

NSTU podcast opens conversations about public education

The Nova Scotia Teachers Union launched a new podcast in late August to explore the realities of public education across Nova Scotia and provide a platform for meaningful conversations about the issues facing today's schools.

Hosted by NSTU President Peter Day and Communications and Public Affairs Officer Mark Laventure, the podcast aims to help fill a growing gap in local media coverage. With fewer local programming opportunities and the consolidation of media outlets, it has become increasingly challenging to ensure local voices are heard.

"We hope the podcast can help fill that gap by providing a platform to discuss the issues affecting students, families, teachers, specialists, and school communities," says Day.

The inaugural episode aired on August 27, followed by a September 22 episode featuring Keli Brewer, an Arts Education Consultant and music educator with the Cape Breton-Victoria Regional Centre for Education. The conversation explored the experiences and challenges of specialist teachers delivering music education in today's schools.

The third episode, released on September 29, featured Jonathan Beadle of Pictou Landing First Nation. As a descendant of a residential school survivor, Beadle shared what the National Day for Truth and



Reconciliation means to him and discussed the inspiration behind his Mi'kma'ki Strong apparel company.

The NSTU podcast is available on YouTube (<https://www.youtube.com/nstuwebcast>) and Spotify under NSTU Podcast.

The NSTU welcomes suggestions for future topics and guest speakers. Members and listeners are encouraged to share their ideas with Peter Day at president@nstu.ca. For more info see page 4.

Teacher *Plus* Credit to merge with three other credit unions

Members of Teachers *Plus* Credit Union, Acadian Credit Union, East Coast Credit Union, and iNova Credit Union officially voted to approve a province-wide merger.

The vote was held between September 22 and October 2, 2026. A favourable vote required 66.67 per cent approval from members at all four credit unions. The vote results are as follows:

- 81.1 per cent of voting members from Acadian Credit Union voted in favour
- 92.2 per cent of voting members from East Coast Credit Union voted in favour
- 94.2 per cent of voting members from iNova Credit Union voted in favour

The merger is scheduled to take effect on **January 1, 2027**. The new organization will manage approximately **\$2 billion in assets**, serve over **65,000 members**, employ around **400 staff**, and operate a network of **24 locations** (including virtual services) across Nova Scotia.



<https://www.facebook.com/nsteachersunion>



<https://x.com/NSTeachersUnion>



[NSTeachersUnion](https://www.instagram.com/NSTeachersUnion)



<http://www.youtube.com/nstuwebcast>

people

New Counsellor Joins the Member Assistance Program

The NSTU is pleased to welcome Andrew Wong to NSTU Counselling Services, effective September 14, 2026. Andrew joins the Member Assistance Program as a new counsellor, filling the role recently vacated by Amy Mahoney. He is a Registered Counselling Therapist-Candidate (RCT-C), effective May 2026.



Before joining NSTU's Member Assistance Program, Andrew ran Resilient Brain Therapy, a private counselling practice. He also worked as a Counselling Therapist Intern with Couch of Hope in Dartmouth, which provides free mental health counselling to uninsured Nova Scotians, and as a Youth Care Worker with the Government of Prince Edward Island.

He has direct experience delivering short-term, client-centred counselling to individuals and supporting families and youth through crisis, transition, and behavioural challenges.

Andrew holds a Master of Education in Counselling (MEd) from the University of New Brunswick and a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from the University of Prince Edward Island.

Andrew is looking forward to serving NSTU members through the Member Assistance Program.

CAPTTO Presidents meet on World Teachers' Day

NSTU president Peter Day joined presidents of the Atlantic Provinces and Nunavut teacher associations for the Council of Atlantic Provinces and Territory Teachers' Organizations (CAPTTO) first meeting of the school year in Ottawa, October 5 to 7. This school year, Nunavut Teacher's Association is hosting CAPTTO meetings.

CAPTTO is comprised of the provincial teacher organizations for New Brunswick (NBTA, NBTF), Newfoundland and Labrador (NLTA), Nova Scotia (NSTU), Nunavut (NTA), and Prince Edward Island (PEITF). Together, these organizations work on shared professional issues, advocate for improvements in public education, and issue joint statements on key topics. CAPTTO also works alongside the Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF/FCE) and its provincial and territorial partners to support teachers nationwide.



Shown (left to right): Andy Doran, Prince Edward Island Teachers' Federation; Justin Matchett, Nunavut Teachers' Association; Heidi Ryder, New Brunswick Teachers' Association, New Brunswick Teachers' Federation; Dale Lambe, Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association; Éric Godin, Association des enseignantes et des enseignants francophones du Nouveau-Brunswick, Fédération des enseignants du Nouveau-Brunswick; and Peter Day.



Managing Editor: **Angela Murray**
Assistant Editor: **Mark Laventure**
Advertising & Circulation: **Nancy Day**



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3106 Joseph Howe Drive,
Halifax, N.S. B3L 4L7
Phone: 902-477-5621
Fax: 902-477-3517
Toll free: 1-800-565-6788
Email: theteacher@nstu.ca
Website: www.nstu.ca

Submission deadlines for 2026-2027:

ISSUE	DEADLINE
September	September 4
October	October 9
December	December 4
Jan/Feb	January 15
March	March 5
April	April 2
May	April 30
June	June 11

The opinions expressed in stories or articles do not necessarily reflect opinions or policy of the Nova Scotia Teachers Union, its staff or elected provincial representatives.

We welcome your comments and suggestions:
1-800-565-6788 or email theteacher@nstu.ca.

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2026-27 Local Presidents and RRC Chairs

Above are NSTU's 2026-27 Local presidents and RRC Chairs, who met on September 18.

Seated: Eliza Abbass (Pictou Local), Nadine Arnold (Colchester-East Hants and Chignecto RRC Chair), Sheila Hawley (Inverness Local president and Strait RRC Chair), NSTU president Peter Day, Laura McCulley (Kings), Alex Mailman (1st vice president, Hants West) and Jerry Delorey (Antigonish).

1st row standing: Dave Currie (Northside-Victoria Local president and Cape Breton-Victoria RRC Chair), Lacey Phinney (Guysborough County), Sarah Hillier (Lunenburg County), Laura Fryday (Queens), Nancie de la Cheviotière (Halifax City), Pauline Seymour (Acting president, Richmond), Sarah Tutty (South Shore RRC Chair), Jeannie Montgomery (Annapolis), Desiree Daniele (Halifax County), Isabelle Cotnoir (CSANE), Caroline Linehan (1st vice president, CSANE), and Stacia Findlay (Cumberland).

2nd Row standing: Jill Vallis (1st vice-president, Cape Breton District), Chris Runyon (Yarmouth Local president and Tri-County RRC Chair), Nicole D'Eon (Shelburne County), Denise Boudreau (Acting Local president, Digby), Beth Button (APSEA), and Chris Doiron (Dartmouth Local president and Halifax RRC Chair).

