare financial statements according to generally accepted accounting principles and make them available to the public.

Reference: Resolution 1999-157, Amended 2004-80, Reaffirmed 2009-87, January 2015

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7. FUNDING OF PUBLIC EDUCATION

It is the position of the NSTU that fully funded public education is a fundamental right of every Nova Scotian; moreover, funding should be program-based, founded on quality educational principles and universal accessibility. To this end, the NSTU believes that our public school system should be fully funded by the Nova Scotia Government to:

- A. supply necessary resources, materials, infrastructure, and equipment (including technology) equitably throughout the province; and,
- B. allow for appropriate and timely in-servicing during the implementation of new programs, assessment tools, reporting practices, or curricula.

Further, the NSTU believes that no public funds or tax incentives should be used to help finance charter or private schools, or in student-voucher schemes.

Reference: Resolution 2019-41

8. FUNDING OF INSERVICING

The cost of inservicing Members necessitated by the introduction of new programs should be borne by the provincial government and the Regional Centres for Education/School Board and not through Professional Development Fund clauses in the *Teachers' Provincial Agreement*.

Reference: Resolution 1990-35, Reaffirmed 1995, 1999-128, Amended 2003-83, Reaffirmed 2007-96, March 2019

9. INTEGRATION AND INCLUSION

The NSTU endorses the Council of Atlantic Provinces and Territory Teachers' Organizations' (CAPTTO) Policy on Inclusion. Further, the NSTU holds the following beliefs:

- A. children with exceptional physical, intellectual, or emotional needs benefit from learning in the most enabling environment;
- B. regular classroom placement may best serve most children; however, self-contained classrooms or other environments may best serve some exceptional children;
- C. teachers working in integrated classrooms require support services;
- D. integration should ensure the rights of all children to an appropriate education and an equitable distribution of resources among all students; and,
- E. school sites should be barrier free.

Reference: Resolution 2001-43, Amended 2002-45, 2004-105, 2011-23, Reaffirmed March 2017, Amended 2021-60

10. MINORITY LANGUAGE EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS

The NSTU recognizes and supports Article 23 – Minority Language Educational Rights of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, which promotes the two official languages of Canada as well as the cultures represented by minority language communities by ensuring primary and secondary minority language

educational facilities for families. In Nova Scotia, Article 23 of the *Charter* preserves and promotes the French language and French language education.
Reference: Reaffirmed 2001-47, Amended 2004-108, Reaffirmed February 2011, March 2017, Amended 2023-39

11. PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT

The NSTU supports the principle of having appropriate professional staff support at all school levels.

Reference: Resolution 2003-35, Amended 2004-116, Reaffirmed February 2011, Amended 2017-25

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12. PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS (P3)

The NSTU believes that P3 schools must:

- A. remain subject to the policies of Regional Centres of Education/School Board, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, and all applicable legislation;
- B. have educational services delivered by certified teachers as defined by the *Education Act*;
- C. respect all collective agreements and the legislation on which they are founded;
- D. ensure the use of school facilities is under the sole jurisdiction of the school's administration;
- E. respect the collegial atmosphere of the school; and,
- F. limit the interests of the private partner to construction and/or maintenance functions.

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Further, the NSTU believes a fair and transparent process exists only if public disclosure includes, but is not limited to:

- G. justification that the P3 model is preferred in a particular instance;
- H. clear roles and responsibilities of all partners;
- I. clear definition and assignment of risk including guarantees such as performance bonds;
- J. public involvement on the site selection committee;
- K. transparency in choosing a private partner or consortium; and,
- L. signing leases before construction begins.

Reference: Resolution 2000-77, Reaffirmed 2003-84, Amended 2007-97, 2013-80, 2019-44

13. RE-CERTIFICATION

The NSTU is opposed to any attempt to require Members to undergo mandatory periodic re-certification.

Reference: Reaffirmed 1999-142, 2002-113, 2005-55, 2008-54, November 2013, January 2020

14. SCENT-SENSITIVE SCHOOL/EDUCATIONAL SITES

Nova Scotia public schools/educational sites must be scent-sensitive places of learning and working.

