

***NSTU  
STRATEGIC PLANNING  
REPORT***

FINAL REPORT

OCTOBER 24, 2022

# NSTU STRATEGIC PLANNING REPORT

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## I EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At its April 8, 2021 meeting, the NSTU Provincial Executive adopted the following motion:

*That the Executive Director, on behalf of the NSTU Provincial Executive, initiate a Strategic Planning process, engage NSTU members, leaders, and external partners, to develop an NSTU Strategic Plan, to be presented to Provincial Executive in June 2022.*

The task was large and the timeline very ambitious, especially considering the province was still in the throes of a public health emergency. In order to achieve the goal of a comprehensive review, broad consultation, and recommendation development, the Executive Director established a small team of NSTU staff, augmented from time-to-time by others, to establish and complete a strategic planning workplan.

It was determined the most effective and efficient manner in which to engage members through this process was the use of a comprehensive member survey, designed to gauge member perceptions on all aspects of the organization. The results of this survey would then be used to engage in targeted consultations. In addition to input from currently teaching members, educational partners and retired members were also provided an opportunity to inform the process.

On August 26, the Provincial Executive was provided the draft member survey in detail for an opportunity to provide feedback. The member survey opened on September 29, and closed on November 28, 2021. Members were able to complete the 250-item survey online. The retiree survey opened on October 27 and closed on November 30 and the partners survey opened on October 27 and closed on January 14. The initial plan was to hold local meetings to provide feedback on the member survey results and to engage in a process of probing questions. Three such meetings were scheduled and held prior to the Omicron wave of COVID infections. These meetings were held in the Cumberland, Colchester-East Hants, and Pictou Locals. Other local meetings had been scheduled but due to public health advisories and member concerns, they were postponed until after the Christmas break.

Once schools reopened, it was determined that the best way to proceed with the dissemination of survey information and engage probing questions, that would not be further impacted by a recurring pandemic wave, was to hold regional meetings virtually and to seek assistance from locals in responding to probing questions. Virtual Regional meetings were conducted from March 10 – 31. Further consultations were held with NSTU Executive and Professional staff on June 8, 2022.

A parallel strategic planning survey was conducted with NSTU retired members late in 2021 with a consultation with the Retired Teachers' Organization occurring early in 2022. Educational Partners were surveyed with three Regional Centres of Education, the Department of Educational and Early Childhood Development along with two local interest groups responding. In all cases, the educational partners reported that developing and improving relationship with the Nova Scotia Teachers Union were important.



Due to the above-mentioned challenges presented by the continuing public health emergency, the Provincial Executive extended the completion date of this report to August 17, 2022.

The following report provides findings of the consultation process and recommendations for strategic initiatives.

Respectfully Submitted,

Steve Brooks,  
Executive Director  
August 17, 2022



## II NSTU AS AN ORGANIZATION

Founded in 1895, the Nova Scotia Teachers Union (NSTU) is a member-based, professional organization serving approximately 9,500 active members. The NSTU has a Provincial Executive (Board of Directors) consisting of 23 members, and a governance structure including 22 Locals, 7 Regions, and 21 Professional Associations. The Union is affiliated with the Canadian Teachers Federation, the Nova Scotia Federation of Labour, and the Canadian Labour Congress. Under the direction of the Executive Director, the executive, professional, and support staff execute policy and provide programs and services to members. The NSTU is the recognized bargaining agent for public education teachers and specialist in Nova Scotia as well as educators in the Atlantic Provinces Special Education Authority.



### III DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

#### A. Member Demographics

The Member Survey was completed by 692 active, reserve, and substitute members, representing 7.4% of the membership. Surveys were received from every Local; completed by early, mid, and late career teachers; identifying as elementary, junior high, high school teachers, regional office staff, EEC staff and specialists; and representing a minimum of 15 equity-deserving groups. The following is a breakdown of responses from the questions related to demographics.

#### Gender Identity

The gender which I currently identify as is:	Response
Female	492
Male	176
Gender Non-Binary	4
I prefer not to Answer or left blank	19
I prefer to self describe my gender identity	1

#### Equity and/or Racialized Identity

I self-identify as being from an equity seeking and/or racialized group(s):	Response
I DO NOT self-identify	558
I DO self-identify	75
I prefer not to answer or left blank	59

#### Self Identifying Equity and/or Racialized Group

I DO Self Identify as:	Response
Female/Woman	12
Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual/Queer/Trans/LGBTQ+/2SLGBTQ+/2ELGBTQ+/LGBTQI2+	17
African Nova Scotian	4
African American	1
Mi'kmaq/Indigenous/Native/Inuit	7
Metis	4
Asian/South Asian/South East Asian	4
Person of Colour	1
Latina/Latino	2
Polish-Canadian	1
Neurodivergent/Autism Spectrum Disorder/Learning Disabled	3
Disabled	8
French minority	1
Senior	1
Acadian	1





**Public Education Experience**

<b>I have taught in the Nova Scotia Public-School system for:</b>	<b>Response</b>
Fewer than 5 years	59
Between 5 and 10 years	96
Between 11 and 20 years	325
Between 21 and 30 years	181
More than 30 years	29

**Current Position**

<b>I am currently working out of the following type of site (best description):</b>	<b>Response</b>
Elementary School	250
Middle School/Junior High School	111
High School	189
P – 12 School	50
Adult High School	3
Regional Centre for Education/Board Office	21
Department of Education and Early Childhood Development	1
APSEA	5
PP – 8/PP – 9/P – 8/P – 9 Schools	25
Itinerant/Circuit/Multiple sites	11
Specialist/Coach	9
On Leave	3
Substitute	3
Jr/Sr High School	5
NSVS	1

**Contract Status**

<b>My contract status is as a:</b>	<b>Response</b>
Permanent Teacher	607
Probationary Teacher	19
Term Teacher	45
Substitute Teacher	14

**Primary Assignment**

<b>My primary assignment is as a (best description):</b>	<b>Response</b>
Classroom Teacher	430
Resource or Learning Centre Teacher	89
Student Services	28
Specialist	105
Classroom/Resource	4
Consultant	4
Coach/Mentor/Support	10



### Primary Assignment (cont.)

My primary assignment is as a (best description):	Response
EAL Teacher	4
Reading Recovery/Early Literacy/Math Intervention	9
Itinerant	2
Department Head/Instructional Lead/Classroom Teacher	3
Registrar/O2 Lead/Classroom	1
Attendance support worker	1
SIS Project Manager	1
NSISP Program Manager	1

### Breakdown by Local and Region

Region	Local	Survey Responses	Size of Local as of March 2021	Local's % Response Rate
Annapolis RRC	Annapolis	17	159	10.69%
	Hants West	25	173	14.45%
	Kings	35	616	5.68%
Cape Breton-Victoria RRC	Cape Breton District	62	660	9.39%
	Northside Victoria	8	261	3.07%
Chignecto Central RRC	Colchester – East Hants	59	770	7.66%
	Cumberland	21	302	6.95%
	Pictou	23	405	5.68%
Halifax RRC	Dartmouth	55	695	7.91%
	Halifax City	102	1106	9.22%
	Halifax County	129	2121	6.08%
South Shore RRC	Lunenburg County	18	413	4.36%
	Queens	4	93	4.30%
Strait RRC	Antigonish	19	207	9.18%
	Guysborough County	12	60	20.00%
	Inverness	18	172	10.47%
	Richmond	7	59	11.86%
Tri-County RRC	Digby	16	110	14.55%
	Shelburne County	8	135	5.93%
	Yarmouth	22	242	9.09%
APSEA	APSEA	8	92	8.70%
CSANE	CSANE	23	531	4.33%
TOTAL NSTU	Whole NSTU	692	9382	7.38%



## **B. Retired Member Demographics**

The Retired Teachers survey was completed by 329 former members, 15 of which indicated that they were answering on behalf of the RTO in some capacity.

### **Breakdown of Demographics for the Retired Teachers Survey**

<b>Respondent Identifies as:</b>	<b>Response</b>
A member of the Retired Teachers Organization (RTO)	189
Completing the survey on behalf of the Retired Teachers Organization (RTO)	15
A retired teacher, formerly an Active Member of the NSTU	121
Other	2
Blank	2
Total	329

## **C. Educational Partners Demographics**

Though input was sought from every Regional Centre for Education, every Bachelor of Education granting institution in Nova Scotia, fellow Nova Scotian labour organizations and unions, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, many Nova Scotian equity deserving organizations, and organizations representing Nova Scotian parents of school age children, there was only limited response.

### **Breakdown of Demographics for the Educational Partners Survey**

<b>Respondent Identifies as:</b>	<b>Response</b>
Regional Centre for Education	3
Delmore Buddy Daye Learning Institute	2
Department of Education and Early Childhood Development	1
Nova Scotia Federation of Home and School Associations	1
Total	7



## IV NSTU MISSION AND BELIEFS

In developing a strategic plan for any organization, the first step is a consideration of the stated mission and beliefs of the organization. Any strategic initiative or direction should be aligned with the organizations mission and beliefs.

### A. NSTU Mission Statement

The current NSTU mission statement is:

***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.***

When asked about the appropriateness of the NSTU mission statement, just over 80% either agreed or strongly agreed with the current mission statement.

#### Response on NSTU Mission Statement's Appropriateness

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly Agree	Left Blank
Response	14	36	83	400	158	1
% Response	2.0%	5.2%	12.0%	57.8%	22.8%	0.1%

Support for the current wording of the Mission Statement is very strong; however, in reviewing comments on the member survey along with feedback heard at regional meetings, there is support for adjusting and focusing the emphasis of the statement. That being said, there does not seem to exist a consensus on what that focus and emphasis should be. A representative sampling of responses include:

*We need to simplify our message and our demands. I find the NSTU is undertaking too many social service agendas which are tangibly impossible to solve. I would like the NSTU to pursue more manageable mandates and issues which are more strictly teacher-centric.*

*Although not sure what words would be appropriate, I think that we should acknowledge the importance of our students somehow in the mission statement. I think that the teaching profession is much different than other professions in that our focus is (and should be) student success.*

*The actual mission is the statement that follows the phrases is "the NSTU promotes and advances the teaching profession and quality public education." This statement has, potentially, nothing to do with supporting members, protecting the rights of members, or of focusing on member needs. The focus of the NSTU needs to be on who and what it advocates and its members should be the priority in that.*

*I am not sure what wording is required but we have too many irons in the fire. There needs to be more focus on member rights and working conditions.*



*We can not fix all problems in the education system due to lack of funding.  
We can not expect to bend all of the time and sacrifice our working  
conditions due to lack of funding therefore I disagree with the promotion of  
quality education wording in some ways.*

*Statement should include supporting and promoting Citizen advocacy and  
responsible government*

The 329 retired teachers who participated in a parallel process echoed the sentiment of the active NSTU members, with 82% either agreeing or strongly agreeing with the NSTU Mission Statement. This is evidence of generational support for the Mission.

## **B. NSTU Belief Statements**

The NSTU mission statement is further clarified through a set of belief statements, when taken separately they address: services to members, leadership in educational change, and promotion and enhancement of public education. The current NSTU Belief Statements read:

***The NSTU serves as the primary advocate for 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 life-long learning***
- ***influencing educational trends through research and evaluation***
- ***disseminating information***

***The NSTU promotes and enhances quality 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***

When asked about the appropriateness of the current NSTU set of Belief Statements, again over 80% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the appropriateness of each of the belief statements.



### Response on NSTU Belief Statements' Appropriateness

Services to Members						
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly Agree	Left Blank
Services to Members						
Response	13	26	63	411	176	3
% Response	1.9%	3.8%	9.1%	59.4%	25.4%	0.4%
Leadership in Educational Change						
Response	14	30	87	405	151	5
% Response	2.0%	4.3%	12.6%	58.5%	21.8%	0.7%
Promotion and Enhancement of Public Education						
Response	17	20	92	406	157	0
% Response	2.5%	2.9%	13.3%	58.7%	22.7%	0%

Support for the current wording of the Belief Statements is very strong; however, in reviewing comments on the member survey along with feedback heard at regional meetings, there is support for refocusing the emphasis of the statements. However, there does not appear to be a consensus on what refocus should entail, indeed often conflicting views exist. A representative sampling of responses include:

*Improving working conditions should be the number one goal.*

*Economic benefits should not be first. Makes it look like that is the priority. It shouldn't be and makes us look greedy.*

*Promoting respect for teachers as professionals.*

*Definitely this section needs a new piece about hearing a wider variety of voices or perspectives in education - movement of education to be more culturally responsive.*

*Replace the term teaching profession to be more inclusive of all NSTU members.*

*addition of "promoting equity and inclusion through education"*

*Avoid issues related to social justice.*

*I don't think enough is being done around social justice and unionism, but I am glad this language is there. There should be more about engaging communities.*

As with the NSTU Mission Statement, retired teachers indicated a strong level of agreement with the NSTU Belief Statements. Ranging from 82% either agreeing or strongly agreeing with the Belief Statement on promoting public education to 87% agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statement concerning providing services to members.



### **C. Summary – NSTU Mission and Belief Statements**

The NSTU Mission Statement and Belief Statements are fundamentally organizational beliefs held by the NSTU; as such, they are essentially policy statements. Policy statements are approved by Council, requiring a majority vote. Policy statements endure a six-year cycle of review; however, the Mission and Belief Statements do not get regularly reviewed in a similar manner.

The NSTU Mission Statement and Belief Statements are very strongly supported by the membership with over 80% of the membership agreeing or strongly agreeing to the appropriateness of these statements. This is also reflected in the results from the retired teachers, which indicates a generational approval of these statements. Comments, both from the survey and during the Local/Regional consultation suggest that some tweaking of language may be in order, but essentially the statements are sound.

### **D. Recommendations – NSTU Mission and Belief Statements**

The following are recommendations regarding the NSTU Mission and Belief Statements:

- IV-1 To ensure the statements are reviewed on a regular cycle; the Mission Statement and Belief Statements be incorporated into the NSTU Governance Section of the Policy manual. That Governance and Policy develop resolutions for the Provincial Executive's consideration to create Policy statements from Mission and Belief Statements for consideration of Annual Council 2023.
- IV-2 That the Mission Statement and Belief Statements be reviewed as policy during this year's Policy Review cycle by the Governance and Policy Committee. Proposed amendments to these Statements to be considered by Provincial Executive in January 2023. Any proposed amendments submitted as Resolutions to Annual Council spring of 2023.





## V GOVERNANCE REVIEW

In December 2020, the NSTU received the final independent report entitled, *Shaping Our Future* from Grant Thornton (the accounting firm responsible for the NSTU's independent audits). The NSTU commissioned the report as directed by Council Resolution 2018-07:

***BE IT RESOLVED THAT*** *an external party be hired to conduct an audit of NSTU's governance structure in order to identify increased efficiencies and the results be reported back to Annual Council 2019.*

The Report made five recommendations, four of which are in regards to the governance structure of the organization (recommendations 1, 2, 4, and 5), and one recommendation regarding the funding of services (recommendation 3). For full details on these recommendations please review the *Shaping our Future* document, available online in the 2021 Annual Council Workbook at <https://nstu.blob.core.windows.net/nstuwebsite/data/annualcouncil/e%20cwb%202021.pdf>.

As Grant Thornton did engage in a consultative process with members it was decided to incorporate the *Shaping Our Future* recommendations as part of the Strategic Planning engagement with members.

### A. *Shaping our Future* Recommendation 1 – The Size of Provincial Executive

The independent review by Grant Thornton recommended that the NSTU should align the size of its executive governance structure (i.e., Provincial Executive) to comparable unions in Nova Scotia and comparable public sector educational organizations across the country. It was noted that the NSTU has the largest Provincial Executive of all teacher organizations in Canada. It was recommended that the size of the Provincial Executive be reduced from its current level of 23 members down to a range of between 12 and 15 members. The primary considerations in this recommendation were reduction of cost, improved governance efficiency, and reduced volunteer expectations.

When asked about the recommendation to reduce the size of the NSTU Provincial Executive nearly 65% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with the recommendation.

#### Response on *Shaping our Future* Recommendation 1

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly Agree	Left Blank
Response	50	77	113	276	173	3
% Response	7.2%	11.1%	16.3%	39.9%	25.0%	0.4%

It was clear from the feedback provided on the member survey and the regional meetings that many members struggled with the question of the size of the Provincial Executive, even those in agreement with the notion of reducing its size. The lack of any recommended alternative model to the existing structure in the Grant Thornton report, may account for the degree of support this recommendation received. Examples of some feedback received include:

*Executive should mirror the RCEs. Local Presidents should have more training and release time focused on assisting members in their regions.*





*I would agree with this change as long as the numbers still include enough PE members from outside of HRM to allow for the voice of rural NS to be heard as this is often not the case in my opinion.*

*Provincial Executive should be based on size of locals, more support for larger locals.*

*The effectiveness of the PE is greatly reduced in its current format due to its large size and conflicting agendas.*

*The PE needs to be downsized to match the size of the RCE. Hence, all of HRCE should be one local as movement between locals is frequent. By having a bigger voice to negotiate our local contracts. PE members should be numbered based on RCE populations.*

*While I was initially reluctant to change the representation on the PE because of geographic challenges, using the RRCs as a basis could make it work. Due to large regions, additional release time would be needed for PE members to effectively interact with members. What should not happen is a furthering of the perception of urban/rural disparity.*

*Our Provincial Exec should reflect the size of the locals they represent. Example: Halifax County has more members so they should have more prov exec members.*

*I agree, however, I think it's important to consider the make-up of PE, with consideration to minorities and representation of members that are not solely teachers (i.e., counsellors; student services - psychologist, SLP, social workers; specialist teachers)*

*Our province very diverse with very different needs from one end of the province to the other! Removing voices from the provincial executive will make it increasingly more difficult to have all voices represented!*

## **B. Shaping our Future Recommendation 2 – The Number of Locals**

The second recommendation coming out of the independent audit of the NSTU governance structure was to reduce the number of Locals. It was suggested that a realignment of Locals could reflect the Regional Centres of Education, CSAP, and APSEA boundaries. The main consideration by the auditors was the significant transfer of member dues being used for Local operations and the expectations being placed upon local leaders.

When asked about the recommendation to reduce the number of Locals, 48% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with the strong minority of 35% disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with the recommendation.