Missing: Jennifer Bradley (Digby), Allison Corbett (Annapolis Valley RRC Chair), Shane Goucher (Hants West), and Dawn Spracklin (Cape Breton District).

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**East Coast
CREDIT UNION**

**iNova
CREDIT UNION**

**Teachers Plus
CREDIT UNION**

From the NSTU President



Keeping the Conversation Going

October is always a busy month for teachers and specialists across Nova Scotia. By now, the school year is well underway, routines are settling in, and the excitement of September has given way to the everyday realities of teaching and learning.

It's also a month that provides an important opportunity for us to come together as professionals, share our experiences, and reflect on the work we do.

On October 23, teachers and specialists across the province will participate in our annual October Conference Day. This is one of the few opportunities during the school year when educators can step away from their regular classroom responsibilities and focus on their own professional learning.

While the sessions offer valuable opportunities to strengthen our professional practice, I've always believed that some of the best learning happens through conversations with colleagues. Whether it's sharing ideas, discussing challenges, or celebrating successes, these conversations help us grow as educators.

While October Conference provides a wonderful opportunity to connect and share ideas, those conversations shouldn't end when the day is over. In fact, some of the most important conversations about public education need to happen beyond our classrooms and staffrooms. That's part of what we're hoping to accomplish with the NSTU Podcast.

The purpose is simple: to speak honestly about the realities of public education in Nova Scotia.

With the loss of local news programs and outlets like Global

Halifax and News Radio 95.7, opportunities for meaningful conversations about public education have become more limited. We hope the podcast can help fill that gap by providing a platform to discuss the issues affecting students, families, teachers, specialists, and school communities.

But this isn't a podcast just for teachers. We want parents, students, families, and anyone who cares about public education



Keli Brewer was a guest for NSTU's podcast on September 22



to be part of the conversation. We also want to celebrate the incredible things happening in our schools every day.

You can find the NSTU Podcast on YouTube and Spotify by searching "NSTU Podcast." If you see a post about an episode, please consider liking, commenting, or sharing it. Every interaction helps us reach more Nova Scotians.

Just as October Conference reminds us of the importance of learning from one another, the podcast offers an opportunity to bring those conversations beyond our classrooms and staffrooms.

The more people we have talking about public education, the stronger our collective voice becomes.

Stand Up Against Bullying Day

NSTU staff recognized *Stand Up Against Bullying Day* on Thursday, September 10, 2026, by wearing pink in support of safe, caring school communities. Schools, teachers, and students across the province mark the day each year and continue to promote positive, inclusive, and healthy learning environments and relationships throughout the school year. Observed on the second Thursday of each school year, *Stand Up Against Bullying Day* began in 2007 at Central Kings Rural High School in Berwick, where Grade 12 students Travis Price and David Shepherd defended a new student who had been bullied for wearing a pink shirt.



Local Service Award Recipients Honoured at Annual Recognition Event

On the evening of September 18, 31 NSTU members were celebrated for their outstanding contributions at the annual Local Service Awards event. These dedicated individuals were recognized for their longstanding commitment to education, their students, and fellow educators.

Whether serving as NSTU representatives at their schools, participating in Local Executive roles, or contributing to provincial and national committees, each of these members has made a lasting impact on public education in Nova Scotia.

Traditionally held during NSTU's Annual Council weekend, the event now takes place earlier in the school year coinciding with the Local Presidents and RRC Chairs' first conference of the school year.

NSTU President Peter Day and Executive Director Bethany MacLeod, presented the awards during the ceremony. The evening included a dinner and social gathering, offering attendees an opportunity to celebrate together, with colleagues, family and NSTU staff.



Shown in the photo seated (l – r): Shelley MacKenzie (Antigonish), Alicia Mills (Guysborough County), Charlotte Butt (Lunenburg County), Gale Doyle (Halifax County), Dawn MacDonald (Dartmouth), Yvonne Lapierre (Halifax County), and Wally Fiander (Yarmouth).

Standing 1st row: Ian Comeau (CSANE), Vera Ryan (Yarmouth), Julie McVicar (Antigonish), Darlene MacLellan (Inverness), Wendy Gould (Colchester-East Hants), Katrina Murphy (Colchester-East Hants), Joanne Richardson-Landry (Kings), Eileen Hiltz (Kings), Carrie Murray (Annapolis), Crystal Patterson (Halifax County), Andrea Arseneau (Cumberland), Joanne Hart (Cumberland), Marilyn Skinner (Halifax City), NSTU president Peter Day.

2nd Row: Bruce Abriel (Dartmouth), Leon Swinkels (Dartmouth), David MacLean (APSEA), Patrick Daley (APSEA), Amanda Weaver (APSEA), Jonathon Sproul (Halifax County), Cindy d'Eon (Shelburne County),

3rd Row: Marc Arseneau (CSANE), and Ben Sichel (Halifax City).

Missing: Andrew McCara (APSEA), Madonna Abbass, Barry Halloran and Sheila Halloran (Cape Breton District), and Shawn Hanifen (Halifax County).

Learning, Reflecting, and Looking Ahead: Nova Scotia Social Studies Educators in Whitehorse

by Wendy Driscoll & Dean Marchand, Social Studies Teachers Association of Nova Scotia

What shapes the way we see the world, and how does that shape the way we teach? What responsibility do we have to help students understand their place in an increasingly interconnected world? These questions were at the heart of a gathering of Social Studies educators in Whitehorse, Yukon this summer.

Hosted by the Northern Council for Global Cooperation (NCGC) and the Social Studies Educators Network of Canada (SSENC), the conference began at the Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre, where Elder Mark Wedge of the Carcross Tagish First Nation led us through a journey called the Sacred Red Road. Through storytelling, reflection, and visuals, participants were invited to consider the relationships between identity, place, and purpose, and how these shape the way we see ourselves and our work with students. Starting in this reflective space offered an intentional pause from our usual roles as educators and set the tone for the days of learning and reflection that followed.

Tracey Wallace and Athulya Joseph of NCGC guided us

through questions about the assumptions and perspectives that shape our teaching. We explored how our worldviews influence what we see and understand, how historical experiences and inherited ways of knowing continue to shape the present, and how we can approach difficult and potentially divisive conversations in the classroom.

Kevin Lopuck of SSENC helped us consider what is on our plates, both literally and figuratively, what teaching Social Studies asks of us, what the work can take out of us, and the emotional weight of trying to help our students navigate and improve the world around them. A reflective river walk rounded out the conference and gave us physical and mental space to consider how these ideas might influence our teaching practice.