Reference: Resolution 1998-62, Reaffirmed 2003-86, 2007-99, Amended 2013-81, Reaffirmed January 2019

15. SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCILS

Because the development of school advisory councils has had and will continue to have a significant impact on the management of schools and teachers' working conditions, the NSTU believes that:

- A. School Advisory Councils should be advisory in nature in accordance with the *Education Act*;

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- B. the NSTU should continue to keep its Members thoroughly informed on issues relating to School Advisory Councils. Professional development activities must be created, and tailored to respond to needs arising from the implementation of School Advisory Councils;
- C. the NSTU must continue to monitor the impact of School Advisory Councils on contractual issues and teachers' working conditions; and,
- D. the NSTU should continue to work with other recognized partners in education including the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, the Nova Scotia Federation of Home and School Associations Inc., the Association of Nova Scotia Educational Administrators, the NSTU's Professional Associations, and other community organizations to ensure the efficient, effective, and supportive implementation of School Advisory Councils.

Reference: Resolution 2001-113, Reaffirmed 2004-90, Amended 2009-96, Reaffirmed January 2015

16. STAFFING OF SMALL HIGH SCHOOLS

- A. Staffing in small schools should not be based on the number of students but rather on the courses that must be offered for high school graduation.
- B. The NSTU believes in the following principle: all schools should be able to offer a program sufficient to ensure specific student outcomes under all categories of the PSP Essential Graduation Learnings (i.e., Aesthetic Expression, Citizenship, Communication, Personal Development, Problem-solving, and Technological Competence).
- C. The NSTU believes the following three areas must be respected in staffing small high schools: Program Integrity, Expectations and Support for Members.
 - I. Program Integrity**
 - a. Small high schools need to be staffed adequately to provide all the essential programs and services as per the PSP.
 - b. Special consideration must be given to combined schools (e.g., P-9, 7-12) because of the large number of cross-over Members and less flexible scheduling.
 - c. Schools must provide a balance of advanced, academic, and graduation credits, including required courses and adequate options for all students (e.g., university-preparatory, college-preparatory, work-bound, special needs).
 - d. Schedules should be developed to allow students to complete more than the minimum 18 credits required to graduate.
 - e. Academic or advanced courses to meet the needs of gifted and talented students should be provided (Challenge for Excellence, EECD).
 - f. Multiple options for compulsory credits should be provided (e.g., choice of Fine Arts and Canadian History courses).
 - g. Schools should offer a range and balance of courses to include the humanities and the arts, as well as science, math, and technology.
 - h. Students should have access to technology, labs, and equipment that are essential for particular programs.
 - i. Single-section courses should be scheduled separately.
 - j. Schools should avoid multi-grade and/or multi-course classrooms.
 - II. Expectations for Members**
 - a. The demands of multi-grade and/or multi-course classrooms and the range of student abilities should be recognized in determining teaching assignments
 - b. Members should be scheduled with appropriate preparation time during both semesters.

- c. Additional prep time should be given:
 - i. if multi-grade classrooms have been necessitated;
 - ii. for IPP and program planning; and,
 - iii. to coordinate, monitor, and mentor students through their correspondence, distance, and independent studies.
- d. Actual class size and climate, as opposed to only FTE student teacher ratios, should be considered in scheduling teaching assignments.
- e. Members teaching outside their specialty areas should have access to appropriate resources and professional development.

III. Support for Members

All small high schools should have:

- a. one full-time non-teaching principal to provide educational leadership and support to Members;
- b. one full-time guidance counsellor as per Comprehensive Guidance and Counselling Program recommendations;
- c. appropriate and equitable computer technology, maintenance, and technical services;
- d. appropriate and equitable library, secretarial, and custodial services;
- e. recognition of fixed costs within operating budgets;
- f. policies, procedures, and professional development to guide the planning for, and delivery of, instruction in classrooms which are multi-graded due to PSP requirements and/or small enrolment in particular courses; and,
- g. appropriate and equitable resource and special education services.