## Response on *Shaping our Future* Recommendation 2

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly Agree	Left Blank
Response	105	137	115	199	132	4
% Response	15.2%	19.8%	16.6%	28.8%	19.1%	0.6%

During regional meetings, especially outside of the Halifax region, concerns were raised that the amalgamation of Locals would have an adverse impact on the ability of rural or smaller groups to have a voice within the union. Once again, it is likely that the lack of an alternate model to the existing structure and number of Locals had an impact on member responses. Examples of some feedback received include:

*I agree to some extent to merge locals- however I don't want to lose the opportunities to encourage local participation.*

*Right now, we do not have the volunteers to take executive positions on locals. Many locals do not even have elections but rather a who's going to take x position this time?*

*Also, many members do not even know the difference between locals as they come from a by gone era of different school boards that no longer exist. These members fall under the same regional contract and seniority list so it makes no difference which local represents them. Members could benefit from having better representation because they have members actually in elected positions because they want to be and not because they were guilting in because no one else would fill them.*

*Considering the size and geography of the education districts, it would not benefit teachers to reduce the local size.*

*It is important to keep our locals in the respected areas to promote member engagement. Ex: meetings, events, PD. Some locals cover big geographical areas.*

*Local representation is important to me*

*I think reducing our number of locals will reduce our recognition of cultural diversity amount our communities. I think the voice provided by our diverse regions will be lost to the dominant culture perspectives and beliefs.*

*If the number of locals is reduced, it is important to take into account the things that will increase - for example travel time/distance for meetings, larger geographic area to cover, etc.*

*Bigger certainly doesn't mean better. I would fear that many teachers in smaller locations would feel left out by being more distanced from their union representatives. Though it could also be a way to connect communities/regions/teachers together.*



*The actual spending on the locals could first be reorganized before jumping to merging groups. Could the scope of locals be adjusted to reduce costs while consolidating certain tasks/duties to a larger, more centralized structure.*

*The major "distinctives" that locals contribute to the lives of members are social events and unique retirement celebration events. Yet, most of the resources that support union life close to members' homes flow to locals, and each local has and sustains a local executive that offers redundant/duplicate roles that exist in neighbouring locals. This is particularly an issue in less populated regions where smaller locals spread across large areas struggle to recruit and retain local leaders, who deliver services to very small numbers of local members.*

### **C. *Shaping our Future* Recommendation 3 – Focus on Priority Focus**

The third recommendation brought forward in *Shaping Our Future*, was not specific to the NSTU governance structure. The report recommended that with a finite amount of funding available to deliver services, the organization focus on delivering the services which members deem most important. A major consideration by the auditors, with this recommendation, was the amount of funds being distributed to support the existing governance structure. The report went on to identify that the following high-level priorities were identified through the *Shaping Our Future* consultations.

1. Negotiation services,
2. Creating a positive public image for the profession,
3. Providing timely and effective support to members in conflict situations with supervisors,
4. Communication with members,
5. Providing timely and effective support in relation to contract rights and benefits, and
6. Fostering a trusted relationship between the union and its members.

When asked about the recommendation to focus Union resources on identified priorities just over 71% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with the next highest response of 17.6% having no opinion.

#### **Response on *Shaping our Future* Recommendation 3**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly Agree	Left Blank
Response	18	55	122	344	151	2
% Response	2.60%	7.95%	17.63%	49.71%	21.82%	0.29%

It became apparent in reviewing comments along with feedback received through regional consultation that even though 11% disagreed or strongly disagreed with the recommendation, most of this negative opinion was in reaction to the priorities identified in *Shaping Our Future*, and not to the concept of focusing resources on priorities identified by the members. It was also clearly heard through regional consultations, that priorities are not fixed and are subject to changing circumstances. Examples of some feedback received include:



*Agreed - the NSTU has suffered "scope creep" over the years, and should narrow its focus, rather than increasing its budget.*

*I don't really think Grant-Thornton fully grasped the NSTU or what it does and stands for. PR is important, but we could spend millions of dollars and not make a dent in public perception of education.*

*Number 2 could easily be bumped down to 3-4 and flipped with either option. To me, that's a losing battle already. Serve the membership first.*

*I would renumber these priorities. 1 is fine, 5 and 6 should follow, then 3, then 2, and lastly 4*

*We strongly believe that we should not spend money on advertisement. It is not going to change the outcome. Remove it from being the second most important priority. Remove it from the list. This should NOT be part of the budget.*

*Members care about their working conditions, salary, benefits, pension. They want to be able to look after their families now and be secure in their retirement. That is what the focus should be on.*

*Of course, members want effective communication, to know they have support if/when necessary. These items should be constant.*

*I think the rating of this scale should be voted on by members through universal suffrage*

*I agree with the elements, but not necessarily with the order. I think it is time to rebuild the relationship between the union and the members.*

*Ranking of priorities: 1, 3, 5, 6, 2, 4*

#### **D. *Shaping our Future* Recommendation 4 – The Number of Provincial Executive Committees**

The *Shaping Our Future* report also recommended that consideration should be given to reducing the number of committees of the Provincial Executive to only those required by collective agreement, law or regulation, or those related to a specific high priority member need. The consultants suggested that the approach and streamlined nature of committees used for the RRCs could be an example for the Provincial Executive, with each committee having specific objectives each year. Two of the main considerations for the auditors were the costs associated with provincial committees and the impact on volunteers' time.

When asked about the recommendation to streamline Provincial committees nearly 68% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with the next highest response of 21% having no opinion.



#### Response on *Shaping our Future* Recommendation 4

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly Agree	Left Blank
Response	26	50	145	316	153	2
% Response	3.8%	7.2%	21.0%	45.7%	22.1%	0.3%

Even though a majority of respondents indicated support for the concept of reducing the number of Provincial committees, it became apparent in review of comments and regional feedback, that the absence of suggestions on which committees might be combined or eliminated impacted responses. Examples of some feedback received include:

*The expenses that provincial committee members get is ridiculously high. I live in HRM & never ever collect any expenses. Everybody can meet over Zoom. There is NO NEED AT ALL for committee members to drive to Hfx, stay in a hotel & eat in restaurants. It makes no sense ENVIRONMENTALLY or fiscally. Zoom is a lot cheaper & easier.*

*If the committee does not have a purpose or is meeting just "to have a meeting" then what is the sense of having the meeting?*

*Membership engagement in the NSTU is often achieved through these committee roles.*

*PE is our voice around the table so the size of it is appropriate considering they are representing 8000 members. However, there are some committees that I don't think are deemed necessary or that serve a purpose anymore.*

*If the NSTU plans to serve as both our contractual and professional organization then a balance of Standing Committees is needed. These committees are another way to get members engaged in the organization. The same is true of the Professional Organizations that produce the October Conferences. Now should committees know why they exist and have a clear understanding as to what they are to achieve...of course.*

*Committees should only be born out of authentic, organic needs for creative problem solving, and so they need to have leaders skilled at facilitating creative problem solving. Formal tracking and monitoring?? Does that equal "bogged down and making up stuff and wasting someone's time typing up made up stuff?" Just do the work of creative problem solving and it will work.*

*There are far too many committees that have little to no impact on the bulk of the membership. The same people rotate through the committees.*

*Unproductive committees are a drain on our limited resources. We need to determine which are most useful and productive, and put our time and resources there.*



*Our committees are just a way to get people engaged in the Union. The committee would be more effective if they were used more efficiently to inform the union.*

#### **E. Shaping our Future Recommendation 5 – The Number of Local Committees**

The Grant Thornton audit of NSTU's governance structure also recommended that consideration be given to streamlining the number of Local committees. The main consideration identified in *Shaping Our Future*, was the demand local committee participation places on volunteers' time.

Overall support for this idea was only marginal with just over 56% of respondents either agreeing or strongly agreeing with this recommendation. However, a greater number of members had no opinion versus opposing the concept.

#### **Response on Shaping our Future Recommendation 5**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly Agree	Left Blank
Response	41	91	168	269	121	2
% Response	5.9%	13.2%	24.3%	38.9%	17.5%	0.3%

Based upon the data and feedback, there does not appear to be any consensus on the issue of the number of Local committees. Some representative comments include:

*local committees are crucial entry point into unionism*

*In small locals all the committees are essentially the local executive. Many of them may only have one member who does all the aspects of the "committee." It seems more efficient to consider a different structure.*

*The same as provincial committees, if committees are meeting just for the sake of having a meeting, then what is the point of meeting? I feel this decrease of local committees is happening anyway because we don't have the volunteers coming forward to be on the committee or it is made up of local exec so the work of the committee is not happening.*

*Local Committees are unique and individualistic to each local. Perhaps if locals are willing to co-collaborate on workshops there might be a cost saving on the staff officers travel expenses. To downsize the locals is in my opinion not a smart move. It will further close the gap for engagement.*

*Individual Locals should have some flexibility to streamline within their Locals. For example, committees that do not attract membership from outside the Executive could operate as Committees of the Whole. Streamlining in a top-down, standardized manner stands to increase strain on Local Executive members and undermine their ability to make decisions that best serve the Local area.*





*In smaller locals, we do not really have a lot of committees. A small group of people do it all.*

*There are not many local committees right now. With fewer committees, there is a reduction in potential leadership development opportunities for members. Some locals are led by a culture of oligarchies where leaders design the table so their friends will lead with them. A dearth of competing ideas is not healthy for a union.*

*We need to ask the question; how much impact has the additional local committees made. If there has been significant impact, then maybe not; however, as a NSTU member I honestly have no idea to the impact of our "extra" local committees.*

*Many locals have committees that don't deliver real value to members. I believe that many of these committees should reside at the regional level to minimize redundancy and alleviate pressure on volunteers.*

*Not sure what committees each local has. If this is a further drain on funds and there are committees that are not well serving education and teachers, then yes, they should be eliminated.*

*I think, especially in smaller locals, they do what committees they can do other than what is mandated.*

*Local committees are extremely important at the local level as it enables members to get involved/engaged in the union both locally and provincially and become a more informed member.*

*Unproductive committees are a drain on our limited resources. We need to determine which are most useful and productive, and put our time and resources there.*

#### **F. Summary – NSTU Governance**

It is clear from the feedback that there is some appetite, by the membership, for considering possible changes to the NSTU governance structure that will reduce the demand on volunteers, increase effectiveness, and reduce financial costs. It is also clear, that there is a very real concern that changes should not adversely impact the ability of members to engage with their Union either provincially, regionally, or locally.

It would seem apparent, based upon the feedback received, that any discussions on making changes to the NSTU governance structure can not happen in the absence of a proposed alternate model(s).

It is difficult but not impossible to take the four governance recommendations from *Shaping our Future* independently of each other. The authority to act on these individual recommendations rests with different levels of the current structure. An example of the recommendations'



interconnectedness is, the reduction in the number of Provincial Executive Members without reducing the number of Locals could inadvertently increase volunteer workload since fewer members would be servicing the same number of Locals.

The size and composition of the Provincial Executive is set out in NSTU By-Laws (Article III – The Provincial Executive, 1 – Composition), this can only change with the 2/3 support of Council.

The boundaries of Locals are the jurisdiction of the Provincial Executive as allowed for in NSTU By-Law (Article III – Provincial Executive, 8 – Duties and Article IV – Local Governance, 1 – NSTU Locals), Local boundaries can be changed by a majority vote of the Provincial Executive. Further, *Shaping our Future's* recommendation on reducing the number of Locals suggests the possibility of aligning Locals with their Regional Representative Councils. The boundaries of RRCs are outlined in NSTU By-Law (Article V – Regional Governance, 1 – Regional Representative Council (RRC)). Though the Provincial Executive has the authority to set Local borders, Council has the authority to change the definition of RRCs through 2/3 majority vote.

The number, mandate, and composition of Provincial Committees largely rests with the Provincial Executive through setting of Operational Procedures. Council can influence this through the budget process.

Finally, the number, mandate, and composition of Local Committees largely rests with the individual Locals. Locals are required to have certain Committees through NSTU Operational Procedure; however, they are allowed the flexibility to combine and add to this list through adoption of their Constitutions, which are then ratified by the Provincial Executive.

#### **G. Recommendations – NSTU Governance**

The following are recommendations regarding NSTU Governance:

- V-1 Using the *Shaping our Future* recommendations and feedback attained through the strategic planning process, the Provincial Executive develop a set of resolutions for consideration by Annual Council 2024 addressing alternative governance models regarding composition, size, and election processes of the Provincial Executive. It is further recommended that the task of developing these models be directed to the Governance and Policy Committee.
- V-2 Using the *Shaping our Future* recommendations and feedback attained through the strategic planning process, an ad hoc committee of local/regional leaders develop a set of recommendations for the consideration of the Provincial Executive by October of 2023, regarding the composition, size, boundaries, and election processes for Locals. It is further recommended that the task of developing any resolutions flowing from the ad hoc committee's recommendation be directed to the Governance and Policy Committee for consideration by Annual Council 2024.





- V-3 Using the *Shaping our Future* recommendations and feedback attained through the strategic planning process, the Provincial Executive review the number, mandate, and composition of NSTU Standing and other Committees in an attempt to align mandates and reduce the overall number of committees. To be presented to the Provincial Executive for their consideration December of 2023. It is further recommended that the task of conducting this review be directed to the Governance and Policy Committee.
- V-4 Using the *Shaping our Future* recommendations and feedback attained through the strategic planning process, an ad hoc committee of local/regional leaders review the number, mandate, and composition of mandated Local committees through NSTU Operational Procedures in an attempt to ease the volunteer expectations on Local members. To be presented to the Provincial Executive for their consideration December of 2023.



## VI NSTU PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

The NSTU offers members a broad set of programs and services. Feedback was collected through the comprehensive survey and regional consultations on the following: Member Services, Professional Learning, Member Assistance Program, Communication/Public Relations, and Technology.

### A. Economic Welfare and Working Conditions (Member Services)

Economic welfare and working conditions representation and services are provided through the Member Services team. These services are most often associated with the work of a union as they include contract interpretation, collective bargaining, labour relations guidance, grievance and arbitration advice, and representation.

Generally speaking, feedback indicate that there is a high member awareness of the various Economic Welfare Programs and Services ranging from a low of 60% awareness of the Legislative Interpretation services provide by the NSTU that impact members economic welfare to a high of 96% awareness of the support NSTU provides members seeking leave from their employer.

This high awareness is matched by significant gaps between high and low considerations of priorities. For example, the largest gap between members reporting an economic welfare service as a high or low priority is Collective Bargaining with over 91% seeing it as a high or very high priority and less than 1% seeing it as a low or very low priority.

On the other hand, the smallest gap between high and low priority consideration is the Labour Relation Guidance documents created for members, with 43% of respondents seeing these documents as a high or very high priority and 11% reporting them as a low or very low priority.

### Awareness Economic Welfare and Working Conditions Programs and Services

Economic Welfare and Working Conditions	Completely Unaware of Service		Aware of Service but Have Never Used		Aware and have Used and/or Referred Another	
	Res.	% Res.	Res.	% Res.	Res.	% Res.
Collective Bargaining (Negotiations)	27	3.9%	417	60.3%	244	35.2%
Collective Agreement Interpretation	133	19.2%	333	48.1%	206	29.8%
Group Insurance Oversight and Support	121	17.5%	336	48.6%	232	33.5%
Grievance and Arbitration Support	28	4.0%	509	73.6%	139	20.1%
Individual Advice and Support to Members	42	6.1%	263	38.0%	384	55.5%
Individual Member Protection and Representation	60	8.7%	464	67.1%	151	21.8%
Legal Representation	48	6.9%	580	83.8%	57	8.2%
Legislation Interpretation and Advice	198	28.6%	410	59.2%	69	10.0%
Labour Relations Guidance Documents	226	32.7%	400	57.8%	58	8.3%
Pension/Retirement Support	22	3.2%	491	71.0%	162	23.4%
Pregnancy/Parental/Adoption Leave Support	22	3.2%	378	54.6%	286	41.3%
Pre-Retirement Seminars	20	2.9%	483	69.8%	174	25.1%



### Priority/Value Economic Welfare and Working Conditions Programs and Services

Economic Welfare and Working Conditions	Very Low Priority		Low Priority		Moderate		High Priority		Very High Priority	
	Res.	% Res.	Res.	% Res.	Res.	% Res.	Res.	% Res.	Res.	% Res.
Collective Bargaining (Negotiations)	2	0.3%	2	0.3%	49	7.1%	181	26.2%	453	65.5%
Collective Agreement Interpretation	7	1.0%	14	2.0%	154	22.3%	290	41.9%	210	30.3%
Group Insurance Oversight and Support	7	1.0%	21	3.0%	183	26.4%	269	38.9%	207	29.9%
Grievance and Arbitration Support	1	0.1%	16	2.3%	150	21.7%	263	38.0%	246	35.5%
Individual Advice and Support to Members	2	0.3%	14	2.0%	156	22.5%	254	36.7%	260	37.6%
Individual Member Protection and Representation	1	0.1%	11	1.6%	121	17.5%	270	39.0%	274	39.6%
Legal Representation	4	0.6%	24	3.5%	153	22.1%	272	39.3%	234	33.8%
Legislation Interpretation and Advice	5	0.7%	48	6.9%	272	39.3%	239	34.5%	112	16.2%
Labour Relations Guidance Documents	10	1.4%	65	9.4%	314	45.4%	192	27.7%	102	14.7%
Pension/Retirement Support	4	0.6%	15	2.2%	153	22.1%	250	36.1%	255	36.8%
Pregnancy/Parental/Adoption Leave Support	23	3.3%	31	4.5%	176	25.4%	250	36.1%	206	29.8%
Pre-Retirement Seminars	12	1.7%	35	5.1%	202	29.2%	244	35.3%	182	26.3%

It seems clear from both survey results and regional consultation that members have a high level of awareness for NSTU economic welfare and working conditions programs and services which is coupled by a sense that these programs and services are a high or very high priority for members.

One thing that is clear from this data is that respondents are aware and view Economic Welfare as a high priority for members. Some comments in this regard included:

*This is an extremely important service. Please do not make cuts here.*

*Even though I have not needed to use many of these services I am thankful they are available to me and think they have great value.*

Suggestions and comments were also made regarding how to make members better aware of the economic welfare and working condition services available to them:

*I really liked the video on our collective agreement. The staff officer went over everything in depth, and no one interrupted him. I hope this practice continues. Question sessions could be held after teachers watch the information video. With teachers' jobs being jammed packed with more tasks, watching an*



*information video is much easier for teachers and explanations can be in depth and a teacher could watch it a few times if they don't understand something.*

*Members need to be aware of these programs and services available to them.*

*Maybe have the Local share info (via email, short sessions, brochures) about the services with Reps so at least they can be aware and support members in their school by directing them to the services available.*

*Remember there are no stupid questions. It takes more than one exposure to Economic Welfare information before it is fully understood. The membership needs to be educated in what supports, information, and services are available to them.*

*My biggest issue is not knowing where to go or who to talk to about specific concerns. This is especially important when it's an issue someone doesn't want to share with too many people.*

*Visual map of the services offered in quick glance.*

*Make documents more accessible. I use google to navigate NSTU documents because it's easier that way. Possibly provide a step-by-step sign-in instruction page for access to all member documents (contract and all other documents that empower members to know their rights and be well-read in NSTU services).*

The Member Services program that was most often commented on to increase access to members was the pre-retirement seminars. While attendance at these sessions is currently restricted by the collective agreement, it seemed clear that increasing access to the information would be positively received.