The Social Studies Educators Network of Canada is a national organization whose mission is to advocate and build capacity for high-quality social studies education by facilitating networking between educators and engaging with partners across Canada.

It is made up of Social Studies teachers' associations from every province and territory, including the Social Studies Teachers Association of Nova Scotia, which has been part of SSENC since its inception.

Being together in Whitehorse was a rare opportunity, and we were determined to make the most of it. The NCGC conference brought us there, and the two days that followed gave us the chance to turn that shared experience inward, gathering as SSENC for our Annual General Meeting and working groups. We continued the conversation by reflecting on what had resonated with us and how those insights could inform SSENC's work and our



SSENC directors in Whitehorse.

vision for the future of Social Studies education in Canada.

Outings to Miles Canyon, walks along the Yukon River and fish ladder, even a visit to the famous Takhini Hot Spring balanced our days of deep thinking and hard work with recreation and fresh air.

Partnering with organizations like the Northern Council for Global Cooperation and connecting with educators who share our commitment to Social Studies is one of the things that makes this work so rewarding. We are grateful for the opportunity to learn together in Whitehorse and to bring those conversations back to our students, learning spaces, colleagues and school communities. We leave with new questions, new connections, and renewed energy for the work ahead.

For more information visit Social Studies Educators Network of Canada [Social Studies Educators Network of Canada](#) and Northern Council for Global Cooperation [Northern Council for Global Cooperation](#). You can also reach out to Wendy at secretary@ssencressc.ca and/or Dean at NSSSTA@ssencressc.ca

Wendy Driscoll has been an educator in Nova Scotia for over 30 years and currently teaches Grades 7 Social Studies and Language Arts in Dartmouth. She served as an executive member of the Social Studies Teachers Association of Nova Scotia for many years and was the recipient of its inaugural Lifetime Achievement Award in 2025. Wendy has served on national educator advisory councils for Elections Canada and the Library of Parliament and is currently the secretary of the Social Studies Educators Network of Canada.

Dean Marchand is an educator in Nova Scotia, teaching multi-subjects from grades Primary through 12. He graduated from St. Francis Xavier University in 2003. Dean is the current President of the Social Studies Teachers Association of Nova Scotia and has also been involved in various capacities with the SSTA as well as roles within the Nova Scotia Teachers union. He represents Nova Scotia on the Social Studies Educators Network of Canada.



Educators reflecting during the conference

pathways
FOR PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Email your name, home address, and the name of your school with **PATHWAYS** in the subject line to theteacher@nstu.ca by **November 30, 2026**, to be eligible for the draw.

Valley of the Birdtail
by Andrew Stobo Sniderman
& Douglas Sanderson
Harper Collins

Valley of the Birdtail: An Indian Reserve, a White Town, and the Road to Reconciliation is a true story about racism, reconciliation, and two neighbouring communities divided by a valley and 150 years of inequality. Their story reflects Canada's troubled Indigenous–non-Indigenous relations while offering hope for change. *Valley of the Birdtail* shows how Rossburn and Waywayseecappo became separate and unequal, contrasting education, income, and the lasting effects of residential schools. Through two families, one white, and one Indigenous, the book connects personal histories to Canada's broader story, challenging readers to rethink the past and imagine a better future.



Dean Marchand and Wendy Driscoll.

Creating a ReconciliACTION Plan

by Amanda O'Regan-Marchand, Executive Staff Officer,
Professional Learning

In 2015, the [Truth and Reconciliation commission](#) released six actions of reconciliACTION that were intended to support the public in developing their work towards reconciliation. During Mi'kmaw History month, begin to create your own [ReconciliACTION plan](#) as we continue to learn and grow in our understanding and in forging relationships within our learning spaces, our schools and our own respective journeys. The intention and the impact of this plan can work in alignment to help you to navigate and grow within each of the six steps and in your understanding and appreciation of the powerful and resilient history of the Mi'kmaq people who tended to this land for generations.

The theme of this year's [Mi'kmaw History Month](#), "Nepisulti'k" (We Are Healing), focuses on healing as "a lifelong journey, rooted in understanding self, history, relationships, and connectedness." Through the words of Elder, Murdena Marshall, and the incredible artwork of Gerald Gloade, we have the opportunity to take in this incredible representation of the process of healing and are invited to reflect on the "puzzle pieces" and paths that must be traveled to and through to move towards healing. How can we, through the following steps, support this healing?

Learn the history between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples.

The more we learn, the deeper our understanding becomes of the lasting effects of the injustices experienced by the Mi'kmaw people, their families, and their ancestors. Learning also allows us to engage with enduring stories, language, and the rich culture, artistry, and creativity that have been preserved through tradition and legacy. As you reflect on this step, consider: What have you learned that you can carry forward and share with others to support the healing journey of Mi'kmaq students, colleagues, families, and communities?

Understand the history and legacy of residential schools.

How can you cultivate opportunity for healing in your learning space; a space where your Mi'kmaq students and their families feel welcome, a space that is open and supportive and encourages the sharing of your students' stories, language and culture. In knowing about the residential school system, what actions are you ready to take to ensure this history is never forgotten or denied.

How will this knowledge (and a willingness to learn more) help to inform our responsibility to do and be better?

Explore the unique intersections we have between treaty, constitutional, Indigenous, and human rights we have in Canada.

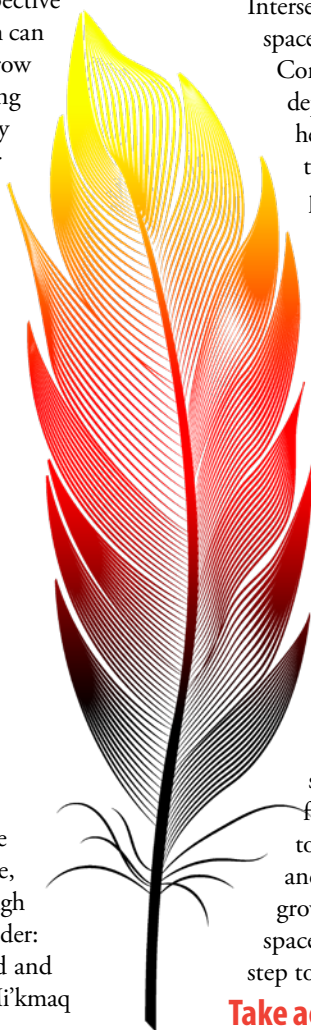
Intersectionality is a powerful concept. It invites us to find spaces of commonality and the potential for reciprocity. Common ground is relational. In the art and the story depicted on this year's Mi'kmaw History Month poster, healing is depicted as recognizing the various pieces of the puzzle that form identity and recognition of the people who accompany the journey. While all paths and learnings may not be positive, there is teaching and learning that must happen to be able to move forward. How can intersectionality and connection be discovered and built upon in your learning spaces to find connections and opportunities to celebrate diversity? What intersections exist in the world outside of working with students? How can we learn from our differences to open our minds and hearts to do the next right thing?