Reference: Resolution 2005-63, 2007-55, Reaffirmed 2009-99, 2009-100, Amended 2015-65

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17. STUDENT ATTENDANCE

School attendance is critically important for student success, as such the NSTU believes:

- A. Regional Centres for Education/School Board shall have student attendance policies which:
 - I. delineate procedures for data entry, identification, intervention and follow-up;
 - II. consider a spectrum of educational programs to serve as interventions;
 - III. deals with chronic absenteeism by specialized regional personnel; and,
 - IV. consider the use of community-based teams (e.g., academic, social service, medical, legal, ethnic) to address student attendance issues.
- B. Individual schools shall have practices which provide for:
 - I. consistent and accurate monitoring of student attendance;
 - II. the immediate attention by site-based administrators where a pattern of absenteeism is noticed; and,
 - III. ongoing discussions among school staff, parent groups, and community agencies which allow for cooperative approaches for addressing student attendance problems.

Reference: Resolution 2000-82, Amended 2003-81, 2007-94, 2019-47

18. TEACHER-LIBRARIANS

- A. The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development has recognized the importance of lifelong learning.
- B. The Essential Graduation Learnings identify the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that graduates will acquire in the course of their education.
- C. Technological Competence is one of these learnings. The outcomes identified place an emphasis on a graduate's ability to locate, evaluate,

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adapt, create, and share information using a variety of sources and technologies. Through the other learnings it is clear that graduates must be able to acquire, process and interpret information critically to make informed decisions.

- D. The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development has also engaged in many initiatives as part of the funding allocated for the Information Technology Initiatives.
- E. Taking into consideration the importance accorded to literacy and technological competency in the public school programs, it is our belief that the library should become a site for the acquisition of these skills. Librarians, in the past, have demonstrated and continued to provide leadership in these areas.
- F. Our recognition of the important role that librarians play in our information technology society leads us to articulate the following principle:
 - I. The NSTU believes the library is a specialized classroom and must be staffed with a teacher-librarian who possesses appropriate teaching certification and the necessary professional training, up to and including, a Master of Library Science.

Reference: Resolution 2000-39, Amended 2001-39, Reaffirmed 2003-55, 2006-82, Amended 2018-50

SECTION V**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT****1. LITERACY EDUCATION**

The NSTU recognizes literacy as an inherent part of public school education; students require language and literacy skills to actively engage in their studies and to fully participate in society. Low literacy skills in adults have significant social costs to the individual, and to society as a whole, in terms of economics, social services, health, and justice. Pre-service education programs, professional learning, and inservice sessions should help develop Members' skills in regards to teaching practice; further, they should equip teachers to develop language skills within their students.

Reference: Resolution 2000-92, Reaffirmed 2002-108, 2005-51, Amended 2008-50, Reaffirmed November 2013, Amended 2021-85

2. MEMBER PROFESSIONAL RESOURCES

Professional resources provide valuable supports for the curricular, pedagogical, and professional learning needs of teachers. The NSTU believes that it is the responsibility of the employer to provide and maintain professional resources for teachers.

Reference: Resolution 2000-98, Amended 2002-117, Reaffirmed 2005-60, 2008-59, Amended 2014-73, 2021-86

3. PRE-SERVICE TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS

The NSTU recognizes the intrinsic value of pre-service teacher education programs for preparing our future Members for their profession. The NSTU believes it should be an active participant on committees, and similar groups, at the Provincial Governmental level, Department of Education and Early

Childhood Development level, provincial university level, and other significant groups, involved in the planning and design of teacher education programs.

Reference: Resolution 2002-110, Reaffirmed 2005-53, 2008-52, Amended 2014-69, 2021-87

4. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

The NSTU believes that Members, as represented by their Locals, have the right to input in the planning process, the allocation of funds, and the time available for professional development activities. Further, the NSTU believes that:

- A. funds paid from Article 60 should be for NSTU Members;
- B. funds paid under Article 60 for NSTU Professional Associations Provincial Conference Day must be solely to NSTU Members attending any of the NSTU Professional Associations' conferences; and,
- C. funds from Article 60 should not be used for obligatory employer directed professional development or in-servicing.