*The pre-retirement sessions could be videos with current information that teachers watch and it should be available to all teachers not just those in their last five years.*

*The pre-retirement seminars need to happen at least 10 years before the first possible date. There is not enough time to make significant changes to one's financial situation 5 years before retirement. A type of "what I need to consider to be ready for retirement in 10-15 years" webinar or pamphlet that people can download and consult at their leisure could be produced. This would not require much cost, but can serve as reference for members even those early in their career. I also propose the pre-retirement sessions be offered online or using a hybrid model so that more people can feel comfortable participating, and it can reduce costs.*

*I believe that there should be two pre-retirement seminars held. One for mid-career (year 15) and one for end of career (5 years out). I have spoken to many*



*teachers that have said they wish they had known the information they learned earlier, in order to be better prepared financially for retirement. They felt that 5 years from retirement was too late to make any real financial change ex. investments, etc.*

The feedback received from retired teachers participating in the consultation process also indicate a high awareness of programs and services in Member Services, with a low 69% reporting awareness of Labour Relation Guidance Documents to a high of 97% reporting awareness of the pre-retirement seminar program.

## **B. Summary – Economic Welfare and Working Conditions**

Though the results from the member survey and discussions at Local/Regional meetings indicate that awareness and importance of programs and services in Economic Welfare and Working Conditions are strong, comments indicate that improvements could be realized.

Activities in this department, by their very nature, are sensitive and confidential; however, generic descriptors of the type and complexity of the work could be shared with members.

Though it comes with related challenges, there appears to be a desire for greater access to information through online presentations. Presentations in this form can become dated relatively quickly, some form of annual review would be necessary. Commentary in such presentations would require a disclaimer regarding the need for clarifying comments from appropriate staff; often information is very case specific. The production and review of such presentations will be taxing on the human resources in the Member Services department.

There is a desire to have information on the website more easily accessible and user friendly, including a staff directory with clear assignments. Comments such as “... *not knowing where to go or who to talk to...*” and “*Visual map of services...*” illustrate this concern. The number of programs and services are extensive, a navigational tool both in terms of staff responsibility and information directory would help members.

## **C. Recommendations – Economic Welfare and Working Conditions**

The following are recommendations regarding Economic Welfare and Working Conditions Programs and Services:

- VI-1 Commencing Annual Council 2023, that the Member Services Report of activities provide the following information:
  - a. number of grievances initiated, resolved, and ongoing;
  - b. number of discipline files initiated, resolved, and ongoing;
  - c. number of injury on duty cases initiated, resolved, and ongoing;
  - d. number of criminal and other legal cases; and
  - e. number of pre-retirement seminars delivered.
- VI-2 By December 2022, the NSTU will begin developing a suite of online presentations/graphics addressing common topics including frequently asked questions-and-answers. Presentations/graphics to be reviewed annually.



- VI-3 By January 2023 have documents related to legislation interpretation and advice and labour relations guidance easily accessible for members.
- VI-4 By June 2023 the NSTU will have clearer online navigational tools available to members regarding programs and services in Economic Welfare and Working Conditions. These tools will assist members in identifying and accessing appropriate Staff contact information, and available resources.
- VI-5 By December 2022, NSTU consider the potential enhancements to program and services offerings in Economic Welfare and Working Conditions by creating a new bilingual Executive Staff Officer position in Member Services, designated to triaging member enquiries. This Staff Officer would be able to provide advice, information, and clarification on routine Member Services matters, and triage members needing ongoing representation to regionally assigned Executive Staff Officers. It is further recommended that the Personnel Committee draft an appropriate Resolution to Annual Council regarding staffing this position.

#### **D. Professional Learning**

In addition to the economic welfare and working conditions support that the NSTU provides members, it also has programs and services designed to support the profession. These programs and services are collectively referred to as Professional Learning, and include research, conferences and workshops, recognition programs, and support for members. Awareness and value for Professional Learning programs and services were not as consistently high as was found with Member Services. This may speak to a need to enhance communication and promotion of these services and programs.

Awareness ranged from a low of 25% awareness of the NSTU liaison with universities to a high of 99% awareness of NSTU October Conference.

There was also reported a significant variance in gap between high and low considerations of priorities. For example, the largest gap between members reporting a professional learning service as a high or low priority is Individual advice to members with over 71% seeing it as a high or very high priority and 5% seeing it as a low or very low priority.

On the other hand, the smallest gap between high and low priority consideration is the NSTU Summer Leadership Institute with an equal 24% reporting it as a high and a low priority.

There were a number of Professional Learning Programs and Services in which there was more reporting it as a low as opposed to a high priority. These included: John Huntley Internships, NSTU Conferences, Project Overseas, Sheonorail Foundation, and University Liaison. In these cases, the largest gap between a consideration of high and low priority was with Project Overseas with 43% seeing it as a low or very low priority and 11% viewing it as a high or very high priority item.





### Awareness Professional Learning Programs and Services

Professional Learning	Completely Unaware of Service		Aware of Service but Have Never Used		Aware and have Used and/or Referred Another	
	Res.	% Res.	Res.	% Res.	Res.	% Res.
Conference on New Techniques and Classroom Teaching (CONTACT)	351	50.7%	213	30.8%	122	17.6%
Curriculum Support and Advice	373	53.9%	248	35.8%	58	8.4%
Developing Successful Schools (DSS)	480	69.4%	186	26.9%	23	3.3%
Educational Research	357	51.6%	283	40.9%	40	5.8%
Equity Services	180	26.0%	466	67.3%	38	5.5%
Individual Advice and Support to Members	120	17.3%	358	51.7%	201	29.0%
John Huntley Memorial Internship Program	210	30.3%	371	53.6%	106	15.3%
Local Professional Learning Support	253	36.6%	279	40.3%	149	21.5%
Member Engagement Day	203	29.3%	227	32.8%	255	36.8%
NSTU Awards, Fellowships, and Grants	53	7.7%	387	55.9%	239	34.5%
NSTU Biennial Conferences	355	51.3%	229	33.1%	97	14.0%
NSTU Leadership Skills Development Institute	345	49.9%	242	35.0%	90	13.0%
Program Development Assistance Fund (PDAF)	215	31.1%	291	42.1%	180	26.0%
Project Overseas	333	48.1%	326	47.1%	20	2.9%
October Conference Day	3	0.4%	19	2.7%	665	96.1%
Sheonorol Foundation Grants	307	44.4%	329	47.5%	45	6.5%
Status of Women	353	51.0%	296	42.8%	37	5.3%
Support for Early Career Teachers	267	38.6%	324	46.8%	89	12.9%
University Liaison	513	74.1%	157	22.7%	20	2.9%

### Priority/Value Professional Learning Programs and Services

Professional Learning	Very Low Priority		Low Priority		Moderate		High Priority		Very High Priority	
	Res.	% Res.	Res.	% Res.	Res.	% Res.	Res.	% Res.	Res.	% Res.
Conference on New Techniques and Classroom Teaching (CONTACT)	67	9.7%	79	11.4%	264	38.2%	174	25.1%	94	13.6%
Curriculum Support and Advice	44	6.4%	72	10.4%	250	36.1%	211	30.5%	96	13.9%
Developing Successful Schools (DSS)	73	10.5%	84	12.1%	314	45.4%	150	21.7%	54	7.8%
Educational Research	58	8.4%	106	15.3%	295	42.6%	142	20.5%	65	9.4%
Equity Services	18	2.6%	30	4.3%	198	28.6%	263	38.0%	170	24.6%
Individual Advice and Support to Members	10	1.4%	24	3.5%	142	20.5%	267	38.6%	225	32.5%



### Priority/Value Professional Learning Programs and Services (cont.)

Professional Learning	Very Low Priority		Low Priority		Moderate		High Priority		Very High Priority	
	Res.	% Res.	Res.	% Res.	Res.	% Res.	Res.	% Res.	Res.	% Res.
John Huntley Memorial Internship Program	74	10.7%	130	18.8%	319	46.1%	103	14.9%	46	6.6%
Local Professional Learning Support	35	5.1%	62	9.0%	270	39.0%	208	30.1%	92	13.3%
Member Engagement Day	73	10.5%	109	15.8%	290	41.9%	117	16.9%	81	11.7%
NSTU Awards, Fellowships, and Grants	15	2.2%	38	5.5%	256	37.0%	221	31.9%	133	19.2%
NSTU Biennial Conferences	88	12.7%	129	18.6%	342	49.4%	73	10.5%	32	4.6%
NSTU Leadership Skills Development Institute	62	9.0%	105	15.2%	325	47.0%	113	16.3%	54	7.8%
Program Development Assistance Fund (PDAF)	29	4.2%	66	9.5%	265	38.3%	187	27.0%	122	17.6%
Project Overseas	128	18.5%	172	24.9%	283	40.9%	56	8.1%	23	3.3%
October Conference Day	35	5.1%	33	4.8%	165	23.8%	214	30.9%	230	33.2%
Sheonoroil Foundation Grants	84	12.1%	118	17.1%	332	48.0%	80	11.6%	41	5.9%
Status of Women	28	4.0%	42	6.1%	224	32.4%	228	32.9%	149	21.5%
Support for Early Career Teachers	21	3.0%	18	2.6%	176	25.4%	251	36.3%	199	28.8%
University Liaison	79	11.4%	116	16.8%	329	47.5%	100	14.5%	43	6.2%

Additional member comments and suggestions were sought through the comprehensive member survey and regional consultations. The vast majority of comments reflected a need to better educate members on the professional learning programs and services available to members, such as:

*I was unaware of many of these programs. Maybe more information should be relayed to members directly.*

*I can't rank priority if I don't know what they are.*

*This information needs to be more effectively communicated to teachers. I've been teaching a long time, and this is the FIRST time I knew what CONTACT is.*

*I found it difficult to rate these on a 1-5 scale, as I have never heard of most of them.*

*Another idea would be to have a short Power Point/Google presentation for all members to be aware of what resources/support is available to all Nova Scotia teachers.*





*There are brochures/posters/information for a number of these items, or maybe only an article over the years in The Teacher. In my experience I have not noticed promotion of items such as the University Liaison, Status of Women, Project Overseas, DSS and Curriculum Support and Advice.*

*I don't know what can be done to improve member engagement and awareness, but it's really low. I'm the union rep and I didn't know about 3/4 of these programs. There has to be more personal connection & word of mouth, I guess? Or social media shares?*

In addition to feedback regarding a lack of awareness of specific Professional Learning programs and services, there was some questioning the value of the work of professional learning, while others seeing it as important to the lives of teachers:

*With only two staff members this area seems a bit thin in our organization. I think we need to focus on doing fewer things and doing them very well. CONTACT is expensive for locals to pay for a delegate, especially if it's out of province. DSS seems focused on administrators and they're no longer our members.*

*Professional Learning is the branch of the NSTU that shows members the value of being part of a profession. It is how connections among members are formed.*

*It appears that there is a lot of overlap here between the service provided by NSTU and those provided by our employer. We have a lot of support through mentorship programs, PD days, grants and other support programs that are provided and administered through the various Regional Centres for Education. I think the NSTU needs to move away from these services. Bringing more teachers into the knowledge of the union; more organizing. I realize these items are in the handbook and on the website, but it doesn't necessarily bring teachers in until they need it or want it, etc.... The knowledge needs to be out there.*

*Needs a broader emphasis to members. PL staff should be driving research and reaching out to locals to demonstrate how members can lead rather than passively follow school change. NS teachers could play a more informed and critical role in systemic cultural change.*

The other area in which significant feedback was received was regarding the NSTU October Conference.

*Get rid of forced October Conference that we have to pay for. It is a joke. I would much rather self-directed PD or ANYTHING. I would prefer to teach for the day. It is wasted. Topics are boring, and having an online PD forced upon us at this time is absolutely ridiculous. Get rid of it!!!*



*Several of the places I indicated moderate to low priority are because I have seen little benefit or evidence that these make much of a difference for the membership as a whole. They often benefit the same people time and time again, especially the fellowships and grants. October Conference Day needs a complete revamp. I would hate to see it be lost, but it is less and less seen as a beneficial and useful PD-day and more and more the day to come to Halifax to shop or a day where people feel they benefit more by meeting in smaller groups to share and learn. The one-shot wonder conference model is outdated and not shown to have much measurable benefit to teachers or students.*

*I do not understand why once I register for our NSTU Oct conference that the receipt is not issued immediately. The receipts seem to be policed by my NSTU, my union, and given out at the end of the conference? This has been discussed by numerous teachers/NSTU members at my school. This needs to be addressed by OUR union.*

*October Conference should either be completely overhauled or stopped altogether. Too many of the professional associations offer PD sessions that aren't even connected to the content area. The virtual sessions this year were not a good use of time.*

Again, there is a strong correlation between the perspectives of active members and those of retired members when it comes to awareness of the NSTU Professional Learning programs and services. Awareness of Professional Learning Programs and Services was much more inconsistent. Ranging from low of 31% awareness of Member Engagement Day to high 97% awareness of October Conference, with less than 50% awareness of the Sheonoril Foundation, Early Career Teacher Supports, and University Liaison.

#### **E. Summary – Professional Learning**

The results of the member survey and discussions at Local/Regional meetings indicate that awareness and importance of programs and services in Professional Learning vary greatly among our members. Awareness may be the reason for the lower ratings for level of importance but not necessarily the sole reason. Much of Professional Learning's programs and services are targeted at a small proportion of the membership, specifically leadership. Though these programs and services are vitally important for informing the decision makers of the organization, the grassroot member may not be aware or necessarily see the importance.

Similar, to Economic Welfare and Working Conditions, again there appears to be a desire for greater access to information through online presentations. These Presentations will have the same challenges as mentioned in the previous section.

And again, similar to Economic Welfare and Working Conditions, there is a desire to have information on the website more easily accessible and user friendly, including a staff directory with clear assignments.

The priority rating and member awareness were particularly soft for programs such as Developing Successful Schools, NSTU's Biennial Conferences, and the John Huntley Memorial Internship



Program. The value of these programs has a great benefit for relatively few members, mainly in leadership roles.

October Conference Day has very high member awareness as well as support in terms of a priority rating; however, comments suggest possible enhancements to this program should be investigated.

#### **F. Recommendations – Professional Learning**

The following are recommendations regarding Professional Learning Programs and Services:

- VI-6 That Professional Learning Staff create a suite of online presentations addressing common topics including frequently asked questions-and-answers. Beginning in December 2022 Professional Learning Staff will start the process of developing these presentations with an annual review to ensure relevancy.
- VI-7 By June 2023 the NSTU will have clearer online navigational tools available to members regarding programs and services in Professional Learning. These tools will assist members in identifying and accessing appropriate Staff contact information, and available resources.
- VI-8 By September 2025 the NSTU will have developed a suite of programs and services aimed specifically to support equity-deserving members.
- VI-9 By June 2024 complete a review of the NSTU’s involvement and support of the Developing Successful Schools program.
- VI-10 By December 2024 complete an accessibility and participation review of the NSTU’s Biennial Conferences.
- VI-11 By June 2025 complete an accessibility and participation review of the NSTU’s John Huntley Memorial Internship Program.
- VI-12 By December 2024 complete an operational review of October Conference Day, review to include an assessment of procedures for, format of, and support for.

#### **G. Member Assistance Program (MAP)**

The NSTU Member Assistance Program (MAP) is a suite of services provided by the NSTU in partnership with the NSTU Group Insurance Trustees, that are not provided through the NSTU Group Insurance Plan. The NSTU Group Insurance Trustees oversee, on behalf of the Union, The NSTU Group Insurance Program and Trust Fund. The Member Assistance Program includes a combination of contracted services from vendors, such as the CAREpath program, and in-house services such as the Counseling and Early Intervention programs.

When asked about awareness and sense of priority for the NSTU Member Assistance Program, responses were more consistent with the high awareness and high priority scores exceeding low awareness and low priority scores found in the Member Services review.



The feedback indicates an awareness range of the various Member Assistance Programs from a low of 21% awareness of Self-care Starter kits to a high of 85% awareness of the NSTU Counselling Services.

There was also reported a significant gap between high and low considerations of priorities. For example, the largest gap between members reporting a Member Assistance Program as a high or low priority is Counselling Services with 71% seeing it as a high or very high priority and 4% seeing it as a low or very low priority.

On the other hand, the smallest gap between high and low priority consideration is the Self-care Starter Kits, with 35% of respondents seeing these documents as a high or very high priority and 21% reporting them as a low or very low priority.

The one program in which the number of respondents reporting it as a low priority exceeded those reporting it as a high priority was the Winter Wellness challenge, with 36% seeing it as a low or very low priority and 26% reporting it as a high or very high priority.