Recognize the rich contributions that Indigenous peoples have made to Canada.

As teachers and specialists, we know that inviting our students to share their contributions can foster an engagement in learning that can truly ignite a spark, motivation and is step towards self-confidence and self-efficacy. Holding space for learning and sharing, by making connections to Mi'kmaq elders, teachings, crafts people, artisans and communities, can help traditions to endure and grow. How can you action this step in your learning spaces starting this month? How can you action this step to support your own wellness journey?

Take action to address historical injustices and present-day wrongs.

Within your learning spaces and spaces outside those you share with students and colleagues, how do you teach and model how to challenge current views that threaten to discredit and denounce history and actions that fuel injustice and inequity? Can you recall a time you have had an opportunity to stand alongside, use your voice and your own respective power to support someone whose voice and lived experience has been repeatedly dismissed and pushed aside? What role will you take to ensure your Mi'kmaq



students and their families recognize they belong, and that you will stand up for and against those who would do harm to others and their physical world? What have you learned and what will you learn about the interconnectedness that is sacred to the Mi'kmaq, among all living things? How will you use what you know to add your voice to theirs?

Teach others.

After developing your plan, reflect on what you will share with the people and communities to whom you are connected—those you belong to, and that belong to you. This sense of belonging is reflected in the teachings of Elder Murdena Marshall and the artwork of Gerald Gloade. Consider how you will communicate the knowledge, experiences, and insights gained through creating your reconciliACTION plan. How has this journey influenced your thinking and inspired your actions? In what ways has your understanding grown or shifted through learning, reflection, and meaningful action? How has supporting healing through intentional and impactful efforts expanded your perspective? Finally, how can you embody these teachings through genuine appreciation while nurturing your own well-being?



Email your name, home address, and the name of your school with **WELL TEACHER** in the subject line to theteacher@nstu.ca by November 30, 2026, to be eligible for the draw.

Our Grandmother's Words: Traditional Stories for Nurturing

by Prune Harris, Murdena Marshall, Diana Denny, Flo Young, Susie Marshall, and Cheryl Bartlett, Featuring the Art of Gerald Gloade
Nimbus Publishing

Through traditional stories, Grandmothers share teachings that guide and nurture parents and children as they grow together. In *Our Grandmother's Words: Traditional Stories for Nurturing*! Nkij'inen Teluet Kina'matnewe'l Telimuksi'ki Wéwkl Atukwaqnn, presented in English and Mi'kmaq, the story follows Sali'j, a Mi'kmaq woman who is happy in her family and proud to be Mi'kmaq. When she realizes she is pregnant, she and her husband celebrate the child they will welcome. Sali'j turns to her Mother, Grandmother, and Godmother, who embrace her joy and share wisdom passed down through generations. This is the Mi'kmaq way.

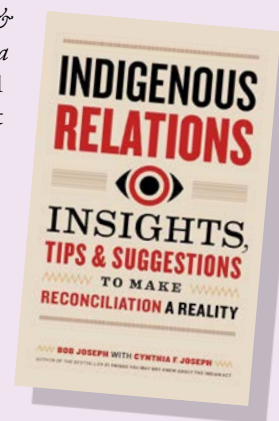


Email your name, home address, and the name of your school with **BIPOC** in the subject line to theteacher@nstu.ca by November 30, 2026, to be eligible for the draw.

Indigenous Relations

by Bob Joseph with Cynthia F. Joseph
Indigenous Relations Press

Indigenous Relations: Insights, Tips & Suggestions to Make Reconciliation a Reality is a practical sequel to 21 Things You May Not Know About the Indian Act, offering guidance for working respectfully with Indigenous Peoples. Bob Joseph explains treaties, leadership, Aboriginal Rights and Title, and the lasting impacts of the Indian Act, while providing tools to build cultural competency and support reconciliation.



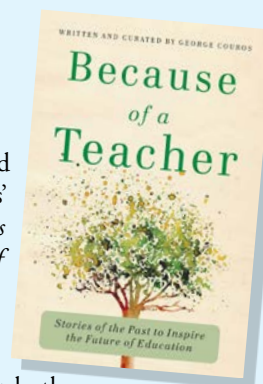
Béginnings

Putting new members in the KNOW!

Email your name, home address, and the name of your school with **BEGINNINGS** in the subject line to theteacher@nstu.ca by November 30, 2026, to be eligible for the draw.

Because of a Teacher by George Couros IMPress

Educators make a difference and that impact ripples through learners' lives. In *Because of a Teacher: Stories of the Past to Inspire the Future of Education*, more than 15 leading educators share stories of the teachers and administrators who inspired them, offering advice for both new and experienced teachers offering hope, encouragement, and reassurance that today's work can inspire future generations. *Because of a Teacher* invites you to remember those who nurtured your love of learning thank those who supported you and reflect on how far you've come.





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SESSION 1:
February 7–12,
2027

SESSION 2:
February 28 – March 5,
2027

SESSION 3:
April 18–23,
2027

*Dates are subject to change

Applications open from **September 8 to October 25, 2026**. Visit **forum.ca** to apply!

FORUM
FOR YOUNG
CANADIANS

Every Child Matters: Learning, Healing and Reconciliation

Members of the NSTU's 2026–2027 Provincial Executive are shown wearing this year's Mi'kma'ki Strong-designed Orange Shirt in recognition of the sixth annual National Day for Truth and Reconciliation which takes place on September 30.

This year's shirt features the message *Healing through Learning – Learning through Healing* and honours the theme *Every Child Matters/E'tasiw mijuaj'jij sespet'e'tasit*. The NSTU's partnership with Mi'kma'ki Strong helps raise awareness of the legacy and ongoing impact of residential schools in Nova Scotia. For the first time, a French version of the shirt was also created, allowing CSANE

members to wear the shirts at their school sites.

Across Nova Scotia, schools, teachers, specialists and students marked the day on September 29 in the spirit of truth, reconciliation and hope.

The National Day for Truth and Reconciliation provides an important opportunity for everyone in the education system to pause, reflect and engage in meaningful conversations about our shared history and the lasting harm caused by residential schools, including here in Nova Scotia.

