

*NSTU Provincial Equity Committee
Year-End Committee Report 2008-2009*

Committee Members:

Mark MacPhee, Chair
Kathy Lee Brickenden
Scott Murchison
Laura McCulley
Belinda Josephson
Debbie Mitchell, Provincial Executive Member
G rard Cormier, Staff Officer

Committee Mandate:

To address matters relating to the status of women, equity, and diversity.

Meeting Dates:

Friday, September 19th, 9-4 NSTU Building
Friday, November 14th, 9-4 NSTU Building
Thursday April 23rd 10-5 Delta Halifax

Budget:

As of July 2, 2009 the Equity Committee has expended \$6,295.47 of a \$7,329.00 budget.

Committee Activities and Recommendations:

1. NSTU Policy Review:

The committee reviewed the NSTU General Policy Statements Review for Council 2009. They suggested reaffirmation for the majority of them and proposed amendments to six of the statements.

2. NSTU Council Resolutions for 2009.

There were no resolutions brought forth. However, the committee did propose that the Executive Liaison communicate with Table Officers regarding the possibility of the NSTU participating in future Gay Pride Parades in Halifax.

3. Update on GBLTT Ad hoc Committee Recommendations.

Staff reported on recommendations from the Ad hoc GBLT Committee that had been modified and approved by the Provincial Executive. One motion allows for an expanded GBLTT focused Equity Conference in April 2009. Another motion deals with an awareness campaign that will be developed by staff. A final one deals with measures that the NSTU will take to create both a positive and inclusive climate for sexual minority individuals in schools.

4. Equity Liaisons

The Committee members separated the Equity Liaisons by region. Each committee member contacted the liaisons for whom they were responsible to ensure any equity needs in their Local were addressed, and to provide information about the Equity conference.

5. Equity Conference “Educators Taking Pride in Equity”

The committee organized an expanded equity conference focusing on sexual minority issues as per provincial executive’s request. The conference was held April 23rd, 24th and 25th at the Delta Halifax. The conference hosted one hundred sixty delegates, and had a variety of workshops all focused on sexual minority issues for students and educators.

The conference keynote was given by the Honorable Scott Brison, liberal MP. Art work from students at Halifax West was displayed throughout the foyer and reception area. Conference delegates had a choice to attend two of eight workshops on Friday, as well as a full conference panel discussion on Friday morning and Saturday morning. Each panel contained a variety of expertise from administrators, RCH liaisons, students, psychologists and teachers.

A keynote closing was provided on Saturday morning by Dr. Stephen Van Zoost. Gerard Cormier discussed an Egale survey which discussed school climate and safety for GLBT students.

NSTU President Alexis Allen unveiled new sexual minority rights posters which is part of the sexual minority rights campaign.

This year’s equity conference was ground breaking in terms of the sexual minority teacher PD work that was completed. The conference was a feature of several television news reports and committee chair Mark MacPhee was also featured on CBC radio. Alexis Allen was featured in the newspaper “The Chronicle Herald” talking about sexual minority rights.

The conference was extremely well received by conference delegates and presenters.

6. Future Equity Conferences

The committee also discussed future conference focuses being on a Human Rights conference which would tie all strands of equity together. It was also discussed that a women’s rights conference be held in future.

It has been a very personally fulfilling year being the chair of the Equity committee. I would like to thank the NSTU for a wonderful experience, and I certainly hope to continue to be involved in NSTU Equity work in the future.