#### Awareness Member Assistance Programs and Services

Member Assistance Program	Completely Unaware of Service		Aware of Service but Have Never Used		Aware and have Used and/or Referred Another	
	Res.	% Res.	Res.	% Res.	Res.	% Res.
CAREpath - Cancer Assistance Program	260	37.6%	376	54.3%	48	6.9%
CAREpath - Heath Care Assist Program	264	38.2%	351	50.7%	62	9.0%
CAREpath - Seniors' Care Assistance Program	337	48.7%	317	45.8%	32	4.6%
CAREpath - Your Wellness Partner	302	43.6%	312	45.1%	65	9.4%
Early Intervention Program (EIP)	232	33.5%	311	44.9%	140	20.2%
EIP - Return-to-Work Support	227	32.8%	349	50.4%	100	14.5%
EIP - Workplace Assessments	350	50.6%	236	34.1%	97	14.0%
Grants - EDUWellness	371	53.6%	267	38.6%	42	6.1%
Grants - Mental Health and Wellness	385	55.6%	257	37.1%	41	5.9%
Independent Psychological Assessment	379	54.8%	249	36.0%	49	7.1%
Long Term Disability Application Assistance	201	29.0%	434	62.7%	52	7.5%
Manulife EFAP - Counselling Services	190	27.5%	320	46.2%	170	24.6%
Manulife EFAP - Depression Care Services	377	54.5%	271	39.2%	35	5.1%
Manulife EFAP - Experiencing Acts of Violence	440	63.6%	227	32.8%	11	1.6%
Manulife EFAP - Grief and Loss Counselling	312	45.1%	340	49.1%	31	4.5%
Manulife EFAP - Lifestyle and Specialty Coaching Services	452	65.3%	208	30.1%	17	2.5%
Manulife EFAP - Stress Solutions	442	63.9%	219	31.6%	22	3.2%
Manulife EFAP - Trauma Care	455	65.8%	205	29.6%	17	2.5%
Member Assistance Program Navigation	413	59.7%	223	32.2%	45	6.5%



### Awareness Member Assistance Programs and Services (cont.)

Member Assistance Program	Completely Unaware of Service		Aware of Service but Have Never Used		Aware and have Used and/or Referred Another	
	Res.	% Res.	Res.	% Res.	Res.	% Res.
Member Assistance Program Triage	468	67.6%	167	24.1%	41	5.9%
NSTU Counselling Services - Members and Family Members	101	14.6%	367	53.0%	218	31.5%
NSTU Counselling Services - School/Site Crisis Intervention	230	33.2%	379	54.8%	69	10.0%
Self-Care Starter Kit	535	77.3%	136	19.7%	11	1.6%
Winter Wellness Challenge	153	22.1%	272	39.3%	250	36.1%

### Priority/Value Member Assistance Programs and Services

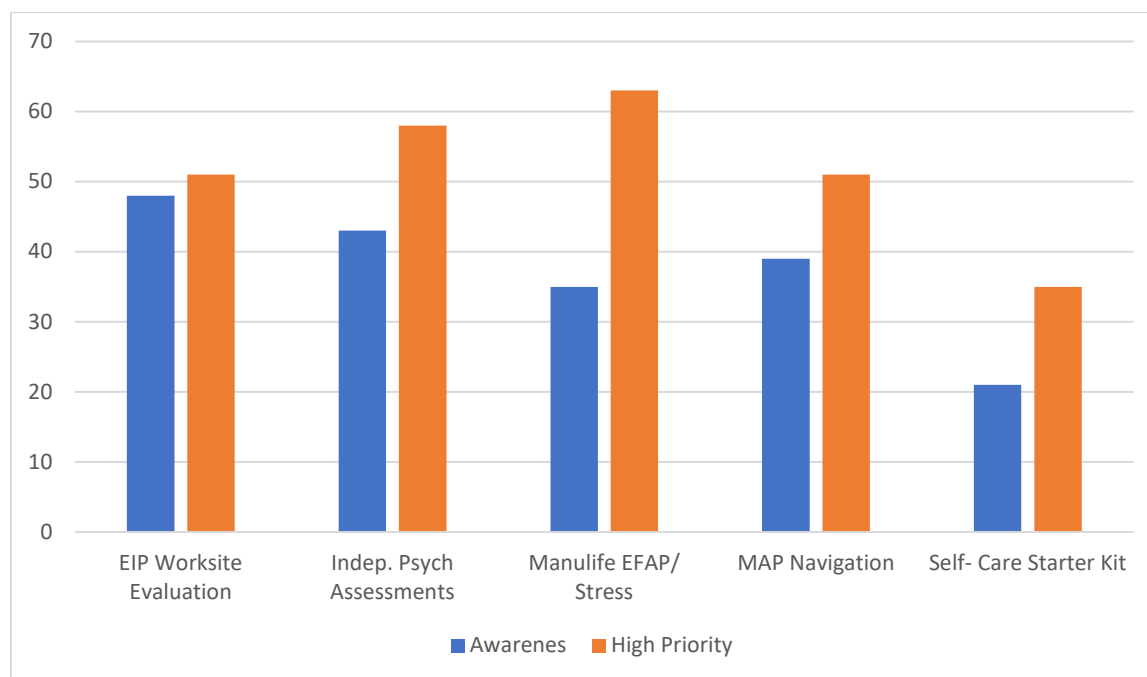
Member Assistance Program	Very Low Priority		Low Priority		Moderate		High Priority		Very High Priority	
	Res.	% Res.	Res.	% Res.	Res.	% Res.	Res.	% Res.	Res.	% Res.
CAREpath - Cancer Assistance Program	13	1.9%	20	2.9%	149	21.5%	254	36.7%	231	33.4%
CAREpath - Health Care Assist Program	14	2.0%	17	2.5%	185	26.7%	233	33.7%	209	30.2%
CAREpath - Seniors' Care Assistance Program	25	3.6%	42	6.1%	216	31.2%	213	30.8%	169	24.4%
CAREpath - Your Wellness Partner	19	2.7%	46	6.6%	225	32.5%	200	28.9%	167	24.1%
Early Intervention Program (EIP)	15	2.2%	30	4.3%	204	29.5%	214	30.9%	199	28.8%
EIP - Return-to-Work Support	12	1.7%	27	3.9%	207	29.9%	225	32.5%	182	26.3%
EIP - Workplace Assessments	18	2.6%	50	7.2%	245	35.4%	199	28.8%	151	21.8%
Grants - EDUWellness	35	5.1%	63	9.1%	311	44.9%	139	20.1%	107	15.5%
Grants - Mental Health and Wellness	26	3.8%	33	4.8%	230	33.2%	192	27.7%	186	26.9%
Independent Psychological Assessment	18	2.6%	32	4.6%	210	30.3%	221	31.9%	178	25.7%
Long Term Disability Application Assistance	10	1.4%	23	3.3%	183	26.4%	233	33.7%	218	31.5%
Manulife EFAP - Counselling Services	16	2.3%	21	3.0%	161	23.3%	210	30.3%	250	36.1%
Manulife EFAP - Depression Care Services	15	2.2%	23	3.3%	144	20.8%	235	34.0%	247	35.7%
Manulife EFAP - Experiencing Acts of Violence	19	2.7%	29	4.2%	155	22.4%	217	31.4%	233	33.7%
Manulife EFAP - Grief and Loss Counselling	15	2.2%	22	3.2%	160	23.1%	245	35.4%	219	31.6%



### Priority/Value Member Assistance Programs and Services (cont.)

Member Assistance Program	Very Low Priority		Low Priority		Moderate		High Priority		Very High Priority	
	Res.	% Res.	Res.	% Res.	Res.	% Res.	Res.	% Res.	Res.	% Res.
Manulife EFAP - Lifestyle and Specialty Coaching Services	37	5.3%	74	10.7%	267	38.6%	146	21.1%	133	19.2%
Manulife EFAP - Stress Solutions	14	2.0%	35	5.1%	177	25.6%	233	33.7%	205	29.6%
Manulife EFAP - Trauma Care	16	2.3%	32	4.6%	179	25.9%	232	33.5%	198	28.6%
Member Assistance Program Navigation	18	2.6%	44	6.4%	250	36.1%	198	28.6%	153	22.1%
Member Assistance Program Triage	24	3.5%	52	7.5%	289	41.8%	165	23.8%	125	18.1%

Interestingly, there were seventeen MAP programs and services which received higher priority scores than awareness scores. A few examples of these are illustrated below:



When high priority score exceeds the awareness score, it is an indicator that while members may not be aware that the NSTU provides a particular program or service, it is deemed to be something members would want to see offered.

When reviewing comments and suggestions gathered through the comprehensive survey and regional sessions, it is clear that while membership awareness of MAP programs and services is relatively high, there are still many members who are unaware that these services exist.





*All of these mentioned are things all workers should know about. So much important information however many are unaware.*

*I have not heard of most of these programs. Particularly the Manulife ones. If these are offered members should have more knowledge about them I consider myself to be relatively involved in the NSTU, but I didn't know about several of these options for members. Improving the visibility of these, communicating the value and availability of these, etc. to members is crucial!*

*There needs to be more communication about these programs and what they offer! Many people are unaware of these services, and they are very important.*

*I think the membership is not aware of the variety of supports available to members. I had cancer and benefited greatly from the CAREpath program. Through word of mouth, I passed along the CAREpath program to another colleague who developed cancer. I think we really need to do better at promoting what the NSTU has to offer.*

*Generally, most of these are valuable, but should be consolidated to fewer programs so that they're more comprehensible / navigable by members. Streamline and/or clarify. Difficult to know who to contact or how.*

*It is hard to prioritize them when you don't even know what they are. It's frustrating to discover so many services offered that I've never heard of... and I pay more attention to the NSTU than most members.*

The availability of in-person, virtual, or remote services was also a theme in the feedback received.

*I think more information about accessible mental health supports is needed. The counselling service for members seems to involve phone calls during work hours, which isn't a good option.*

*I wish the Manulife program supported more fully in-person or even zoom counselling. Most people will not find accessing web pages of information to be very supportive, nor is a live chat feature what most struggling folks are seeking.*

*more early intervention workers or more support from them, did not find this particularly helpful or supportive when I used it, I thought I would receive more direct support instead of just a check in by email once in awhile.*

*Counselling services need to be streamlined. I tried accessing them last year. I was already under a lot of stress that trying to figure out how to navigate the support felt like another burden. It was difficult to reach someone and make a decision what route to do.*



*EIP-needs a bigger staff-in my experience results were very slow.*

Once again, awareness of MAP programs and services by retiree members was similar to that of active members. LTD Assistance and NSTU Counselling Services had over 70% awareness with EI Assessments, EDUWellness Grants, Mental Health Grants and Independent Psychological Assessments below 50% awareness.

#### **H. Summary – Member Assistance Program**

The results from the member survey and discussions at Local/Regional meetings indicate that awareness and importance of programs and services in the Member Assistance Program are very strong, with ratings on priority often outstripping awareness of the given program. The comments plainly indicate a need for greater awareness and greater depth of explanation on these programs and services. Further, a need for ease of access to this information, with links to assist members in identifying and accessing appropriate Staff contact information, and available resources.

#### **I. Recommendations – Member Assistance Program**

The following are recommendations regarding Member Assistance Programs and Services:

- VI-13 By September 2022 the NSTU begin to explore, with the Group Insurance Trustees, ways to assist in promoting the benefits of the Members Group Insurance Plan.
- VI-14 By September 2022 the NSTU begin to explore, with the Group Insurance Trustees, ways to promote specific aspects of the Member Assistance Program.
- VI-15 By June 2023 the NSTU will have clear online links to information regarding the Member Assistance Program available to members.

#### **J. Communications/Public Relations**

When asked about NSTU Communication Programs and Services there was a reasonable awareness of most services with one exception being the President's Media Tours. This may be due to the two years of travel and safety precautions which impacted President travel and access to schools.

Awareness ranged from a high of 96% for the NSTU Discount Program to a low of 24% for the President's Media Tour. The gap between high and low priority items was largest with Communication to members being viewed as a high or very high priority by 76% of respondents and 3% as a low or very low priority.

There were four Communications program and service areas in which the number of respondents describing them as a low or very low priority exceeded those viewing them as high or very high priorities. These were, President's media tour, The Member Diary, *The Teacher* and the World Teacher Day recognition.





### Awareness Communications/Public Relations Programs and Services

Communications/Public Relations	Completely Unaware of Service		Aware of Service but Have Never Used		Aware and have Used and/or Referred Another	
	Res.	% Res.	Res.	% Res.	Res.	% Res.
Education Week Recognition	163	23.6%	374	54.0%	144	20.8%
Local Media Tours	442	63.9%	185	26.7%	51	7.4%
Media Relations	176	25.4%	434	62.7%	70	10.1%
Member Communication	106	15.3%	370	53.5%	199	28.8%
Member Diary	90	13.0%	229	33.1%	363	52.5%
NSTU Deals and Discounts	14	2.0%	119	17.2%	546	78.9%
Political Actions and Engagement	201	29.0%	321	46.4%	155	22.4%
PRIDE Week Recognition	99	14.3%	414	59.8%	159	23.0%
Public Relations Campaigns	112	16.2%	400	57.8%	170	24.6%
Social Media Engagement	87	12.6%	334	48.3%	253	36.6%
<i>The Teacher</i>	41	5.9%	176	25.4%	463	66.9%
World Teachers' Day	73	10.5%	381	55.1%	224	32.4%

### Priority/Value Communications/Public Relations Programs and Services

Communications/Public Relations	Very Low Priority		Low Priority		Moderate		High Priority		Very High Priority	
	Res.	% Res.	Res.	% Res.	Res.	% Res.	Res.	% Res.	Res.	% Res.
Education Week Recognition	58	8.4%	90	13.0%	270	39.0%	178	25.7%	80	11.6%
Local Media Tours	101	14.6%	140	20.2%	296	42.8%	98	14.2%	33	4.8%
Media Relations	24	3.5%	43	6.2%	207	29.9%	225	32.5%	173	25.0%
Member Communication	9	1.3%	14	2.0%	118	17.1%	235	34.0%	290	41.9%
Member Diary	151	21.8%	127	18.4%	230	33.2%	112	16.2%	52	7.5%
NSTU Deals and Discounts	25	3.6%	44	6.4%	184	26.6%	219	31.6%	199	28.8%
Political Actions and Engagement	25	3.6%	31	4.5%	192	27.7%	246	35.5%	179	25.9%
PRIDE Week Recognition	32	4.6%	41	5.9%	210	30.3%	225	32.5%	162	23.4%
Public Relations Campaigns	28	4.0%	31	4.5%	187	27.0%	244	35.3%	182	26.3%
Social Media Engagement	26	3.8%	40	5.8%	203	29.3%	255	36.8%	145	21.0%
<i>The Teacher</i>	98	14.2%	113	16.3%	293	42.3%	122	17.6%	47	6.8%
World Teachers' Day	81	11.7%	116	16.8%	286	41.3%	122	17.6%	65	9.4%

Additional responses and feedback from members regarding NSTU Communications, tended to focus on the Member Diary, *The Teacher*, Deals and Discounts, professional literature, and the tone of public relations. With regards to the Member Diary, the following are a sample of the feedback received.

*The member diary is antiquated. As teachers, we are expected to use technology, so important portions of the diary can be made accessible on the*



*NSTU website, as long as it is easy to find and not so deeply embedded in the site, that members aren't able to locate it.*

*The member diary should be put online. In this day it is a waste of environmental resources and money for the union.*

*Could the Member Diary calendar structure be handier as a day-planner/ flat style that could fit into someone's plan-book or backpack.*

*Not sure how effective Member Diary is. Perhaps an online version would be more useful. Deals and Discounts should reflect whole province. Usually mainland is prioritized, but it has improved the past few years which is good to see. I always check it out to see if there is anything of interest to me.*

*The paper version of the Member Diary is not at all necessary in 2021. Just send out email reminders about important dates, like is already being done.*

*Member Diary is outdated now as a calendar but the information in it is important – can the numbers for example be put on a magnet for the staff room fridge.*

*I feel the communications between NSTU and its members is vital. I question how much members access resources such as The Teacher or their member diary though I believe they should be available to access for those that want to.*

For those members who provided further feedback regarding *The Teacher*, while not universal, there seem to be a sentiment expressed that *The Teacher* should either be revised electronically or published physically.

*Turn The Teacher into a weekly podcast.*

*Publish and deliver The Teacher to sites.*

*Unfortunately, since the Teacher has been online, I have read very little of it. Sometimes when I remember, I check to see what is the book draw. I know that we are in the age of technology; however, I spend too much time on the computer as is. It would be interesting to know how many teachers still read the publication. I know that when there were paper copies in the staffroom, some teachers would read them there.*

*Get rid of magazine The Teacher*

*The Teacher is just not needed. It's irrelevant & out of date. Plus, teachers are WAY too busy to read it. We are overwhelmed with docs that we have to read to keep up as teachers. We have no desire or time to read the Teacher.*



*The Teacher is 'low priority' for me, however, if it is low cost and low resource use, then it's worth having/keeping. I just find most members don't read it/use it to its potential.*

*I have been reading The Teacher for years!!!*

*The Teacher needs to be more accessible. Either return to print or move the teacher into a web native platform so stories can be search and share compatible.*

*Bring back a paper copy of The Teacher.*

Some members took the opportunity to reference the need for more professional literature being distributed by the Union.

*The lack of physical professional literature from the NSTU (specifically as an example, Aviso) is missed in schools. Without it being visible, the role of the NSTU is forgotten.*

*I think what is sad is what is missing from this list. At one time our professional organization, the NSTU, completed an award-winning professional magazine, AVISO. Taking that from hard copy to online only killed it, and now I don't believe we demonstrate our professionalism in such a way.*

The Deals and Discounts program was seen as the Communication program with the highest level of awareness along with 60% of respondents viewing it as a high or very high priority. The majority of additional feedback sought to see the program expanded to other parts of the province.

*Many of the NSTU deals and discounts program are specific to certain areas and if you are not in that area then there are very little deals to take advantage of. Maybe more effort could be put into obtaining deals that are beneficial in areas of the whole province.*

*More deals and discounts for Cape Breton as well as the rest of the island. I know of a business who has tried to reach out to offer a discount but couldn't find the contact information repeatedly.*

*Most of this should disappear. Our most important communication is with our members and, from time to time (but not as a standing requirement) with the rest of the world on specific issues. I specifically don't think effort & energy should be spent on deals & discounts.*

*The deals and discounts only really seem to benefit those in hrm.*



Interestingly, for those members who provided additional feedback, there existed a split between those who felt that NSTU public relation campaigns have been too “aggressive” to those who question the extent to which public opinion regarding teaching could be adjusted.

*Stop worrying about public relations - just worrying about us.*

*PR is not the key to our success. It is only successful if we engage members in consistent action and engagement with community*

*I am not a fan of some of the aggressive tone and messages in many tweets from some in the NSTU and some locals. Although, we may be right in an argument, the angry tone is not swaying the public.*

*So much of our communication to the public comes off as complaining or whining. In order for our profession to get ahead we need to regain respect. Respect is earned. People offer respect when they see what a great service the educators are providing. We need to highlight the impacts of our collective actions. We need to find miracle type success stories for students and start to hit social media, TV and radio with those impacts of teachers. Let's show the public how much we actually do instead of how much we want.*

*Teachers are placing things online which I have felt are not professional for them. Also, some of the campaigns cause fear in members. Prior to returning to school after the first wave of covid, the media campaign on Twitter caused me extreme anxiety. My union should not be causing these feelings of distress.*

*I think it's a high priority that the NSTU do continue to communicate with the political parties to try and keep positive working relationships and for them to get a sense of our roles and all that teaching entails. I also believe the NSTU can be members advocates with the public so they too have a better understanding of education, the demands of teaching and what teachers do each day. It would be helpful for the public to gain an understanding and new respect for teachers and education.*

*The public thinks what it thinks. People went through school on one side of the desk, so they think they understand the other. Nothing will change that but personal experience. Focus on the members, not the media campaigns that don't change opinions and actually alienate some people.*

#### **K. Summary – Communications/Public Relations**

The results of the member survey and discussions at Local/Regional meetings indicate that awareness and importance of programs and services in Communications/Public Relations vary greatly among our members.