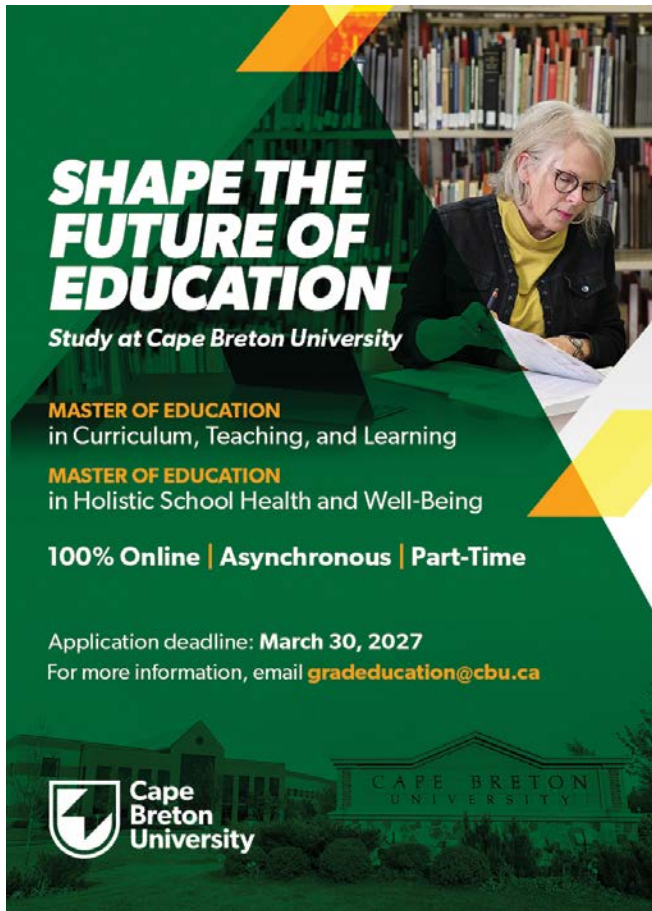


First row: Malik Adams (African Nova Scotian Representative), Melanie Kennedy- Conrad (Halifax County), Francine Fleming (Indigenous Representative), Jo-Leigh MacPhee (first vice-president), NSTU president Peter Day, Vera Ryan (Digby-Shelburne-Yarmouth), Sue Larivière-Jenkins and Ian LeBlanc (CSANE), and Doug Read (Pictou).

2nd row: Jacinda Hatton and Melissa Deveau (Annapolis-Hants West-Kings), Sunit Pinet (Halifax City), Mai-Ling Storm (Lunenburg County-Queens), Sarah Acker (Digby-Shelburne-Yarmouth), Paula Landry (Inverness-Richmond), and Angela Ewing (Halifax County).

Back row: Peter Murphy (Cape Breton District), Janet O'Brien (second vice-president, Antigonish-Guysborough), Kasi Humber (Colchester-East Hants), Rachelle MacIsaac (Cape Breton District), Kim Dunning (Northside-Victoria), Marilyn Skinner (Halifax City), Lindsay Crossman Wheaton (secretary-treasurer, Cumberland), and Mark Savoury (Dartmouth).

Missing: Andrew McCara (APSEA).



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www.nstu.ca

The deadline for the
December issue of
The Teacher is December 4

Contact Nancy at 902-477-5621 or theteacher@nstu.ca

2026 Holocaust Education Week Student Program

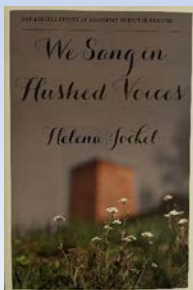
Wednesday, October 28 | 10:30 a.m. | Paul O'Regan Hall, Halifax Central Library

5440 Spring Garden Road, Halifax, B3J 1E9

Preregistration required: Edna LeVine, AJC Director of Community Engagement: engagement@theajc.ca

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We Sang in Hushed Voices



The life and legacy of Holocaust survivor **Helena Jockel** (1919 – 2016), author of ***We Sang in Hush Voices***.

A special conversation featuring her granddaughter, **Yolana Wassersug**, in conversation with retired CBC Radio broadcaster **Olga Milosevich**. Together, they will reflect on Helena's enduring legacy and the responsibility of carrying memory forward to future generations.

The program, approximately 1 hour, will include the Azrieli Foundation's 10 minute film featuring the story and testimony of Helena Jockel.

Copies of Helena's memoirs ***We Sang in Hushed Voices***, published by and courtesy of The Azrieli Foundation will be available for all students.

Presented by the Atlantic Jewish Council with support from the Halifax Central Library and the Azrieli Foundation.



Atlantic Jewish Council



Halifax Public Libraries



Mi'kmaq, Indigenous and African Nova Scotian pre-service teacher bursary recipients

The NSTU's bursary program to support Bachelor of Education students who identify as Mi'kmaq/Indigenous or African Nova Scotian/of African Ancestry saw five recipients last school year. Each Bachelor of Education granting institution in the province is eligible to award one \$2,000 bursary to a Mi'kmaq/Indigenous student and one \$2,000 bursary to a student of African Nova Scotian or African ancestry. Cape Breton, Mount Saint Vincent and St. F.X. Universities awarded bursaries.

Congratulations to the following students who received NSTU bursaries during the 2025-26 school year:

Spenser Jackson, (MSVU)

Xavier Johnson, (CBU)

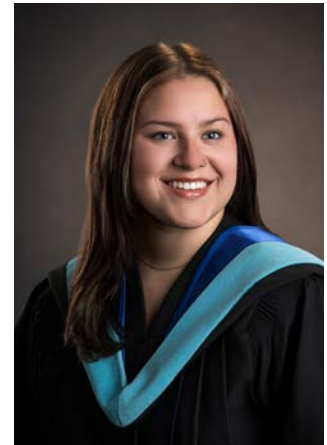
Kaia Knockwood, (St. F.X)

Mya Slawter, (St. F.X)

Kiana Touesnard, (CBU)



Spenser Jackson



Kaia Knockwood

ARE YOU RETIRING SOON?

Look at what the **rto** Retired Teachers Organization of the Nova Scotia Teachers Union has to offer



- **RTO** local branches offer a wide range of social activities, including meetings, presentations and recreational activities.
- The **RTO** Legacy Foundation honours former teachers and their work. Funds are used exclusively for youth programming.
- The **RTO** is a member of ACER/CART and the Seniors Advisory Council of NS, two seniors advocacy groups, providing our voice for health, safety, and continuing care.
- **RTO** stays connected to the NSTU, enabling access to the Deals and Discounts program and providing vital input on ongoing benefits.

<https://rtonstu.ca>

or



1-800-565-6788

for more information

We are a group of retired teachers dedicated to supporting retired educators in Nova Scotia by providing resources, advocacy, and opportunities for social connection. The RTO consists of 23 local branches across Nova Scotia, helping former teachers stay engaged with the teaching community and with each other.

Help shape tomorrow's accessibility leaders

The Rick Hansen Foundation School Program offers free ready-to-use lessons, activities, and classroom resources designed to build empathy, challenge assumptions, and encourage students to recognize and remove barriers to inclusion.

Inspire the next generation to make a difference.

Find everything you need at
RickHansen.com/resource-library
or scan the QR code.