Reference: Resolution 2002-112, Reaffirmed 2005-54, Amended 2006-46, Reaffirmed 2008-53, November 2013, Amended 2021-88

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5. PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

- A. The NSTU believes that the continued renewal of knowledge, expertise, and practice through a variety of experiences is central to the concept of professionalism; further, that professional learning requires a lifelong commitment and meaningful growth requires adequate resources and time.
- B. The NSTU is committed to identifying and supporting strategies, initiatives, and programs to promote and implement effective professional learning practices by and for its membership.
- C. The NSTU recognizes that effective professional learning activities can happen at the provincial, local, school, or individual level; moreover, delivery and format at each of these levels can achieve different learning objectives.
- D. The NSTU recognizes the following as effective means to enhance the professional growth of its Members:
 - I. a positive attitude towards continued growth;
 - II. individual professional growth which is self-directed and job embedded;
 - III. NSTU Locals participating as agents of professional growth; and,
 - IV. educational partners participating, where appropriate, as agents of professional growth.
- E. The NSTU recognizes the school as an integral agent of professional growth and believes that school-based professional learning:
 - I. has the greatest impact when supported by strong leadership at the school and Regional levels;
 - II. should be job embedded;
 - III. should engage Members in ongoing reflection within a culture of professional learning community; and,
 - IV. should be consistent within each and throughout all Regions.

Reference: Resolution 2000-97, Reaffirmed 2002-114, 2005-56, Amended 2008-55, 2014-70, 2021-89

6. SCHEDULING – MEMBER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OR INSERVICING

The NSTU endorses the principle that obligatory professional development or inservicing for NSTU Members be conducted during the normal instructional day, and be job embedded.

Reference: Resolution 2003-97, Reaffirmed 2005-57, 2008-56, Amended 2014-71, Reaffirmed January 2020

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SECTION VI

GENERAL

1. APPROPRIATE ONLINE CYBERCONDUCT

Electronic communication and online activity are prevalent in our education system and the community-at-large. As such, the NSTU holds the following beliefs in regards to cyberconduct:

- A. Appropriate cyberconduct is the ethical, legal, and positive manner in which we conduct ourselves online and is part of ensuring a safe learning and working environment for our educational sites.
- B. Inappropriate cyberconduct should be discouraged and acted upon swiftly and decisively.
- C. Education is an essential part of promoting appropriate cyberconduct.
- D. Ensuring appropriate cyberconduct is a shared responsibility between educational stakeholders, government departments and agencies, and the community-at-large.

Reference: Resolution 2008-NB1, Reaffirmed 2009-104, Amended 2015-66, 2018-73, Reaffirmed January 2021

2. COMMERCIALISM IN SCHOOLS

The NSTU believes that, in all but the most limited cases, Public Schools should be free of commercial enterprises, including but not limited to advertising, franchising, and for-profit businesses. As such, the NSTU believes:

- A. access to students must only occur with proof of sound educational objectives;
- B. commercial advertising aimed at children should be banned on Public School properties and school buses;
- C. commercial enterprise must not exploit students as a captive audience;
- D. sponsorship agreements must be consistent with sound educational values;
- E. sponsorship acknowledgement should only be made in appropriate ways; and,
- F. commercially sponsored classroom and curricular materials should be clearly marked as such.

Reference: Resolution 2019-45, Reaffirmed January 2021

3. DESIGNATION OF STAFF ROOMS

The NSTU believes that educational site staff rooms should be designated for use of staff, according to the wishes of the educational site staff.