Feedback regarding the Member Diary questioned its value, while others mused about changes to format and content as a means to improve the document. Though the Member Diary is a readily available source of NSTU information, a review of the Member Diary's effectiveness would be in order.

Though opinion is greatly divided on the NSTU's publication *The Teacher*, with some members saying to eliminate it altogether and others nostalgically remembering the benefit of the printed version. There is a requirement by provincial law and in NSTU By-Law for the NSTU to have a publication or magazine; *The Teacher* is imbedded in NSTU Operational Procedures as a source of information regarding election details and presentations; the newspaper is the main source of up-to-date items of interest; and *The Teacher* acts as a physical reminder of the benefits of NSTU membership. For these reasons, and others, the publication cannot simply be eliminated.

Though not universally acknowledged, there are several comments lamenting the lose of the Professional Magazine (*AVISO*) both in this section and elsewhere from the survey results. There is a stated desire to have a source of pedagogical articles on educational research from fellow teachers and professional staff of the Union.

Survey results indicate that members place a high value on the NSTU's Deals and Discounts program; however, several comments were made regarding the geographically limitations of these deals.

Member awareness and priority rating for NSTU political action engagement and public relations are relatively strong; however, comments suggest that members wish to know how to better engage in these activities in terms of supporting the efforts of the Union.

Members also commented on the effectiveness and appropriateness of NSTU and member comments on social media. There seems to be a desire for the NSTU to educate its members regarding social media etiquette.

During the consultative portion of the process, CSANE indicated a desire for greater access to information and documentation in French as a first language to better serve their members. Currently, the NSTU budgets \$24,000 for translation services.

When it came to reporting on awareness of Communication programs and services retired teachers reported high awareness of *The Teacher* at 93%, followed by Education Week at 90%. Closely followed by awareness of the NSTU's Deals and Discounts program at 89%. All other Communications programs and services ranged from 30% – 65%.

#### **L. Recommendations – Communications/Public Relations**

The following are recommendations regarding Communications/Public Relations Programs and Services:

- VI-16 By June 2023 complete an effectiveness, content, and formatting review of the NSTU's Member Diary.



- VI-17 By March 2023 reintroduce a limited print run and distribution of *The Teacher*. Keeping the online format but include distribution of a limited number of print copies to each school/site. By March 2024 conduct an opinion survey of the membership to get an indication of the perceived value of the printed version of the publication.
- VI-18 By December 2023 the NSTU begin investigating ways for sharing members' academic work through print and/or virtual mediums.
- VI-19 By December 2024 complete an accessibility and relevance review of the NSTU's Deals and Discounts program.
- VI-20 By June 2023 create an educational presentation for the appropriate engagement of our members in political action and public relations campaigns.
- VI-21 By June 2023 create a presentation to help educate our members regarding appropriate engagement on social media on educational and Union issues.
- VI-22 By September 2024 create and distribute to each school/site a poster of NSTU programs and services with instructions on finding more details and contact information.
- VI-23 By June 2023, NSTU complete a cost analysis for providing NSTU information available on the NSTU website in both English and French. Consultation should occur with CSANE to identify high priority items.

## **M. Technology**

Feedback regarding NSTU technology platforms, respondents indicated a high awareness of the various Technology services ranging from a low of 55% awareness for the Act for Education Website to a high of 98% awareness for the NSTU's main website.

This high awareness is matched by significant gaps between high and low considerations of priorities. For example, the largest gap between members reporting a Technology service as a high or low priority is Electronic Voting with over 78% seeing it as a high or very high priority and 3% seeing it as a low or very low priority.

On the other hand, the gap between high and low priority consideration for the Act for Education website indicated that 27% of respondents see it as a high or very high priority and 26% report it as low or very low priority.





### Awareness Technology Programs and Services

Technology	Completely Unaware of Service		Aware of Service but Have Never Used		Aware and have Used and/or Referred Another	
	Res.	% Res.	Res.	% Res.	Res.	% Res.
Act for Education Website	299	43.2%	203	29.3%	180	26.0%
Electronic Voting System	27	3.9%	36	5.2%	618	89.3%
Membership Registry	68	9.8%	147	21.2%	467	67.5%
NSTU Conference Registration	9	1.3%	41	5.9%	631	91.2%
NSTU Group Insurance Website	52	7.5%	200	28.9%	430	62.1%
NSTU Member Email Address	8	1.2%	92	13.3%	582	84.1%
NSTU Webmail System	15	2.2%	84	12.1%	582	84.1%
NSTU Website	3	0.4%	45	6.5%	633	91.5%
Union Calling Townhall System	142	20.5%	199	28.8%	344	49.7%

### Priority/Value Technology Programs and Services

Technology	Very Low Priority		Low Priority		Moderate		High Priority		Very High Priority	
	Res.	% Res.	Res.	% Res.	Res.	% Res.	Res.	% Res.	Res.	% Res.
Act for Education Website	76	11.0%	104	15.0%	309	44.7%	127	18.4%	59	8.5%
Electronic Voting System	6	0.9%	14	2.0%	115	16.6%	227	32.8%	311	44.9%
Membership Registry	15	2.2%	29	4.2%	216	31.2%	224	32.4%	190	27.5%
NSTU Conference Registration	21	3.0%	17	2.5%	132	19.1%	232	33.5%	271	39.2%
NSTU Group Insurance Website	14	2.0%	17	2.5%	153	22.1%	242	35.0%	249	36.0%
NSTU Member Email Address	52	7.5%	72	10.4%	167	24.1%	176	25.4%	202	29.2%
NSTU Webmail System	66	9.5%	61	8.8%	171	24.7%	157	22.7%	219	31.6%
NSTU Website	11	1.6%	27	3.9%	141	20.4%	224	32.4%	264	38.2%
Union Calling Townhall System	67	9.7%	97	14.0%	272	39.3%	151	21.8%	85	12.3%

It is clear when reviewing the additional comments and feedback received from members that while NSTU technology services are considered high to very high priorities, there is significant dissatisfaction with the NSTU website and webmail system. This dissatisfaction would indicate a strong desire by members to invest greater time and resources to both.

With respect to the NSTU website, the following are a sample of the feedback received:

*The NSTU website has been an eyesore and source of frustration for well over a decade. Its usability and aesthetics are atrocious, and despite containing a trove of phenomenal resources and information, its design,*





*structure, and navigation are so putrid that members by the thousands simply don't use it because it serves them so poorly.*

*The website is too busy, too hard to navigate.*

*The website needs a facelift, asap! Needs to be more user friendly for sure!*

*Website needs a revamp. It is too busy and not organized well. It is difficult to find things.*

*Current NSTU website is hard to maneuver. It is not user friendly, and things are hard to find. Members should find the website as a place they feel comfortable using.*

*NSTU website OK but Professional Association websites need major attention. Conference registration has had major issues Conferences 2021 and 2019.*

*The website is hard to navigate.*

*The website needs to be streamlined*

By far, the largest amount of feedback received was with regards to the current NSTU webmail system. Feedback indicates a strong desire to either invest in the current system or to abandon it.

*The NSTU must mothball NSTU webmail. It has been a faulty and problematic system since its inception that has repeatedly failed the union and members at critical times. We should migrate to a web account that members self-manage and update annually, where they can self-select a non-employer email account they already use consistently to receive union correspondence and updates as well as a cell number where they can receive text blasts and notifications. This set up is standard in leading teacher organizations in Canada, and is far past due for our organization.*

*Webmail is clunky and not easily added to mobile devices – upgrade to a more compatible server like exchange or Gmail.*

*I have stopped using my webmail entirely as I have a much easier, more reliable free non-employer email option.*

*There should be a new system for email.*

*spend money so that webmail doesn't crash so often*

*In the staff room, it is often cited as the reason why more aren't engaged in NSTU things. Get on the google train. Many of us are using personal emails to*



*conduct union business because of the need for shared drives and collaborative workspaces that NSTU does not provide.*

*The webmail is unreliable. We need a major upgrade. It also needs to be easier for members to register and get their email address.*

*The NSTU needs to get rid of the current webmail system. It has caused too much grief over the years to still be in use. It needs to go.*

*The NSTU webmail system is a high priority because if you want people to use it then it needs to work!*

*In general, members find that the NSTU webmail is difficult to use. We also resent having to have yet another email address.*

*I wasn't able to initialize my NSTU email after multiple tries. I'll eventually call to try and sort it out but it was frustrating and I wish it was all just going through our personal emails rather than a whole different one.*

*Webmail was offered at a time when few people had their own email addresses, so it probably makes more sense to have a listserv that allows people to use any personal email address.*

*The email system is awful. It needs to be modern and easier for members to use and register for, especially password retrieval*

*I am not sure the webmail system is worth it. As long as people use non-employer email, maintaining another system and people needing yet another email address and password to remember seems a waste of time and money. I for one forward NSTU email to my Gmail account so I have one less email to check. It seems to glitch quite often as well.*

*Stopped using NSTU email since I couldn't change my own password that I couldn't remember.*

*NSTU webmail is extremely difficult to use. It's not user friendly whatsoever.*

*The teachers that I know that do not have or are not interested in signing up for an NSTU email it is because it's another email to check. Personally, I have forwarded my NSTU email to my personal email and rarely go on my NSTU email.*

*I think that the entire webmail system should be reconsidered. It has failed when it is needed most (i.e., October conference), it is not user friendly and people complain about it constantly.*

*Having a NSTU email accounts is a very good idea. However, our current system is not able to do what we need it to.*



*The email platform is absolutely terrible and not at all user-friendly. Please invest in a better email platform.*

*I value having an NSTU email, webmail system, and webpage; however, these need to be vastly improved upon.*

*I just wish the webmail system was not as horrible as it is. I like having our own system, but golly can we actually get it to work?*

Retired members reported a high awareness of both the NSTU and NSTU Group Insurance Websites at 92% and 90% respectively. Awareness of the Union Calling Program is lowest at 24%.

#### **N. Summary – Technology**

The results of the member survey and discussions at Local/Regional meetings indicate that awareness and priority rating of programs and services in Technology are relatively high. Comments indicate that work is required to improve most of these offerings, or to eliminate them all together if unable to bring them up to a certain standard. Further, there seems to be a desire to expand offerings into areas not currently provided, in particular file sharing and video conferencing platforms.

The NSTU takes its obligation concerning securing the privacy of its membership very seriously. Technology initiatives, by their very nature, come with related expenses and organizational liability concerns. Expertise in technology is required in order to make educated decisions regarding technology offerings.

#### **O. Recommendations – Technology**

The following are recommendations regarding Technology Programs and Services:

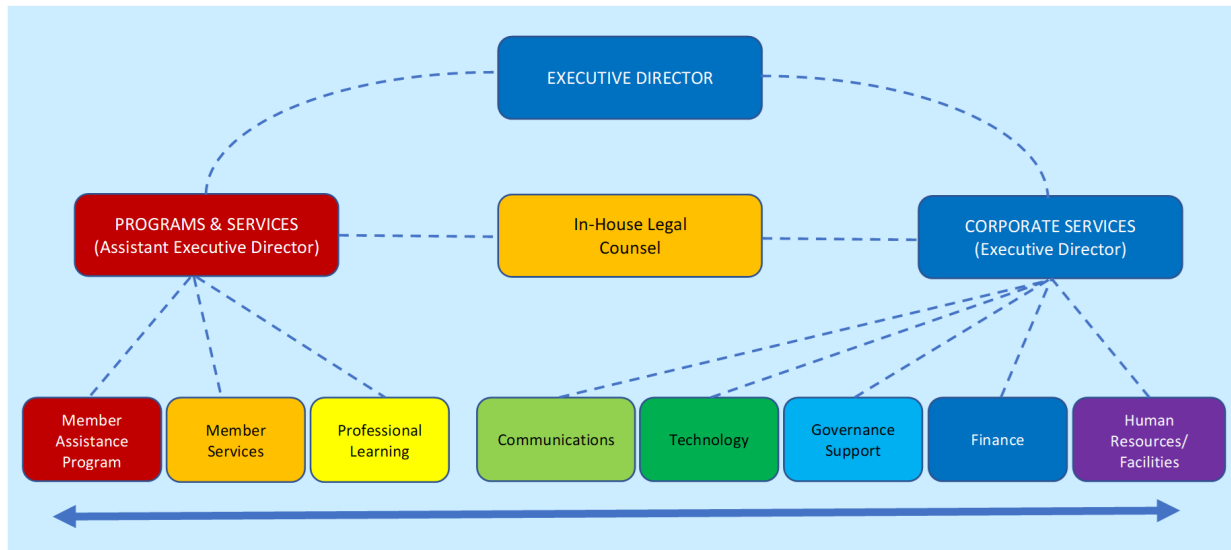
- VI-24 By October 2022 the NSTU will initiate a comprehensive external/expert review of the NSTU technology infrastructure. This review to include, but not necessarily be limited to, the NSTU website, webmail, Member Registry platform, hardware and software, and potential video conferencing and file sharing capabilities.
- VI-25 By June 2023 the Provincial Executive consider the establishment of a strategic technology fund to support the implementation of the comprehensive external review. It is further recommended that the task of developing parameters regarding this fund be directed to the Finance and Property Committee.



## VII OPERATIONS

### A. Corporate Roles and Responsibilities

The NSTU is a member driven organization but it is also a corporate entity. As such the NSTU maintains a small, in comparison to other teacher organizations, staff to support member facing services, governance, and operations. NSTU operations is organized in two teams: Corporate Services which supports the overall operations of the NSTU as an organization and Programs and Services which provide direct services to individual members and groups of members. The illustration below details the organizational structure of the NSTU.



It is not surprising that the familiarity as recorded by respondents was highest for staff responsibilities that align with member facing service. 65% of respondents reported being familiar or very familiar with Member Services while 16% were either unfamiliar or very unfamiliar. Likewise, with regards to Professional Learning, 63% of respondents were familiar or very familiar with the staff responsibilities while 17% were either unfamiliar or very unfamiliar with these staff responsibilities.

Respondents reported being least familiar with staff responsibilities associated with supporting NSTU facilities and the governance structure of the NSTU. With regards to Facilities staff, 24% were either familiar or very familiar with these responsibilities while 48% reported being unfamiliar or very unfamiliar with facilities staff responsibilities. 27% of respondents were either familiar or very familiar with staff responsibilities that support the NSTU governance structure while 49% were unfamiliar or very unfamiliar with these responsibilities.



### Familiarity with NSTU Staff Roles

NSTU staff roles & responsibilities	Very Unfamiliar		Unfamiliar		Neither		Familiar		Very Familiar	
	Res.	% Res.	Res.	% Res.	Res.	% Res.	Res.	% Res.	Res.	% Res.
Communications/Public Relations	98	14.2%	115	16.6%	116	16.8%	284	41.0%	71	10.3%
Facilities	144	20.8%	190	27.5%	139	20.1%	166	24.0%	37	5.3%
Finance	112	16.2%	154	22.3%	135	19.5%	233	33.7%	44	6.4%
Governance Support	141	20.4%	199	28.8%	150	21.7%	155	22.4%	29	4.2%
Human Resources	91	13.2%	111	16.0%	138	19.9%	292	42.2%	43	6.2%
Legal	94	13.6%	124	17.9%	168	24.3%	252	36.4%	37	5.3%
Member Assistance Program (MAP)	82	11.8%	128	18.5%	149	21.5%	262	37.9%	54	7.8%
Member Services	49	7.1%	63	9.1%	115	16.6%	352	50.9%	98	14.2%
Professional Learning	51	7.4%	70	10.1%	127	18.4%	331	47.8%	101	14.6%
Technology	80	11.6%	124	17.9%	176	25.4%	248	35.8%	48	6.9%

The majority of feedback received from members indicated a lack of awareness regarding roles and responsibilities and a desire to have access to a staff officer when needed.

*Need more staff presence in rural areas. More staff to ensure that member concerns are dealt with in a timely manner.*

*Legal services, what are their roles, why is this not advertised clearly on the website? In The Teacher?*

*I truly believe many teachers are unaware of NSTU staff roles & responsibilities. There needs to be job descriptions of what each job entails.*

*I believe that staff need to listen to members who contact them. I have heard from too many members' stories where they feel dismissed due to busy staff who do not have time to listen. Even if teachers can't be supported, they need to feel heard and not just feel ignored or dismissed abruptly.*

*Unless you sit on a committee or are involved in the union the people of the NSTU are not known by most teachers. As a long-involved member with the NSTU, I'm sad to say how quickly one becomes out of touch with the organizational schema. Member education is necessary.*

*Similar to the infographic above, maybe a visual illustration of what each service does would be helpful. If we look at the flow chart and believe it's likely useful for our situation then we could follow up on the details. Only having lengthy publications does not help the typical teacher who is already inundated with "stuff to read" and time poor due to numerous outside of the working day tasks to be completed for the next work day.*



*I don't know anything about any of this. Perhaps the NSTU should educate its members....*

*Our staff officers are extremely valuable and important to the smooth running of our organization. They are often the face of the organization when dealing with the locals and individual members.*

*I just want to be able to talk to someone if there's a conflict and/or need to understand the contract and have benefits/wellness support.*

*Staff might want to be more proactive in reaching out to members more frequently, maybe offering a "Did You Know?" weekly email to promote one aspect of their portfolio?*

*It seems I may be aware of some of the roles or services but really am not familiar with any of the workings especially at the head office.*

*All of the staff are excellent!*

#### **B. Summary – Operations**

The results of the member survey and discussions at Local/Regional meetings indicate that members are not familiar with the roles and responsibilities of the various staff within NSTU Central Office. Though several comments praise the value of staff, more indicate a desire for knowledge regarding duties and responsibilities, and some indicate a wish for greater staff presence, especially in rural areas.

#### **C. Recommendations – Operations**

The following are recommendations regarding NSTU Operations:

- VII-1 By June 2023 conduct a comparative study on the staffing levels of similar teacher organizations in Canada.
- VII-2 By June 2023 make easily available on the website a brief summary of the Executive and Professional Staff responsibilities.