NSTU Research Repository

The NSTU is in the process of establishing a repository of academic research in education, comprising the accomplished thesis work of our members.

Have you completed a thesis in educational research? Willing to share your results to inform members' practice and understanding of public education in Nova Scotia? We would like to celebrate and promote your good work through our repository of academic research in education by NSTU members.



Members should contact
our Professional Learning
department via

appl@nstu.ca



executive highlights

September 11, 2026

- Filed the Table Officers Report;
- Reappointed Bill Redden as a Nova Scotia Teachers' Pension Plan Trustee, pursuant to Operational Procedure 6. B. II. b. i., for a three-year term effective January 1, 2027 to December 31, 2029;
- Selected members to serve on the BIPOC Committee;
- Selected members to serve on the Professional Associations Coordination Committee (PACC);
- Selected a member to serve on the Political Action/Public relations (PA/PR) Committee;
- Approved a call for nominations for the Political Action/Public Relations (PA/PR) Committee from APSEA and South Shore Regions to fill two 2-year terms;
- Approved the tentative agreement between the Nova Scotia Teachers Union and the EIP Case Coordinators;
- Approved the employment contract between the Nova Scotia Teachers Union and General Counsel;
- Filed the 2025-2026 NSTU Standing Committee Annual Reports;
- Referred a motion to the Governance & Policy Committee to research and consider alternative structures for Annual Council, including how other teaching organizations and unions conduct their Annual Councils, and report back to the Provincial Executive by the February Provincial Executive meeting;
- Referred a motion to the Finance & Property Committee to research and consider alternative structures for Annual Council, including how other teaching organizations and unions conduct their Annual Councils, and report back to the Provincial Executive by the February Provincial Executive meeting;
- Approved a motion that Annual Council 2029 and 2030 be held at the Halifax Convention Centre;
- Approved a motion that the Governance & Policy Committee review the nomination process for the position of NSTU president and report back to the Provincial Executive.

September Book Winners!



Shana Graves — HRCE

Bēinnings

Putting new members in the KNOW!

Alison Creaser — SSRCE



Lisa Walker Mohammed — CBVRCE



Karyn Harrison — HRCE

NSTU Webmail has ended... but let's stay in touch



Visit <http://www.nstucentral.ca> and update your member registry profile with a preferred non-employer email

Don't know your username?
Email webaccounts@nstu.ca for help





TEACHING TOGETHER

 CTF/FCE

Are you looking
for a larger, more
global view of
education?

As a teacher, do
you feel you have
more to offer and
more to learn?

Are you ready for a
professional and
personal
adventure?

If yes, Teaching Together might be for you!

Volunteer for Teaching Together with the Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF/FCE)

The CTF/FCE is seeking English- and French-speaking Canadian teachers at the elementary and secondary levels who are interested in volunteering their time, knowledge, and skills to co-facilitate professional development in-service programs in partnership with teaching organizations in Africa and the Caribbean. Each year, over 50 Canadian teachers are chosen to volunteer in the program, which takes place in July.

All candidates must:

- Hold a Canadian passport valid until at least six months following the volunteer program. (Proof that a passport application has been made will be accepted);
- Be a member of a provincial or territorial teacher organization that supports Teaching Together;
- Hold a valid teaching certificate;
- Have completed at least five years of teaching in Canada by the time of departure for the program;
- Be in excellent health and be able to work in potentially challenging conditions;
- **Have high standards of professionalism and personal conduct;**
- **Show evidence of flexibility and mature judgment;**
- **Be willing to put the team and program needs above personal needs.**

Please note:

Teaching Together is a volunteer experience. Administrative, travel, and living expenses are covered by the CTF/FCE and its Member Organizations. No salaries or honoraria are paid to volunteer participants. No family or friends are permitted to accompany participants during pre-departure orientation or overseas programs.

To apply please contact Amanda O'Regan-Marchand at amarchand@staff.nstu.ca

Deadline to apply is November 27, 2026



www.ctf-fce.ca

CTF/FCE concerned National AI Literacy Initiative puts adoption before safety

On September 9th, the Minister of Artificial Intelligence and Digital Innovation, Evan Solomon, unveiled Canada's [National AI Literacy Initiative](#), delivered in partnership with the Alberta Machine Intelligence Institute (Amii). The Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF/FCE) welcomes federal investment in K-12 educators. But the initiative asks teachers to integrate AI into K-12 classrooms before anyone, government included, can say whether these tools are safe and beneficial for learning. [AI for All: Essentials for Educators](#) encourages the adoption of a technology that is unregulated, untested, and changing faster than any course can keep up with.

Adoption before guardrails

The first chapter of *Essentials for Educators* places the onus on educators to become AI literate so they can "consider whether AI tools have a place in [their] classroom, which tools are appropriate, ... and where clear boundaries are needed." The course description implies it will empower educators to make responsible choices about AI use but sidesteps whether or not these products are safe and beneficial for learning in the first place.

Chapters still in development further push teachers towards tech with topics like "practical classroom workflow integration," "fostering student future-readiness," and "ethical AI adoption grounded in global standards." But who decides what ethical AI adoption looks like in Canadian classrooms? Educators should not be expected to evaluate the safety of complex AI systems that developers themselves [struggle to understand](#). The government must ensure the course takes a critical and cautious stance on AI use in K-12, including clarifying that accountability rests with tech companies to deploy AI products that are ethical and effective by design.

The myth of responsible use

[Emerging research](#) warns that AI use in the classroom may do more harm than good. This month, the [OECD acknowledged](#) the drop in reading scores among 15-year-olds is associated with increased reliance on AI and digital technology. Studies also

suggest AI can [reduce teaching quality](#) and [weaken the teacher-student relationship](#). In [British Columbia](#), more than 80 per cent of teachers worried that students will become overly dependent on AI or lose critical thinking skills. Nevertheless, Amii promises their course will help teachers "tend a thriving digital classroom ecosystem." With growing [evidence of AI risks](#), how will Amii meaningfully guide educators to embed systems in an age-appropriate, pedagogically-sound way?

The course's first module notes that "AI can make some kinds of work easier or faster and can offer students new forms of support," but concedes that "sometimes the practice, decision-making, problem-solving, and sustained thinking involved in doing the work are themselves important parts of learning." Not sometimes. Always. A program that treats essential parts of learning as optional is not ready to guide teachers on the appropriate pedagogical use of risky technologies. The CTF/FCE calls on Amii and the federal government to open the five chapters of *Essentials for Educators* that are in development for review from educators across Canada, so they have a clear voice in how AI literacy takes shape in their classrooms.