Reference: Resolution 2001-111, Reaffirmed 2004-89, 2009-85, January 2015, Amended 2021-95

4. ETHICAL PURCHASING

The NSTU believes in the values of fair trade, environmental sustainability, and ethical principles. As such, the NSTU encourages its Members to, and wherever reasonably possible will, purchase goods and services that come from suppliers/ producers which:

- A. follow labour standards which include, but are not limited to:
 - I. compensating with fair wages and benefits,
 - II. practicing equal pay for work of equal value,
 - III. excluding child or forced labour,
 - IV. complying with local and national health and safety standards,
 - V. complying with local and national human rights, discrimination, harassment and abuse regulations, and
 - VI. allowing for freedom of association;
- B. follow environmental sustainability standards which include, but are not limited to:
 - I. complying with local and national environment laws and regulations,
 - II. incorporating high quality renewable or recyclable materials that can be repaired, reused, or upgraded as required,
 - III. minimizing single-use items,
 - IV. minimizing toxicity of air, water, and soil, and
 - V. minimizing its effect on climate change;
- C. are Nova Scotian or Canadian; and,
- D. are unionized.

Reference: Resolution 2002-119, Amended 2004-79, 2007-40, 2010-16, Reaffirmed January 2016, Amended 2019-8, 2021-98

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5. FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION AND THE RIGHT TO STRIKE

The NSTU firmly believes in the freedom of association and the right of collective bargaining as guaranteed under the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. The NSTU vehemently opposes strike-breaking methodologies, including but not necessarily limited to:

- A. legislated contracts or legislated wage and benefit packages;
- B. back-to-work legislation;
- C. legislation classifying workers as essential services; and,
- D. the use of replacement workers during a legal strike.

Reference: Resolution 2001-112, Reaffirmed 2004-93, Amended 2009-101, Reaffirmed January 2015, Amended 2015-64, 2021-103

6. INTERNAL TO THE NSTU OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

- A. Health and safety in the workplace is a shared responsibility.
- B. The NSTU, as an employer, is responsible for protecting its employees by ensuring a safe workplace, free from occupational health and safety hazards.
- C. Employees are responsible to work safely and to report hazardous conditions to their supervisor.
- D. Occupational hazards include, but are not limited to:
 - I. situations which may cause an immediate acute illness or injury;
 - II. situations where prolonged exposure may cause a progressive illness or injury; and,
 - III. environments which may aggravate existing ailments.
- E. Employees who become ill or are injured due to occupational hazards in the workplace shall receive the full support of the NSTU.

- F. The NSTU, shall establish and maintain procedures in keeping with the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* to ensure incidents of workplace injury and illness are mitigated (as much as possible), reported, documented, and dealt with efficiently and effectively.

Reference: Resolution 2010-42, Reaffirmed January 2015, Amended 2019-61, Reaffirmed January 2021

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7. INTERNAL TO THE NSTU – RESPECTFUL WORKPLACE

- A. The NSTU, as an employer as well as a Member organization, has a responsibility to ensure a safe work environment free from abuse/harassment. Abuse and harassment include, but are not limited to:
- I. physical, verbal, emotional, and mental abuse;
 - II. sexual harassment;
 - III. bullying, including cyberbullying; and,
 - IV. intimidation.
- B. The NSTU shall recognize that employees and/or Members may experience abuse/harassment by fellow staff and/or Members.
- C. NSTU employees or Members subjected to abuse/harassment shall receive the full support of the NSTU.
- D. The NSTU, in accordance with the *Nova Scotia Human Rights Act*, shall establish and maintain procedures to ensure incidents of abuse/harassment are mitigated (as much as possible), reported, documented, and dealt with efficiently and effectively.

Reference: Resolution 2001-108, Amended 2004-92, 2009-98, Reaffirmed January 2015, Amended 2019-62, Reaffirmed January 2021

8. INTERNATIONAL PEACE

Peace is not merely the absence of war. To be genuine and lasting, peace must be shared equally by all the peoples of the world. Attaining international peace is inextricably tied to respecting individual human rights, creating an equitable international economic order, obtaining gender-equity in educational rights, and protecting the environment. Further, the NSTU holds the following beliefs:

- A. violence and abuse of power must never be used to solve conflicts;
- B. children have the right to live, grow, and develop in a world free of war and the aftermath of armed conflict;
- C. children must never be used as child soldiers; and,
- D. education and health care must be fundamental rights of all people of the world.