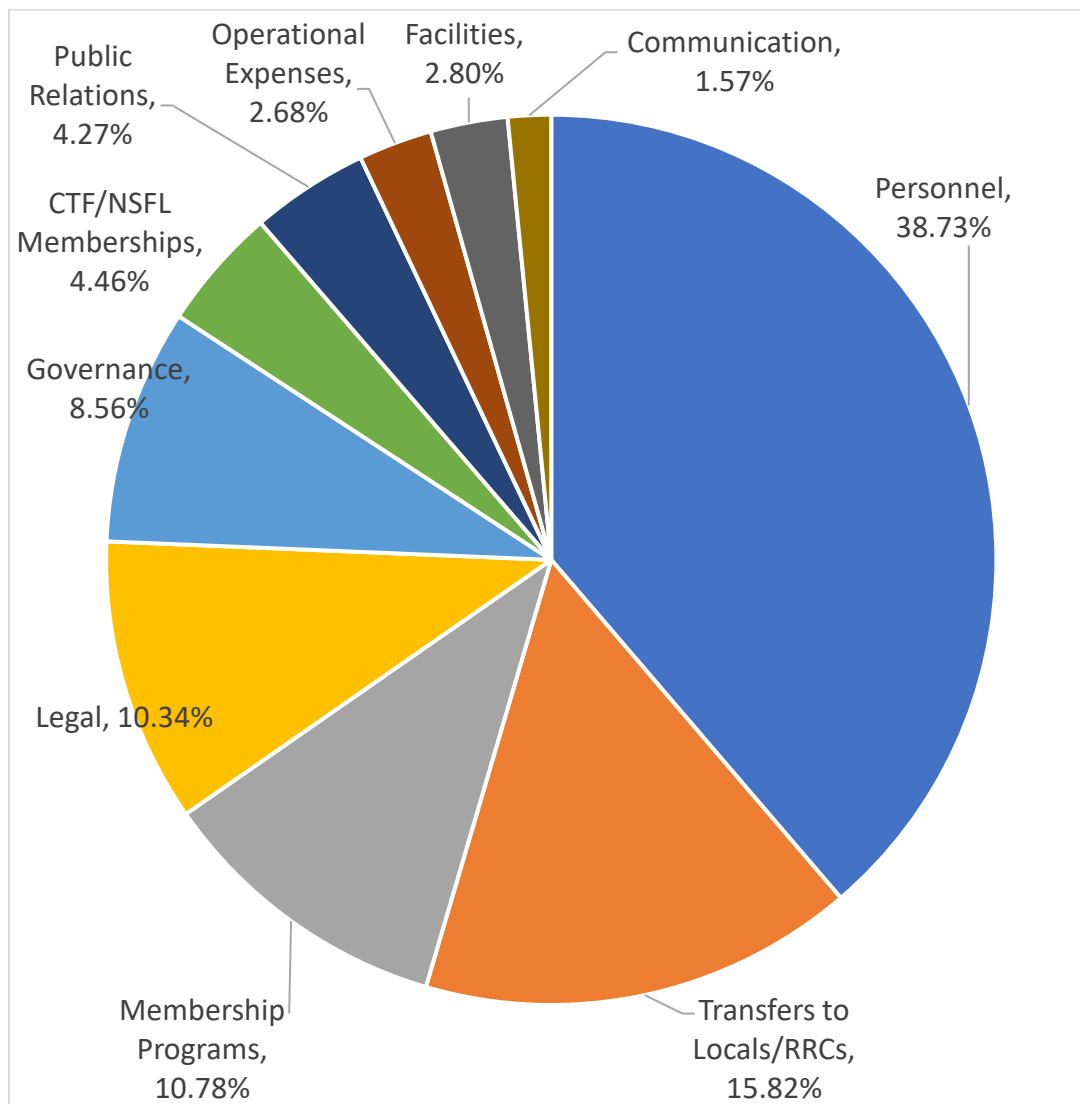
## VIII FINANCES

### A. Budget

How an organization budgets its resources should be aligned with the mission, beliefs, and priorities of the organization. NSTU membership fees and expenditures are established by NSTU Annual Council through the budget process. Expenditures, and hence revenue, should mirror the organizations priorities.

### B. Expenditures

The following table was provided to members responding to the strategic planning survey. It represents the broad categories of NSTU expenditures giving a three-year average on spending. Expenditures should be based on the priorities of the organization. (Acronyms are as follow: Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF), Nova Scotia Federation of Labour (NSFL), and Regional Representative Council (RRC))





The following description was provided on the survey.

**Description of expense lines are as follow:**

Communication	Postage, Printing and publications, Professional magazine, Telecommunications, <i>The Teacher</i> , and Translation services
CTF/NSFL Memberships	Expense of Membership in the Canadian Teachers' Federation and Nova Scotia Federation of Labour
Facilities	Expense of maintaining NSTU properties
Governance	Executive Operations, Annual Council, President's salary and expenses, and Committees and meetings
Legal	External Legal expenses
Membership Programs	Benevolent payments, Conferences, Counselling services, Expenses - programs and operations, Leadership development and outreach, Inclusive education, Professional associations, Professional learning opportunities, Projects International, Special Projects, Study and Research grants, and Substitute costs
Operational Expenses	Accounting audit and consultation, Affiliate consultation, Insurance, Office expenses, and Technology support
Personnel	Professional development, Salaries Exec staff, Salaries Office staff, and Employee Benefits
Public Relations	Expense of Public Relations Campaigns
Transfers to Locals/RRCs	Transfers from NSTU to Locals and Regional Representative Councils

In all allocation areas, more respondents indicated a desire to maintain existing expenditures as opposed to either decreasing or increasing expenditures. This ranged from a low of 49% for Communication expenditures to a high of 76% for Legal expenditures.

When expressing interest in increasing expenditures, responses ranged from a high 35% for Membership Programs to a low of 1% for CTF/NSFL memberships.

When expressing interest in decreasing expenditures, responses ranged from a high 38% for governance and a low of 7% for Member Services.



### Response on Adjusting NSTU Expenditures

Expenditure	Expenditure Should be Reduced		Expenditure Should be Maintained at Current Level		Expenditure Should be Increased	
	Res.	% Res.	Res.	% Res.	Res.	% Res.
Communications	245	35.4%	340	49.1%	75	10.8%
CTF/NSFL Memberships	164	23.7%	485	70.1%	8	1.2%
Facilities	167	24.1%	465	67.2%	26	3.8%
Governance	266	38.4%	369	53.3%	18	2.6%
Legal	74	10.7%	527	76.2%	58	8.4%
Membership Programs	52	7.5%	362	52.3%	245	35.4%
Operational Expenses	137	19.8%	498	72.0%	20	2.9%
Personnel	207	29.9%	391	56.5%	60	8.7%
Public Relations	112	16.2%	379	54.8%	172	24.9%
Transfers to Locals/RRCs	135	19.5%	455	65.8%	68	9.8%
Other (please specify)	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%

### C. Revenues

In addition to providing feedback on specific expenditure areas, members were asked if NSTU dues were too high, too low, or just right. 59.5% of respondents felt dues were just right, 27.5% felt dues were high or very high. 10.4% believed dues to be low or very low.

### Response on Current Union Fees

Current NSTU Membership Fee	Very Low	Low	Just Right	High	Very High
Response	4	68	412	152	38
% Response	0.6%	9.8%	59.5%	22.0%	5.5%

A broad range of responses were received through both the questionnaire and regional meetings. Members took time to make reference to CTF-FCE, NSFL and CLC fees, transfers to locals, staff size, NSTU events, greater use of virtual meetings, and work from home options for staff. Representative comments include:

*There may be some publications that are rarely used and when used not all that valuable. Maybe some of the health programs could be streamlined. If folks are now working from home happily maybe facilities could be reduced. I have been very happy to have our union looking out for us and would want it maintained for others at a reasonable level.*

*If locals are sitting on reserves, why are they still getting a large portion of dues in rebates? at least figure out a way to recover some of that money – be it a partial reduction of transfers if your per-member holdings are over a certain amount?*

*CTF expenditures must be reduced – lot of money spent and rank and file members see little value other than provincial exec members benefitting.*



*Belonging to the Canadian Teachers' Federation does nothing to help actual teachers as they do their job as teachers. It is totally irrelevant to dues-paying members. What do we get out of it? Why should our dues go to something that does not benefit us?*

*We need to stop being members of NSFL. It's far too expensive, especially when we have to join the Canadian Federation of Labour. The CTF provides information and services we need, and they're teachers. We have nearly nothing in common with the "labour" groups and we've seen no benefit. In fact, we're often at odds, e.g., with ECEs in pre-primary and those should probably be NSTU positions.*

*I think the amounts transferred to locals should be greatly reduced. We have ridiculously long meetings, we spend a lot on "social events" and we get paid to go to meetings. Also, by reducing some of the programs and services offered by the NSTU, perhaps we can reduce some of the personnel needed.*

*The salary of the President needs to be reviewed and reduced. Tie funding to funds locals have in investments. If a local is sitting on tens of thousands of dollars, reduce funding. Set a minimum each local can have in reserve fund.*

*Operational costs could be lowered by having more employees work from home.*

*Council should be every second year and leadership should be the same on altering years. Leadership could be online for more members to attend sessions. Leadership can be done on Pheedloop or zoom.*

*While I would favour reducing most of these expenses, I would prioritize reducing external legal costs – we have an in-house counsel!*

*It costs money to run a large ship like the NSTU. If we want the best in representation and services, we have to be prepared to pay.*

*Hire more counsellors.*

*With less members we should have less staff.*

*There should be a serious look taken at how technology could help in the long run with saving money by having more virtual meetings. This could save on rental space fees, heating costs, paper and printing costs and mileage. I know that there are fees associated with the infrastructure or program fees needed to run virtual meetings, but my understanding is that the savings big picture-wise could be significant.*



*NSTU seems to spend a lot of money on events/conferences/meetings for their own representatives. And I don't know why the NSTU is funding study/research, professional development, special projects or international projects.*

*Things like October conference, annual council, rep retreats, etc. could be cut back on.*

*A review of membership with CTF and NSFL needs to be completed. Our members need to be advised of the benefits of these memberships. All members (not just the PE or Annual Council voting delegates) should approve such memberships.*

*Regarding governance, it is possible to reduce cost by keeping the same amount of meetings but having one or more that are virtual.*

*Staff who can work from home should and therefore reduce facility costs and eventually downsize all office space.*

*Every year, locals move thousands of dollars into reserve funds, many of which are not managed, that could be used for higher value actions like PR and political action campaigns. One of the most common criticisms of the NSTU is that members would like to see more PR campaigns. At the same time, much of their money goes into accounts never to be seen or used again by their locals.*

*The committees should be reduced and those that remain should be virtual. There is no reason to spend thousands and thousands yearly on hotels and meterage. Is it really necessary to drive from Yarmouth for a two-hour meeting when we have the ability to meet virtually? Staff expenses should also be more closely monitored.*

*Cuts to the top and professional development (covered by Centres and Boards); redirect funds to member supports.*

*Staff is too large, from exec. staff down to support staff.*

*Is it possible to downsize the office space necessary do the NSTU by changing locations and allowing more people to work from home?*

*Lower the president's salary to highest paid teacher salary and connect it to contractual raises like everyone else*

*Stop NSFL membership. Costs vs profits are not profitable*

*Staff is too large, from exec. staff down to support staff.*



#### **D. Summary – Finance**

The results of the member survey and discussions at Local/Regional meetings indicate that there is a strong desire to maintain the current Union fees. Further, approximately half to three-quarters of members believe funding levels on individual expense lines should be maintained at current levels.

There does seem to be a desire to increase or decrease spending in certain expense lines; however, these efforts are not always compatible. For example, results indicate that many members wish to reduce spending on communications but increase spending on public relations. This seems counterintuitive and indeed is in conflict with members' response in terms of priorities of the organization where accurate and timely communication with members is a slightly higher priority compared to engaging in public relations campaigns.

Likewise, feedback also indicates that about the same number of members wish to reduce spending on personnel but increase spending on member programs and services. Again, this may be difficult to achieve, as staff are responsible for much of the delivery of programs and services to members. In order to increase programs and services to members a greater staff complement would likely be required.

The results do indicate two areas where members show a desire to have reductions in expenses, these being governance and transfers to Locals/RRCs. Governance expenses are such things as Provincial Executive Operations, Annual Council, President's salary and expenses, and NSTU Committees. Transfers to Locals/RRCs help run the governance of those committees, but also help fund member programs and services at the local/regional level. Transfers to Locals/RRCs are in part governance expenses.

NSTU Budgeting strongly demonstrates sound financial management at the Provincial level; there have been several years of budgets with slim surpluses or deficits, without the need for either Union dues increases or transfers from the reserve fund.

Review of Locals' financial statements indicates very large surpluses year-after-year, with a growing amount of money isolated in the various Local reserve funds. Though two years of COVID restrictions certainly had an effect on both Local and provincial reduction in expenditures, this in and of itself does not account for the growing reserves at the local level as this trend was evident prior to the pandemic. Locals have a duty under NSTU Operational Procedure to invest their reserves wisely: *"The monies shall be invested to maximize return while minimizing risk of loss keeping in mind the cash flow needs of the Local."*; however, many Locals hold their reserve funds in bank accounts, earning little or no interest growth. Below is a chart illustrating the growing amount of funds in local reserves, with an average in local reserves across the province of \$516 per member. The average funds in local reserves now represents more than four-years of transfers. There is a significant organizational liability related to having substantial members' funds being managed in this ad hoc fashion.



### Local Level Net Assets in Reserve and Budget Surpluses (Deficits) Last Four Years

	Member Numbers 28-Mar- 22	Net Assets in Reserve	Rev Over Exp	Net Assets in Reserve	Rev Over Exp	Net Assets in Reserve	Rev Over Exp	Net Assets in Reserve	Rev Over Exp
Year Ending		31-Jul-21	31-Jul-21	31-Jul-20	31-Jul-20	31-Jul-19	31-Jul-19	31-Jul-18	31-Jul-18
Annapolis	162	115,741	14,128	101,613	11,306	90,307	-1,013	91,320	7,222
Antigonish	213	202,713	20,291	182,422	22,697	159,725	2,981	156,744	9,426
APSEA	82	154,047	14,315	139,732	17,655	122,077	14,563	107,513	1,103
Cape Breton District	657	224,383	8,086	216,297	38,295	178,002	42,015	135,987	-7,605
Colchester- East Hants	771	440,023	48,328	391,695	46,037	345,658	17,832	327,825	13,469
CSANE	553	255,214	31,659	223,555	37,811	185,744	22,645	117,516	27,611
Cumberland	305	222,710	28,222	194,488	13,688	180,800	14,850	165,950	-7,906
Dartmouth	737	180,118	838	179,280	17,021	162,259	9,970	152,290	-2,068
Digby	109	81,129	-7,103	88,232	10,233	77,999	6,191	84,190	-4,984
Guysborough County	59	71,845	14,014	57,831	12,063	45,768	1,108	44,659	-944
Halifax City	1072	321,980	51,905	270,075	53,370	216,705	25,900	193,055	-8,895
Halifax County	2149	1,077,666	167,664	910,002	153,225	756,777	118,527	638,250	116,909
Hants West	173	114,487	12,556	101,932	1,511	100,421	352	100,773	941
Inverness	177	139,306	17,928	121,378	23,117	98,261	-1,492	99,753	-12,427
Kings	628	289,463	23,671	265,792	35,857	229,935	-585	230,520	-5,621
Lunenburg County	427	232,822	21,964	210,858	33,900	176,958	16,362	160,595	19,770
Northside- Victoria	269	76,826	-8,990	85,816	8,845	76,971	16,741	60,230	-7,804
Pictou	417	336,728	26,525	310,203	25,290	284,913	17,243	267,670	-2,515
Queens	100	76,256	16,134	60,122	6,316	53,806	2,531	56,337	-3,587
Richmond	58	47,858	4,594	43,264	9,219	34,045	2,720	37,265	-4,007
Shelburne County	143	137,117	7,060	130,057	6,232	123,825	2,966	120,859	12,231
Yarmouth	256	115,066	17,942	97,124	25,927	71,197	4,743	75,940	1,430
Totals	9517	4,913,498	531,731	4,381,768	609,615	3,772,153	337,150	3,425,241	141,749

If there are trifold desires to maintain Union fees at the current level, increase spending on membership programs and possibly public relations, and reduce spending on governance at both the provincial and local level, then there needs to be a serious review of the expenditures for the Provincial Executive, Annual Council, and transfers to Locals/RRCs.



## **E. Recommendations – Finance**

The following are recommendations regarding NSTU finance:

- VIII-1 By December of 2023 the Provincial Executive conduct a review of the current transfer formula for Local and RRC funding to determine the necessary funds required to ensure operational expenses are covered and adequate reserves are maintained; to assess how any excess funds may be used to enhance the programs and services delivered to members. It is further recommended that the task of conducting this review be directed to the Finance and Property Committee.
- VIII-2 By June 2024 the Provincial Executive conduct a review of the format for Annual Council in order to identify possible cost savings. It is further recommended that the task of conducting this review be directed to the Governance and Policy Committee.
- VIII-3 The NSTU continue to review its operations in order to identify possible cost savings.





## IX MEMBERSHIP ENGAGEMENT/INVOLVEMENT

### A. Member Participation

Members were provided an opportunity to indicate their engagement with the NSTU by identifying the NSTU activities/roles they have participated in the past. The variety of activities illustrates that there are many ways in which members may choose to be engaged with their union.