Prioritize impact over scale

Amii aims to reach [50,000 K-12 educators](#) with their AI literacy course by 2031 but says nothing about how they will measure its impact. Which educators will they reach, and how? What feedback has educators offered on the content, and how will this inform ongoing refinement? As teachers across the country struggle to navigate the rapid onslaught of AI, we need clarity on how online, self-paced AI literacy courses will address their professional needs. The CTF/FCE calls for transparent evaluations of the national AI literacy program. Honest, public impact reports will help the government earn the trust of educators, students, and families across the country.

The CTF/FCE is ready to engage with the federal government, Amii, and the broader public to co-develop AI programs that are democratic and grounded in safety and human rights.



CTF/FCE

coming events

OCTOBER

Breast Cancer Awareness Month

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month. One in 8 women in Canada will learn they have breast cancer in their lifetime. Breast cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer among women in Canada. More info: <https://cancer.ca/en/ways-to-give/breast-cancer-awareness-month>

OCTOBER

Women's History Month

October is [Women's History Month](#) in Canada, a time to highlight the achievements of women and girls, past and present, who have shaped Canada in fields like politics, science, arts, business, and the economy.

Discover the stories of remarkable Canadian women on the [Women of Impact in Canada](#) gallery.

Women's History Month also shines a light on the inequalities women still face, such as wage gaps, underrepresentation in leadership, and barriers to entering and advancing in the workforce, and the need to work together toward lasting change.

[Take action to advance gender equality](#) in your community.



OCTOBER

Canada's Healthy Workplace Month

Every October, [Canada's Healthy Workplace](#) Month (CHWM) highlights the importance of practicing habits that promote a healthy mind, body, and organizational culture.

Check out the [events calendar](#) to help you keep track of the activities and events happening across Defence during Canada's Healthy Workplace Month.

CHWM is a great time to explore the [Defence Team health and wellness resources](#) that are available to you.



OCTOBER 26 TO 30

Media Literacy Week 2026: Learn, Engage, Connect

[Media Literacy Week](#) 2026 takes place from October 26 to 30. Hosted nationwide by [MediaSmarts](#), the week brings together schools, libraries, community organizations and individuals through free resources, activities and [events](#) promoting digital media literacy.

From misinformation and artificial intelligence to online trust and digital citizenship, Media Literacy Week helps people build the skills to think critically and make informed choices online.

This week also includes [Digital Citizen Day](#) on Wednesday, October 28, which encourages Canadians to reflect on how we participate, share and support one another in digital spaces.

Visit MediaLiteracyWeek.ca to discover how you and your community can take part.

The NSTU has been a long-time sponsor of Media Literacy Week.



Teachers' Pension Act Regulations

In 2019, the Regulations under the *Teachers' Pension Act* were amended to increase the number of days that a person in receipt of a Teachers' Pension could work as a substitute teacher to 99.5 days without affecting their pension. For the 2024-2025 and 2025-2026 school years, the number of days was increased to 119.5 days.

The sponsors of the Teachers' Pension Plan have recently agreed to the following amendment for the 2026-2027 school year which **reduces** the number of days that a person in receipt of a Teachers' Pension could work as a substitute teacher to 99.5 days.

For the 2026-2027 school year, persons in receipt of a Teachers' Pension can:

1. Work for less than 70 days (up to 69.5 days) in a term position;
2. Work for less than **100** days (up to **99.5**) days as a substitute teacher; and
3. Days in item 1 count towards the days in item 2.

If you have any questions regarding this amendment, please feel free to contact us at pension@nstu.ca.

coming events

OCTOBER

Mi'kmaw History month

Each October, Mi'kmaw History Month invites all Nova Scotians to deepen their understanding of Mi'kmaw culture, history, and heritage through educational and cultural activities. This year's theme celebrates lifelong healing journeys. The 2026 poster titled *Nepisulti'k — We Are Healing* invites people across Mi'kma'kik to reflect on healing as a lifelong journey—one rooted in understanding ourselves, our histories, our relationships, and our connectedness to one another.

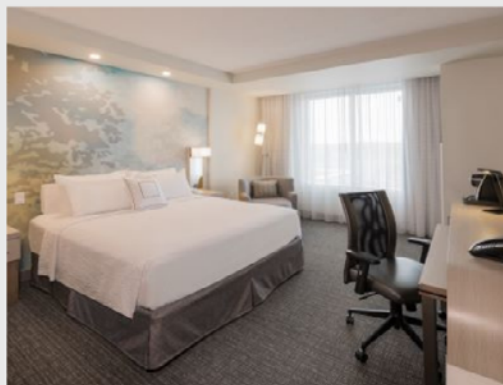
The heart of this year's theme comes from teachings shared by the late Elder Murdena Marshall, whose guidance continues to shape cultural learning across Mi'kma'ki. The 2026 poster and supporting videos feature Antle and Friends, characters created by Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey.

Across the province, teachers, students, and schools take this time to explore the history, culture, and achievements of the Mi'kmaq community—and to reflect on our shared understanding of their enduring contributions and traditions. For further information visit: <http://mikmahistorymonth.ca>.



COURTYARD[®]

BY MARRIOTT



NSTU LEISURE RATE

Available for **Last Room Availability** for the remainder of 2025 until end of June 2027 (excluding predetermined blackout dates)

Choose from a room with 2 Queen Beds or 1 King Bed and enjoy:

- Complimentary Breakfast
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- High-Speed Wi-Fi

Rates:

- \$119.00 per night (standard rate)
- \$159.00 per night during July & August (summer rates)

Rates are net, non-commissionable, and do not include the 3% Marketing Levy or 14% HST.

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BY TANIA BREEN

TOURING: MARCH 16 – MAY 26, 2027

RECOMMENDED FOR: GRADES P – 12

THEMES: INTERGENERATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS,
IMAGINATION, STORYTELLING, COMMUNICATION,
CONNECTION & UNDERSTANDING, MENTAL HEALTH.



As educators, we pour our energy into supporting students, it's important to remember that our own mental health matters too. One challenge that often arises during the fall and winter months is Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) – a form of depression that follows a seasonal pattern, most commonly appearing as the days get shorter and darker.

SAD is more than just the “winter blues”. While many people notice a dip in energy during the colder months, SAD can significantly impact mood, sleep, and motivation.

Those who experience Seasonal Affective Disorder often deal with the following symptoms:

- Appetite changes, including increased cravings for sugary or starchy foods
- Avoidance of people or activities previously enjoyed
- Difficulty in concentrating
- Daytime fatigue
- Feeling tense or stressed
- Irritability
- Sense of hopelessness
- Weight gain

These symptoms can affect not only personal well-being, but also how we show up in the classroom.

Teaching is an emotionally demanding profession, and shorter daylight hours can compound feelings of exhaustion. Add in the busy rhythm of the school year – grading, parent meetings, extracurriculars – and it's easy to see how educators may be at higher risk of feeling overwhelmed during this season.