Reference: Resolution 2023-46

9. MEDICARE

The NSTU believes that health care is an essential component of social services that should be provided to all Nova Scotians permitting them to fully participate in society. The fundamentals of a publicly funded, high quality, universal, broad-based, accessible, inclusive medicare system helps to promote healthy living, addresses child and family poverty, reduces barriers of inclusion, and enhances economic growth. Moreover, healthy children are better equipped to learn, and healthy teachers have greater fortitude to endure their challenging vocation.

Reference: Reaffirmed 1999-70, Amended 2002-122, 2004-82, 2009-89, 2015-61, 2021-97

10. NATIONAL UNITY

The NSTU supports the concept of national unity.

Reference: Resolution 2001-109, Reaffirmed 2004-83, 2009-90, January 2015, January 2021

11. NETWORKING WITH FRANCOPHONE TEACHERS ASSOCIATIONS/ORGANIZATIONS

The NSTU recognizes the importance of communication with other Canadian Francophone teachers' associations as well as the Francophone Services division of the Canadian Teachers' Federation.

Reference: Resolution 2001-107, Amended 2004-91, 2009-97, Reaffirmed January 2015, Amended 2021-99

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12. PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

The NSTU, in recognition of its support for the *Nova Scotia Human Rights Act*, acknowledges the definition of physical and mental disabilities as given in the Act. Further, the NSTU believes that it is incumbent upon its Members to model appropriate practices that demonstrate respect for the abilities of persons with disabilities.

Reference: Resolution 2001-104, Amended 2004-84, Reaffirmed 2009-91, January 2015, Amended 2021-100

13. PHYSICAL NECESSITIES BE MADE AVAILABLE

There are certain minimal physical necessities which all Members must have available in their workplaces i.e., staff and gender-neutral washrooms.

Reference: Resolution 2000-101, Reaffirmed 2004-85, 2009-92, Amended 2015-62, Reaffirmed January 2021

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14. PORNOGRAPHY

- A. The NSTU is opposed to the downloading, importation, manufacture, distribution, sale, broadcast, or public display of child pornography, in any form.
- B. NSTU Members should not access pornographic material, in any form at any time:
 - I. using employer provided technology or access; or,
 - II. at work sites.

Reference: Resolution 2001-110, Amended 2004-86, 2009-93, 2015-63, Reaffirmed January 2021

15. SMALL COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

The NSTU recognizes the vital importance of small community schools and supports their continued operation.

Reference: Resolution 2001-102, Reaffirmed 2004-77, Amended 2009-84, Reaffirmed January 2015, Amended 2021-93

16. UNCEDED TERRITORY RECOGNITION

The NSTU recognizes that we live and work on unceded Mi'kmaq territory, that we are privileged to be together in Mi'kma'ki, that we are all treaty people, and that we wish to acknowledge this relationship.

Reference: Resolution 2017-55, Reaffirmed January 2021

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CODE OF ETHICS

C. Member and Administration

- I. The Member should maintain a reasonable and professional level of support to internal administration of the school/ educational site and regional office.

D. Member and Professional Organization

- I. The Member who in their professional capacity is a Member of a committee, board, or authority dealing with matters affecting the educational program of Nova Scotia as a whole should be elected, appointed, or approved by the Nova Scotia Teachers Union.
- II. The Member, or group of Members, should not take any individual action in matters which should be dealt with by their Local, Regional Representative Council, or by the NSTU.
- III. The Local or Regional Representative Council should not take any individual action in matters where the assistance of the NSTU has been sought, or in matters requiring the authorization of the NSTU.

E. Member and Profession

- I. The Member's conduct should advance and promote the teaching profession and the cause of education in the province.
- II. The Member should maintain their professional learning which will keep them abreast of the trends in education.
- III. The Member should engage in no gainful employment, outside of the contract, where the employment affects adversely their professional status, or impairs their standing with pupils, colleagues, and the community.

F. Member and Community

- I. The Member should so conduct themselves in their private life that no dishonour may befall them or through them to the profession.



In the event of any discrepancy between this document
and the original, the original shall prevail.

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