#### Participation in NSTU Activities

Activity	Participated		Did Not Participate		Don't Recall	
	Res.	% Res.	Res.	% Res.	Res.	% Res.
Voted in a Local Election (for Local Executive)	596	86.1%	57	8.2%	32	4.6%
Voted in a Professional Association Election (for a Professional Association Executive)	321	46.4%	278	40.2%	84	12.1%
Voted in a Provincial Election (for NSTU President or Provincial Executive Member)	625	90.3%	38	5.5%	21	3.0%
Voted in a Provincial Ratification Vote on a Tentative Agreement	537	77.6%	63	9.1%	78	11.3%
Voted in a Regional Ratification Vote on a Tentative Agreement	461	66.6%	94	13.6%	126	18.2%
Attended an Annual Council	216	31.2%	448	64.7%	20	2.9%
Attended a Local meeting	389	56.2%	285	41.2%	10	1.4%
Attended a Locally organized social or community event	388	56.1%	276	39.9%	19	2.7%
Attended an NSTU Member Engagement Day Event	237	34.2%	396	57.2%	51	7.4%
Attended October Conference	611	88.3%	71	10.3%	2	0.3%
Attended a Pre-Retirement Seminar	99	14.3%	580	83.8%	5	0.7%
Attended a Professional Association AGM	242	35.0%	421	60.8%	19	2.7%
Attended a Professional Learning event delivered by the NSTU	368	53.2%	273	39.5%	42	6.1%
Attended a Public Demonstration on Teachers' Rights	299	43.2%	348	50.3%	36	5.2%
Attended a Regional Representative Council meeting	134	19.4%	523	75.6%	25	3.6%
Attended an NSTU Telephone Townhall	284	41.0%	374	54.0%	26	3.8%
Contributed to an NSTU organized charity event	141	20.4%	473	68.4%	71	10.3%
Followed the NSTU on social media	532	76.9%	136	19.7%	14	2.0%
Updated personal information in Membership Registry	399	57.7%	217	31.4%	69	10.0%
Nominated for an NSTU Committee	153	22.1%	512	74.0%	20	2.9%
Nominated for a Local Service Award	49	7.1%	615	88.9%	23	3.3%
Nominated for an NSTU Office	66	9.5%	606	87.6%	11	1.6%
Nominated someone else to serve	138	19.9%	520	75.1%	21	3.0%
Participated in NSTU Political Action event or campaign	258	37.3%	391	56.5%	34	4.9%



### Participation in NSTU Activities (cont.)

Activity	Participated		Did Not Participate		Don't Recall	
	Res.	% Res.	Res.	% Res.	Res.	% Res.
Participated in Winter Wellness Challenge	251	36.3%	423	61.1%	13	1.9%
Read <i>The Teacher</i>	488	70.5%	181	26.2%	13	1.9%
Served on a Local Executive	140	20.2%	534	77.2%	7	1.0%
Served on an NSTU Committee at the provincial level	114	16.5%	559	80.8%	6	0.9%
Served on an NSTU Committee at the Local/Regional Level	184	26.6%	495	71.5%	7	1.0%
Served on a Professional Association Executive	63	9.1%	607	87.7%	9	1.3%
Served on the Provincial Executive	28	4.0%	643	92.9%	10	1.4%
Served on a Regional Representative Council	76	11.0%	593	85.7%	10	1.4%
Served as an NSTU Representative or Alternate	262	37.9%	417	60.3%	3	0.4%
Sought Advice/Support from NSTU Staff	490	70.8%	181	26.2%	9	1.3%
Used the NSTU Deals and Discounts Program	526	76.0%	154	22.3%	8	1.2%
Visited the NSTU website	645	93.2%	33	4.8%	2	0.3%

Member feedback on engagement identified a number of themes including, lack of knowledge on what the union offered, support for social activities, interest in townhall type activities, role of locals in engagement and the role of communications in engagement. Some responses indicated the impact work life balance was having on members' time. In addition, it was noted that had the strategic planning survey not limited engagement activities to the past 24 months, results may have been different. Some sample responses included:

*There are many things on this survey that I had not heard of. I go on the website often and often find it hard to find information. A more user-friendly interface might help.*

*There used to be a golf tournament in Claire years ago; I never saw so many members engaged at an event since then. Maybe organize something fun (not family skating or Cricket nights) where you could give some good plugs about the NSTU then?*

*Local townhalls. Have locals review some provincial topics and ask them to respond with comments, concerns, votes at their local meetings.*

*I think member engagement needs to start at the regional level because the ways to engage membership are different in different areas of the province. That being said, the locals that normally organize member engagement events are feeling the lack of time crunch as well. Maybe if provincial NSTU has a member engagement event they want to push out to the regions, then have a local rep that is given the time (by way of a sub) to organize the event at the regional level.*



*I would attend all local meetings however I would know I would not be heard and I would be with an executive who do not stand for positive mental health for all so that would harm my mental health. I did attend all local meetings up to when I learned of the disregard for positive mental health for all.*

*In general, there is an "insiders' culture" within the NSTU. There are the union people who are very interested and engaged in all of the union dealings, and then there are the rest of us who are totally uninterested. Part of the problem is that the union has become too large and is trying to do too many things. I became a union rep for a couple of years to try to educate myself about the union, but I found the monthly local meetings repetitive, unnecessary, and unhelpful.*

*NSTU Deals and Discounts could be more inclusive of areas outside of the Halifax region. Some very nice opportunities are available if you live near the city.*

*More needs to be done in member outreach and engagement. Members feel very disconnected from the union, especially at the local level. We need to do more at the beginning of a teacher's career to get them more engaged and stay engaged.*

*The teacher is great but is there any way to print 2 copies/school?*

*Don't have time with heavy workload and family commitments. Not much you can do. Try speaking to and understand the needs of ALL member not just the ones in the classroom.*

*I think that I would benefit from doing some continuing education on The NSTU itself. There is just so much more to learn about; more than I ever imagined. So much in fact that I'm uncertain as to where to start.*

*Make the site more user friendly – keep it working! Offer deals and discounts outside of the Halifax region.*

*People are engaged when things are happening, and it feels like there is momentum. Right now, there isn't momentum and teachers' spirits across the province are really suffering. Member engagement was at an all time high when we went on strike, and then we were broken. Teachers who just pay their dues aren't going to suddenly become more involved unless it feels like we're pushing for something to be done. Is the membership divided in ways that makes coming together difficult at the moment? I'm not sure. If the government and their austerity minded backers and business supporters can keep us divided and conquered, they will do so. I don't have an easy plan to address this... Here's to hoping.*



*Talk to membership, value them, ask for their advice, educate them. Have the focus of Local executives be on building trust and listening and valuing the Local membership. Reinstate the NSTU President's media tours. It is a means of connection to the frontline membership.*

website map on homepage so new teachers or teachers who are unfamiliar with the site actually know where to look. Do not use acronyms!

*Please poll us regularly. NSTU school reps can do this, a simple form on the website can be used, but communication should not be one way!*

*It's all about time. I am absolutely exhausted each day when I get home. I would love to be active; however, I do not have the energy to give. The profession is becoming increasingly unsustainable and that is taking over other aspects of my life adverse impacting my family and wellbeing.*

townhall type events. More grassroots level opportunities.

*That's a really tough one, especially right now. Morale is extremely low due to workload and so many mandated initiatives, often creating way more work for teachers and little benefit for students, even borderline harmful by times. Teachers are burning out faster than ever. I have much less energy or desire to become involved than earlier in my career and really worry about the stress level of young teachers. Teaching used to be a very exciting, invigorating and rewarding career engagement came naturally.*

Keep up the good work

*I don't like when our local spends money on 'gifts' like beach blankets and whatnot at the end of the year. I like the public skates, but the blanket just makes me question what they're spending my money on. I did not ask for that. Do not spend my dues on that.*

*I think it might be beneficial to have more open town hall meetings. Sometimes the communication of behind-the-scenes meetings does not get communicated to members. I have experienced a range of very good to not very good communication depending on the school representatives in terms of getting the information out.*

*I oppose member engagement events where free drink tickets are distributed to those who attend. I do not wish my member dues to be used in this way.*

*The social media is far too negative. Teachers are reluctant to follow because it is deficit focused and negative.*

*Some information could be instructional videos-what the union does for you-for example-that could be a video to watch*



## **B. Summary – Membership Engagement/Involvement**

The results of the member survey and discussions at Local/Regional meetings show that members' engagement/involvement varies significantly, with several comments suggesting that members engage to the level/depth that they are able or interested. Workload and family commitments were cited for possible reasons engagement may have been low the past two years. Comments indicate a desire to know more about what is going on, both provincially and locally, in order to participate. Systemic barriers to participation do exist, these need to be examined and reduced.

## **C. Recommendations – Membership Engagement/Involvement**

The following are recommendations regarding membership engagement/involvement:

- IX-1 By September 2022 the NSTU begin investigating ways to increase the involvement and participation of equity-deserving members in the Union.
- IX-2 Beginning December 2022, the NSTU begin using *The Teacher* to promote and report on Local events.
- IX-3 Beginning December 2022, the NSTU will provide Local Executives with a list of Local member engagement best practices.



## X. PRIORITIES

### A. Organizational Priorities of the Membership

Identifying the priorities of any organization is fundamental to all other activities. Using the data obtained through the strategic planning survey it would appear there is no clear consensus by the membership on what the number one priority of the union should be. When asked the question, just 35% of respondents felt that Improving Working Conditions should be the number 1 priority of the NSTU followed by 14% who felt that the number 1 priority should be to Improve and Protect Economic Benefits for members. It is also important to note that any list of priorities is a snapshot in time. The organizations top priority today may not be so important tomorrow.

When feedback was sought on what the top 5 priorities of the union should be, 71% included Improving Working Conditions, 52% Improving and Protecting Economic Benefits, 48% Supporting Individual Members, 36% Advocating for Publicly Funded Education, 35% Advocating for Educational Change based upon Research, and 34% Promoting the Teaching Profession. Though not universally believed to be the number one priority by members, improving working conditions is ranked significantly higher than any other priority. The two priorities of improving and protecting economic benefits and supporting the personal well-being of individual members are ranked fundamentally at the same level of priority with each other. Similarly, the next three priorities (advocating for publicly funded education, advocating for educational change based upon research, and promoting the teaching profession) are basically at the same level of members' priority, but significantly lower in priority than the three above them. Though consensus is difficult to achieve, these six priorities should be considered the top priorities of the membership as of the time the survey was conducted in the fall of 2021.

#### Member Ranking of Priority List

Priority	Rank	1	2	3	4	5	Top 5	% Considered Top 5
Improving working conditions		242	124	45	38	40	489	70.7%
Improving and protecting economic benefits		98	107	68	53	33	359	51.9%
Supporting the personal well-being of individual members		49	73	64	70	73	329	47.5%
Advocating for publicly funded education		57	56	49	41	48	251	36.3%
Advocating for educational change based upon research		66	40	54	41	43	244	35.3%
Promoting the teaching profession		20	43	63	56	56	238	34.4%
Advocating for social justice for all		35	38	41	52	34	200	28.9%





### Member Ranking of Priority List (cont.)

Priority	Rank	1	2	3	4	5	Top 5	% Considered Top 5
Providing high quality professional development to members		13	33	47	55	31	179	25.9%
Providing accurate and timely information to members		8	27	56	44	33	168	24.3%
Engaging in public relations campaigns		10	10	31	28	34	113	16.3%
Providing labour relations and legal advice to individual members		8	17	29	26	32	112	16.2%
Promoting member engagement		10	16	26	20	33	105	15.2%
Engaging members in political action campaigns		14	16	16	16	20	82	11.8%
Representing individual members under investigation		4	11	13	20	28	76	11.0%
Providing pedagogical and curriculum advice to members		6	5	12	16	19	58	8.4%
Supporting political action campaigns of other organizations		4	9	10	16	13	52	7.5%
Conducting and disseminating current research in education		2	7	8	15	11	43	6.2%
Partnering with other labour organizations		1	8	10	9	12	40	5.8%
Engaging in public opinion research		1	4	6	6	12	29	4.2%
Partnering with other education partners		2	7	3	7	4	23	3.3%
Other (please identify in the field in the next question)		4	0	1	1	4	10	1.4%

Further feedback on this topic did illustrate how some of these priority areas can be related to one another. Feedback included:

*We need to do more to get members more involved in our union at all levels.  
Therefore, the more members are informed the more all of the items on the list will have greater value to them.*





*Not able to rank using list:*

- 1) working conditions*
- 2) promote teaching profession*
- 3) member engagement*
- 4) publicly funded education*
- 5) political action/social justice*

*I believe the union should be focusing on the members and their needs, not acting as a political entity.*

*supporter teacher retention, especially new teachers (first 5 years).*

*Stay out of the social justice far left politics. It is killing us with parents and the community. Our focus should be on members working conditions and remuneration/pensions. That is it, we have turned our union into something it was not meant to be recently.*

*Priorities would be safe working environment, equity and fair wages, membership programs and wellness.*

*Very difficult to rank. Many are very important. A final box for any last comments would have been nice.*

*Negotiating for prep time and quality of teacher working conditions.*

*The NSTU needs to make itself relevant to its members and to the general public.*

*At this time, I feel the NSTU isn't relevant to me... it's failed to represent me for the past two collective agreements and the advocacy of the present and previous presidents haven't been effective. The teaching profession isn't respected.*

*I learned of many services provided by the NSTU that I was unaware of. This is similar to the political advocacy of the NSTU for the past several years... much money and time spent but nobody notices.*

*My moral is at an all time low. If I could find alternate employment at comparable pay, I'd leave the teaching profession immediately.*

*Protecting Retirement benefits*

*Promoting better classroom composition based on school climate and needs.*

*Advocate for members, and a safe, non-violent workplace.*



## **B. Summary – Priorities**

The results of the member survey and discussions at Local/Regional meetings, though not having a clear consensus on the top priority, does indicate the majority of the memberships' top priorities at the time of the survey. The top two priorities are best achieved through negotiations at the provincial level. Further, comments indicate a desire to be polled regularly regarding the priorities of the members.

## **C. Recommendations - Priorities**

The following are recommendations regarding priorities:

- X-1 Beginning September 2022, that the Provincial Economic Welfare Committee prioritize the development of collective agreement proposals designed to improve working conditions and improving and protecting economic benefits
- X-2 Beginning September 2022, that the Provincial Economic Welfare Committee prioritize the development of collective agreement proposals designed for Group Insurance Benefits.
- X-3 Beginning in September 2022 that the following six priorities be considered the NSTU's top priorities for 2022 to 2024: improving working conditions, improving and protecting economic benefits, supporting the personal well-being of individual members, advocating for publicly funded education, advocating for educational change based upon research, and promoting the teaching profession.
- X-4 Beginning in June 2024, the NSTU regularly conduct biennial surveys of the membership to identify the top four to six priorities for the organization. Future surveys to be conducted in June of a Presidential election year.
- X-5 Beginning in September 2023, the NSTU establish a document in which NSTU activities acknowledged as one of the top four to six priorities are identified. This priorities document to be shared regularly with the Provincial Executive.



## **XI. RETIRED TEACHERS ORGANIZATION AND EDUCATIONAL PARTNERS**

### **A. Summary – Retired Teachers Organization (RTO)**

The retired teachers of Nova Scotia, most of whom would have been former active members of the NSTU, are an important partner in education. Retired teachers care about the public education system and are at times in a better position to speak publicly on educational matters that would be of concern to the broader community. Many retired teachers are members of the Retired Teachers Organization and as such the RTO is positioned to be the future advocate for all teachers once they leave the profession. A Parallel consultation process was provided to retired teachers with 329 participating, 204 of whom identifies themselves as RTO members.

During consultations, four key priorities were identified by participants. They were:

- Recognizing the RTO as an advocacy voice for the NSTU and public education.
- Improving relations between the RTO and the NSTU
- NSTU advocacy for seniors' issues
- Improving the teacher pension plan.

### **B. Recommendations – Retired Teachers Organization (RTO)**

The following are recommendations regarding the Retired Teachers Organization:

- XI-1 The NSTU continue to have regular quarterly meetings with the RTO executive.
- XI-2 The NSTU continue to participate, when invited, in RTO sponsored activities.
- XI-3 By December 2023, that the NSTU engage in discussions with the RTO executive for the purpose of identifying senior's issues that are a priority for the RTO.

### **C. Summary – Educational Partners**

Though the response rate by Educational Partners was very low, there was support from those that answered the survey regarding fostering and improving the relationship between the NSTU and their organization.

### **D. Recommendation – Educational Partners**

The following is a recommendation regarding the Educational Partners:

- XI-4 The NSTU continue to interact with Educational Partners whenever the interests align.



## APPENDIX A – SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

One of the advantages afforded by a Strategic Planning process is that it provides a concise list of recommendations for action along with a timeline for either initiating or completing each recommendation. The following list of forty-eight recommendations are categorized by section of the Report.

The authority to act on the various recommendations of this report rests with different levels of the organization. Some recommendations are ultimately a decision of Council, via a recommendation of the Provincial Executive. Some recommendations can be implemented by the Provincial Executive directly. Some recommendations fall under the office of the NSTU President. While others are operational in nature and can be implemented by Staff under the direction of the Executive Director. Recommendations listed here will use AC for Annual Council, PE for Provincial Executive, P for NSTU President, and ED for Executive Director as an indication of the level of authority required to enable the recommendation.

### Recommendations – NSTU Mission and Belief Statements

The following are recommendations regarding the NSTU Mission and Belief Statements:

- IV-1<sup>AC</sup> To ensure the statements are reviewed on a regular cycle; the Mission Statement and Belief Statements be incorporated into the NSTU Governance Section of the Policy manual. That Governance and Policy develop resolutions for the Provincial Executive’s consideration to create Policy statements from Mission and Belief Statements for consideration of Annual Council 2023.
- IV-2<sup>AC</sup> That the Mission Statement and Belief Statements be reviewed as policy during this year’s Policy Review cycle by the Governance and Policy Committee. Proposed amendments to these Statements to be considered by Provincial Executive in January 2023. Any proposed amendments submitted as Resolutions to Annual Council spring of 2023.

### Recommendations – NSTU Governance

The following are recommendations regarding NSTU Governance:

- V-1<sup>AC</sup> Using the *Shaping our Future* recommendations and feedback attained through the strategic planning process, the Provincial Executive develop a set of resolutions for consideration by Annual Council 2024 addressing alternative governance models regarding composition, size, and election processes of the Provincial Executive. It is further recommended that the task of developing these models be directed to the Governance and Policy Committee.
- V-2<sup>AC</sup> Using the *Shaping our Future* recommendations and feedback attained through the strategic planning process, an ad hoc committee of local/regional leaders develop a set of recommendations for the consideration of the Provincial Executive by October of 2023, regarding



the composition, size, boundaries, and election processes for Locals. It is further recommended that the task of developing any resolutions flowing from the ad hoc committee's recommendation be directed to the Governance and Policy Committee for consideration by Annual Council 2024.

V-3<sup>PE</sup> Using the *Shaping our Future* recommendations and feedback attained through the strategic planning process, the Provincial Executive review the number, mandate, and composition of NSTU Standing and other Committees in an attempt to align mandates and reduce the overall number of committees. To be presented to the Provincial Executive for their consideration December of 2023. It is further recommended that the task of conducting this review be directed to the Governance and Policy Committee.

V-4<sup>PE</sup> Using the *Shaping our Future* recommendations and feedback attained through the strategic planning process, an ad hoc committee of local/regional leaders review the number, mandate, and composition of mandated Local committees through NSTU Operational Procedures in an attempt to ease the volunteer expectations on Local members. To be presented to the Provincial Executive for their consideration December of 2023.