While everyone experiences SAD differently, research and practical experience point to a few approaches that can help

Meet with a Healthcare Practitioner – SAD is a treatable disorder, so discussing medical treatment or support from a qualified healthcare practitioner can be a useful first step in identifying the ideal treatment option(s).

Light Therapy – Using light therapy has provided relief for 60% to 80% of people who suffer from SAD. Sitting for 30 minutes in front of a special fluorescent light that simulates natural outdoor light can help improve mood and energy levels.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy – This therapy works to replace negative thoughts with positive thoughts. It can be used in conjunction with light therapy.

Self-help – Some self-help strategies include regular exercise, good sleeping habits, and healthy diet. It is also important to stay connected with family and friends to improve mood.

Some other everyday tips to ease winter SAD symptoms include:

- avoiding alcohol and being aware of your caffeine intake
- finding some time to get outside during the day
- keeping a journal to help you deal with any negative feelings
- resisting the urge to eat unhealthy, sugary or high carbohydrate foods
- taking vitamin D supplements or eating foods high in vitamin D.

Seasonal Affective Disorder is common, and it's nothing to be ashamed of. By recognizing the signs and taking proactive steps, teachers can care for themselves while continuing to nurture the students who depend on them.

For additional help and support, the following programs and services offered through the NSTU Group Insurance and Member Assistance Program (MAP) are available:

NSTU Member Assistance Program	Contact Information
NSTU Counselling Services	(902) 477-5621 1-800-565-6788
Employee and Family Assistance Program	1-877-955-6788 www.homeweb.ca

Total Care Medical Plan – Psychologist Services - 80% of the usual and customary charges to a maximum of 20 visits per year.

belairdirect
(902) 453-9543 or 1-800-453-9543 (toll-free)
Email: GroupBenefitsNS@belairdirect.com

We trust the information outlined above is helpful. Please don't forget to visit our website at www.nstuinsurance.ca or scan the QR code below to review the many benefits and programs available to you through the NSTU Group Insurance Plan.



The NSTU Group Insurance Trustees want to remind you to mark your calendars for the following upcoming initiative:

EDUWellness Grants – For Members by Members

What is the purpose of the EDUWellness Grants?

The For Members by Members EDUWellness Grants have been established to support initiatives that promote the well-being of our plan members in an effort to recognize the tremendous work and efforts put in by you every day. For more information, visit the NSTU Group Insurance Trust website at <https://nstuinsurance.ca/grants/the-eduwellness-grant/>.

Who is eligible for the grants?

To be eligible, the individual must have a permanent, probationary, or term contract and be a member of the NSTU, PSAANS, or RTO at the time of application. Please be advised that applicants that have received a grant within the last 2 years will not be eligible.

What is the selection process for the EDUWellness Grants?

The NSTU Group Insurance Trustees will award 10 grants valued at up to \$1,500 each. Grants will be scored following the rubric that can be found at <https://nstuinsurance.ca/grants/the-eduwellness-grant> and awarded to the applicants with the highest overall scores. Please be advised that not all applications will be awarded grants.

What is the deadline to submit applications for the EDUWellness Grants?

Applications must be submitted on/or before 11:59pm on January 15, 2027. Completed projects are due no later than May 31, 2027.

For Members by Members

EDUWellness

Purpose

The NSTU Group Insurance Trustees will fund original ideas that support the mental health and well-being of plan members across Nova Scotia.

Deadline

January 15th.

Grant Amount

Up to \$1,500 each.

For more information:

<https://nstuinsurance.ca/grants/the-eduwellness-grant/>



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GROUP
INSURANCE
TRUST**



NSTU
GROUP
INSURANCE
TRUST



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Certain conditions, limitations and exclusions apply to all offers. Visit belairdirect.com for more details. Offers may change without notice.

classifieds

Classified rates are \$2.00 for the first 15 words and 25¢ per additional word upon presentation of a professional number.

Non-members pay \$6.00 for the first 15 words and 25¢ per additional word.

To book, call Nancy Day at 1-800-565-6788
or email theteacher@nstu.ca

Permanent HRCE Elementary School Counsellor looking for one year job exchange (potentially longer) with school counsellor in CBVRCE. Please call or text (902)220-6698 or email healingbarnes@gmail.com

Permanent HRCE Elementary Teacher looking for one year job exchange (potentially longer) with teacher in CBVRCE. French qualified. Possible housing swap. Contact: Hrcetocbce@gmail.com

FEEL LIKE A CHANGE?



Secondments at the Nova Scotia Teachers Union

The Nova Scotia Teachers Union is updating its resource file of active members interested in short-term secondment to NSTU staff.

Seconded staff supplement the work of permanent Union staff, and increase staff available when the demand exceeds the capacity of the organization.

Individuals may be seconded to provide a service or program over a period of weeks, to serve as a resource person or liaison with a Union committee or group or to initiate and/or implement a specific program, project or task.

Secondments may be in member services, professional services, public relations, public affairs or organizational support.

Active members interested in being listed in the resource file are requested to print and fill out an application form available on-line by:

- ENTERING THE NSTU WEBSITE
- SELECT "STAFF"
- SELECTING "SECONDMENTS" FROM THE MENU ON THE LEFT-HAND SIDE

Information forms will be retained in the resource file for a period of one year.

2026-2027 NSTU RETIREMENT SEMINARS SCHEDULE

DATE	REGION	LOCATION
October 7-8, 2026	CCRCE	Amherst Travelodge (Wandlyn) – Amherst
October 14-15, 2026	TCRCE	Tru by Hilton – Yarmouth
October 28-29, 2026	CBVRCE	Holiday Inn – Sydney
November 3-4, 2026	SRCE	Port Hawkesbury Civic Centre – Port Hawkesbury
November 18-19, 2026	HRCE	NSTU Building – Halifax
November 24-25, 2026	AVRCE	Maritime Express – Kentville
December 1-2, 2026	SSRCE	Best Western Plus – Bridgewater
December 8-9, 2026	HRCE	NSTU Building – Halifax
January 6-7, 2027	HRCE	NSTU Building – Halifax
January 12-13, 2027	CCRCE	Pictou County Wellness Center – Stellarton
January 20-21, 2027	CCRCE	Inn on Prince – Truro
February 10-11, 2027	HRCE	NSTU Building – Halifax

Information from the



Nova Scotia Teachers Union

The John Huntley Memorial Internship Program

The deadlines for application for the John Huntley Memorial Internship Program are

**October 1, February 1
& April 1.**

Applications for active NSTU members are available through your NSTU rep, on the NSTU website at www.nstu.ca or at Central Office 477-5621 or 1-800-565-6788. The internship provides members with an opportunity to learn more about the NSTU.



Nova Scotia Teachers Union