### **Recommendations – Economic Welfare and Working Conditions**

The following are recommendations regarding Economic Welfare and Working Conditions Programs and Services:

VI-1<sup>ED</sup> Commencing Annual Council 2023, that the Member Services Report of activities provide the following information:

- a. number of grievances initiated, resolved, and ongoing;
- b. number of discipline files initiated, resolved, and ongoing;
- c. number of injury on duty cases initiated, resolved, and ongoing;
- d. number of criminal and other legal cases; and
- e. number of pre-retirement seminars delivered.

VI-2<sup>ED</sup> By December 2022, the NSTU will begin developing a suite of virtual presentations/graphics addressing common topics including frequently asked questions-and-answers. Presentations/graphics to be reviewed annually.

VI-3<sup>ED</sup> By January 2023 have documents related to legislation interpretation and advice and labour relations guidance easily accessible for members.

VI-4<sup>ED</sup> By June 2023 the NSTU will have clearer online navigational tools available to members regarding programs and services in Economic Welfare and Working Conditions. These tools will assist members in



identifying and accessing appropriate Staff contact information, and available resources.

- VI-5<sup>AC</sup> By December 2022, NSTU consider the potential enhancements to program and services offerings in Economic Welfare and Working Conditions by creating a new Executive Staff Officer position in Member Services, designated to triaging member enquiries. This Staff Officer would be able to provide advice, information, and clarification on routine Member Services matters, and triage members needing ongoing representation to regionally assigned Executive Staff Officers. It is further recommended that the Personnel Committee draft an appropriate Resolution to Annual Council regarding staffing this position.

### **Recommendations – Professional Learning**

The following are recommendations regarding Professional Learning Programs and Services:

- VI-6<sup>ED</sup> That Professional Learning Staff create a suite of online presentations addressing common topics including frequently asked questions-and-answers. Beginning in December 2022 Professional Learning Staff will start the process of developing these presentations with an annual review to ensure relevancy.
- VI-7<sup>ED</sup> By June 2023 the NSTU will have clearer online navigational tools available to members regarding programs and services in Professional Learning. These tools will assist members in identifying and accessing appropriate Staff contact information, and available resources.
- VI-8<sup>ED</sup> By September 2025 the NSTU will have developed a suite of programs and services aimed specifically to support equity-deserving members.
- VI-9<sup>ED</sup> By June 2024 complete a review of the NSTU's involvement and support of the Developing Successful Schools program.
- VI-10<sup>ED</sup> By December 2024 complete an accessibility and participation review of the NSTU's Biennial Conferences.
- VI-11<sup>ED</sup> By June 2025 complete an accessibility and participation review of the NSTU's John Huntley Memorial Internship Program.
- VI-12<sup>ED</sup> By December 2024 complete an operational review of October Conference Day, review to include an assessment of procedures for, format of, and support for.



### **Recommendations – Member Assistance Program**

The following are recommendations regarding Member Assistance Programs and Services:

- VI-13<sup>ED</sup> By September 2022 the NSTU begin to explore, with the Group Insurance Trustees, ways to assist in promoting the benefits of the Members Group Insurance Plan.
- VI-14<sup>ED</sup> By September 2022 the NSTU begin to explore, with the Group Insurance Trustees, ways to promote specific aspects of the Member Assistance Program.
- VI-15<sup>ED</sup> By June 2023 the NSTU will have clear online links to information regarding the Member Assistance Program available to members.

### **Recommendations – Communications/Public Relations**

The following are recommendations regarding Communications/Public Relations Programs and Services:

- VI-16<sup>ED</sup> By June 2023 complete an effectiveness, content, and formatting review of the NSTU's Member Diary.
- VI-17<sup>PE</sup> By March 2023 reintroduce a limited print run and distribution of *The Teacher*. Keeping the online format but include distribution of a limited number of print copies to each school/site. By March 2024 conduct an opinion survey of the membership to get an indication of the perceived value of the printed version of the publication.
- VI-18<sup>ED</sup> By December 2023 the NSTU begin investigating ways for sharing members' academic work through print and/or virtual mediums.
- VI-19<sup>ED</sup> By December 2024 complete an accessibility and relevance review of the NSTU's Deals and Discounts program.
- VI-20<sup>ED</sup> By June 2023 create an educational presentation for the appropriate engagement of our members in political action and public relations campaigns.
- VI-21<sup>ED</sup> By June 2023 create a presentation to help educate our members regarding appropriate engagement on social media on educational and Union issues.
- VI-22<sup>ED</sup> By September 2024 create and distribute to each school/site a poster of NSTU programs and services with instructions on finding more details and contact information.
- VI-23<sup>ED</sup> By June 2023, NSTU complete a cost analysis for providing NSTU information available on the NSTU website in both English and French. Consultation should occur with CSANE to identify high priority items.





### **Recommendations – Technology**

The following are recommendations regarding Technology Programs and Services:

- VI-24<sup>PE</sup> By October 2022 the NSTU will initiate a comprehensive external/expert review of the NSTU technology infrastructure. This review to include, but not necessarily be limited to, the NSTU website, webmail, Member Registry platform, hardware and software, and potential video conferencing and file sharing capabilities.
- VI-25<sup>PE</sup> By June 2023 the Provincial Executive consider the establishment of a strategic technology fund to support the implementation of the comprehensive external review. It is further recommended that the task of developing parameters regarding this fund be directed to the Finance and Property Committee.

### **Recommendations – Operations**

The following are recommendations regarding NSTU Operations:

- VII-1<sup>ED</sup> By June 2023 conduct a comparative study on the staffing levels of similar teacher organizations in Canada.
- VII-2<sup>ED</sup> By June 2023 make easily available on the website a brief summary of the Executive and Professional Staff responsibilities.

### **Recommendations – Finance**

The following are recommendations regarding NSTU finance:

- VIII-1<sup>PE</sup> By December of 2023 the Provincial Executive conduct a review of the current transfer formula for Local and RRC funding to determine the necessary funds required to ensure operational expenses are covered and adequate reserves are maintained; to assess how any excess funds may be used to enhance the programs and services delivered to members. It is further recommended that the task of conducting this review be directed to the Finance and Property Committee.
- VIII-2<sup>PE</sup> By June 2024 the Provincial Executive conduct a review of the format for Annual Council in order to identify possible cost savings. It is further recommended that the task of conducting this review be directed to the Governance and Policy Committee.
- VIII-3<sup>ED</sup> The NSTU continue to review its operations in order to identify possible cost savings.



## **Recommendations – Membership Engagement/Involvement**

The following are recommendations regarding membership engagement/involvement:

- IX-1<sup>PE</sup> By September 2022 the NSTU begin investigating ways to increase the involvement and participation of equity-deserving members in the Union.
- IX-2<sup>ED</sup> Beginning December 2022, the NSTU begin using *The Teacher* to promote and report on Local events.
- IX-3<sup>ED</sup> By December 2022, the NSTU will provide Local Executives with a list of Local member engagement best practices.

## **Recommendations - Priorities**

The following are recommendations regarding priorities:

- X-1<sup>PE</sup> Beginning September 2022, that the Provincial Economic Welfare Committee prioritize the development of collective agreement proposals designed to improve working conditions and improving and protecting economic benefits.
- X-2<sup>PE</sup> Beginning September 2022, that the Provincial Economic Welfare Committee prioritize the development of collective agreement proposals designed for Group Insurance Benefits.
- X-3<sup>PE</sup> Beginning in September 2022 that the following six priorities be considered the NSTU's top priorities for 2022 to 2024: improving working conditions, improving and protecting economic benefits, supporting the personal well-being of individual members, advocating for publicly funded education, advocating for educational change based upon research, and promoting the teaching profession.
- X-4<sup>ED</sup> Beginning in June 2024, the NSTU regularly conduct biennial surveys of the membership to identify the top four to six priorities for the organization. Future surveys to be conducted in June of a Presidential election year.
- X-5<sup>ED</sup> Beginning in September 2023, the NSTU establish a document in which NSTU activities acknowledged as one of the top four to six priorities are identified. This priorities document to be shared regularly with the Provincial Executive.

## **Recommendations – Retired Teachers Organization**

The following are recommendations regarding the Retired Teachers Organization:

- XI-1<sup>P</sup> The NSTU continue to have regular quarterly meetings with the RTO executive.



XI-2<sup>P</sup> The NSTU continue to participate, when invited, in RTO sponsored activities.

XI-3<sup>P</sup> Beginning December 2023, that the NSTU engage in discussions with the RTO executive for the purpose of identifying senior's issues that are a priority for the RTO.

**Recommendation – Educational Partners**

The following is a recommendation regarding the Educational Partners:

XI-4<sup>P</sup> The NSTU continue to interact with Educational Partners whenever the interests align.



## APPENDIX B – NSTU STRATEGIC PLAN TIMELINE CHART

Timeline Chart for the NSTU Strategic Plan Recommendations

Recommendation	Sept. 2022	Dec. 2022	June 2023	Sept. 2023	Dec. 2023	June 2024	Sept. 2024	Dec. 2024	June 2025	Sept. 2025
<b>MISSIONS and BELIEFS</b>										
IV-1										
IV-2										
<b>NSTU GOVERNANCE</b>										
V-1										
V-2										
V-3										
V-4										
<b>NSTU PROGRAMS and SERVICES</b>										
<b>Economic Welfare and Working Conditions</b>										
VI-1										
VI-2										
VI-3										
VI-4										
VI-5										
<b>Professional Learning</b>										
VI-6										
VI-7										
VI-8										
VI-9										
VI-10										
VI-11										
VI-12										
<b>Member Assistance Programs</b>										
VI-13										
VI-14										
VI-15										
<b>Communications/Public Relations</b>										
VI-16										
VI-17										
VI-18										
VI-19										
VI-20										
VI-21										
VI-22										
VI-23										
<b>Technology</b>										
VI-24										
VI-25										
<b>NSTU OPERATIONS</b>										
VII-1										
VII-2										



### Timeline Chart for the NSTU Strategic Plan Recommendations (cont.)

Recommendation	Sept. 2022	Dec. 2022	June 2023	Sept. 2023	Dec. 2023	June 2024	Sept. 2024	Dec. 2024	June 2025	Sept. 2025
<b>NSTU FINANCES</b>										
VIII-1										
VIII-2										
VIII-3										
<b>NSTU MEMBERSHIP ENGAGEMENT</b>										
IX-1										
IX-2										
IX-3										
<b>NSTU PRIORITIES</b>										
X-1										
X-2										
X-3										
X-4										
X-5										
<b>RETIRED TEACHERS ORGANIZATION and EDUCATIONAL PARTNERS</b>										
XI-1										
XI-2										
XI-3										
XI-4										

<b>Chart Colour Code Descriptors</b>	
	To be completed by
	To be initiated by and ongoing
	To be initiated by and completed as soon as possible.



## APPENDIX C – SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS AS ADOPTED BY THE PROVINCIAL EXECUTIVE

The Provincial Executive reviewed Recommendations flowing from the Strategic Planning report at their October 21, 2022 meeting. Decisions regarding these Recommendations were limited to those where either the Provincial Executive or Council have the sole authority to act as outlined in Appendix A (Recommendations labelled PE or AC). Recommendations where the President or the Executive Director have the authority to act are left to these individuals respectively. What followings are the motions and related Recommendations as adopted by the Provincial Executive.

THAT RECOMMENDATION IV-1 REGARDING NSTU MISSION AND BELIEF STATEMENTS FROM THE STRATEGIC PLANNING REPORT BE ADOPTED.

IV-1 To ensure the statements are reviewed on a regular cycle; the Mission Statement and Belief Statements be incorporated into the NSTU Governance Section of the Policy manual. That Governance and Policy develop resolutions for the Provincial Executive's consideration to create Policy statements from Mission and Belief Statements for consideration of Annual Council 2023.

THAT RECOMMENDATION IV-2 REGARDING NSTU MISSION AND BELIEF STATEMENTS FROM THE STRATEGIC PLANNING REPORT BE ADOPTED.

IV-2 That the Mission Statement and Belief Statements be reviewed as policy during this year's Policy Review cycle by the Governance and Policy Committee. Proposed amendments to these Statements to be considered by Provincial Executive in January 2023. Any proposed amendments submitted as Resolutions to Annual Council spring of 2023.

THAT RECOMMENDATION V-1 REGARDING NSTU GOVERNANCE FROM THE STRATEGIC PLANNING REPORT BE ADOPTED AS AMENDED.

V-1 Using the Shaping our Future recommendations and feedback attained through the strategic planning process, the Provincial Executive develop a set of resolutions for consideration by Annual Council 2024 addressing alternative governance models regarding composition, size, and election processes of the Provincial Executive. It is further recommended that the task of developing these models be directed **to an ad hoc committee of local/regional leaders and provincial executive members who sit on the Governance & Policy Committee** ~~to the Governance and Policy Committee.~~

THAT RECOMMENDATION V-2 REGARDING NSTU GOVERNANCE FROM THE STRATEGIC PLANNING REPORT BE ADOPTED AS AMENDED.

V-2 Using the Shaping our Future recommendations and feedback attained through the strategic planning process, an ad hoc committee of local/regional leaders **and Provincial Executive members that serve on the Governance & Policy Committee** develop a set of recommendations for the consideration of the Provincial Executive by October of 2023, regarding the composition, size, boundaries, and election processes for Locals. It is further recommended that the task of developing any resolutions flowing from the ad hoc committee's recommendation be directed to the Governance and Policy Committee for consideration by Annual Council 2024.



THAT RECOMMENDATION V-3 REGARDING NSTU GOVERNANCE FROM THE STRATEGIC PLANNING REPORT BE ADOPTED AS AMENDED.

V-3 Using the Shaping our Future recommendations and feedback attained through the strategic planning process, the Provincial Executive review the number, mandate, and composition of NSTU Standing and other Committees in an attempt to align mandates and **review** ~~reduce~~ the overall number of committees. To be presented to the Provincial Executive for their consideration December of 2023. It is further recommended that the task of conducting this review be directed to the Governance and Policy Committee.

THAT RECOMMENDATION V-4 REGARDING NSTU GOVERNANCE FROM THE STRATEGIC PLANNING REPORT BE ADOPTED.

V-4 Using the Shaping our Future recommendations and feedback attained through the strategic planning process, an ad hoc committee of local/regional leaders review the number, mandate, and composition of mandated Local committees through NSTU Operational Procedures in an attempt to ease the volunteer expectations on Local members. To be presented to the Provincial Executive for their consideration December of 2023.

THAT RECOMMENDATION VI-5 FROM THE ECONOMIC WELFARE AND WORKING CONDITIONS PROGRAMS AND SERVICES SECTION OF THE STRATEGIC PLANNING REPORT BE ADOPTED.

VI-5 By December 2022, NSTU consider the potential enhancements to program and services offerings in Economic Welfare and Working Conditions by creating a new Executive Staff Officer position in Member Services, designated to triaging member enquiries. This Staff Officer would be able to provide advice, information, and clarification on routine Member Services matters, and triage members needing ongoing representation to regionally assigned Executive Staff Officers. It is further recommended that the Personnel Committee draft an appropriate Resolution to Annual Council regarding staffing this position.

THAT RECOMMENDATION VI-24 REGARDING TECHNOLOGY PROGRAMS AND SERVICES FROM THE STRATEGIC PLANNING REPORT BE ADOPTED AS AMENDED.

VI-24 By October 2022 the NSTU will **continue the** ~~initiate a~~ comprehensive external/expert review of the NSTU technology infrastructure. This review to include, but not necessarily be limited to, the NSTU website, webmail, Member Registry platform, hardware and software, and potential video conferencing and file sharing capabilities.

THAT RECOMMENDATION VI-25 REGARDING TECHNOLOGY PROGRAMS AND SERVICES FROM THE STRATEGIC PLANNING REPORT BE ADOPTED.

VI-25 By June 2023 the Provincial Executive consider the establishment of a strategic technology fund to support the implementation of the comprehensive external review. It is further recommended that the task of developing parameters regarding this fund be directed to the Finance and Property Committee.

THAT RECOMMENDATION VIII-1(A) FROM THE FINANCE SECTION OF THE STRATEGIC PLANNING REPORT BE ADOPTED AS AMENDED.





VIII-1(a) By December of 2023 the Provincial Executive conduct a review of the current transfer formula for Local and RRC funding to determine the necessary funds required to ensure operational expenses are covered and adequate reserves are maintained. It is further recommended that the task of conducting this review be directed to the Finance and Property Committee **in consultation with local leaders**.

THAT RECOMMENDATION VIII-1 (b) FROM THE FINANCE SECTION OF THE STRATEGIC PLANNING REPORT BE ADOPTED AS AMENDED.

VIII-1 (b) By December of 2023 the Provincial Executive conduct a review to assess how any excess funds may be used **by the locals** to enhance the programs and services delivered to members. It is further recommended that the task of conducting this review be directed to the Finance and Property Committee **in consultation with local leaders**.

THAT RECOMMENDATION VIII-2 FROM THE FINANCE SECTION OF THE STRATEGIC PLANNING REPORT BE ADOPTED.

VIII-2 By June 2024 the Provincial Executive conduct a review of the format for Annual Council in order to identify possible cost savings. It is further recommended that the task of conducting this review be directed to the Governance and Policy Committee.

THAT RECOMMENDATION IX-1 FROM THE MEMBERSHIP ENGAGEMENT/INVOLVEMENT SECTION OF THE STRATEGIC PLANNING REPORT BE ADOPTED AS AMENDED.

IX-1 ~~By September 2022~~ the NSTU ~~begin~~ **continue** investigating ways to increase the involvement and participation of equity-deserving members in the Union.

THAT RECOMMENDATION X-1 FROM THE PRIORITIES SECTION OF THE STRATEGIC PLANNING REPORT BE ADOPTED.

X-1 Beginning September 2022, that the Provincial Economic Welfare Committee prioritize the development of collective agreement proposals designed to improve working conditions and improving and protecting economic benefits.

THAT RECOMMENDATION X-2 FROM THE PRIORITIES SECTION OF THE STRATEGIC PLANNING REPORT BE ADOPTED.

X-2 Beginning September 2022, that the Provincial Economic Welfare Committee prioritize the development of collective agreement proposals designed for Group Insurance Benefits.

THAT RECOMMENDATION X-3 FROM THE PRIORITIES SECTION OF THE STRATEGIC PLANNING REPORT BE ADOPTED.

X-3 Beginning in September 2022 that the following six priorities be considered the NSTU's top priorities for 2022 to 2024: improving working conditions, improving and protecting economic benefits, supporting the personal well-being of individual members, advocating for publicly funded education, advocating for educational change based upon research, and promoting the teaching profession.

