

NSTU joins national day of action against Bill C-23

NSTU president Shelley Morse joined representatives from Leadnow Canada, the Council of Canadians, the Confederation of Students, and concerned citizens in the *Let People Vote* national day of action. This coordinated effort brings further attention to Bill C-23, proposed federal legislation which will restrict voting rights for Canadians.

"This (un)Fair Elections Act Bill aims to restrict voting rights," says NSTU president Shelley Morse. "If passed, it will also mean the end of Elections Canada's civic literacy program in Canadian schools including Student Vote's parallel election program."

Last fall close to 196 schools at the elementary, middle and high school levels in Nova Scotia representing 22,784 students were involved in the Student Vote program in Nova Scotia. "Our teachers are strong supporters of this program because it combines in-class learning, family dialogue, media literacy and an authentic in-school vote and ultimately engages students in the democratic process."



Halifax County Local president Meg Ferguson, NSTU president Shelley Morse and student teacher Lauren O'Brien are shown at the National Day of Action, *Let People Vote* event against Bill C-23.

She says that any attempt to change legislation governing voting rights should be done fairly, in a non-partisan manner. "As teachers, we welcome and invite the diverse voices of children, youth, parents and families in the education community."

Morse says she's encouraging her members to sign the *Let People Vote* petition (<http://www.leadnow.ca/let-people-vote/>), in which over 82,000 signatures have been collected nationally and sign on to CTF's "Thunderclap.it" campaign against Bill C-23 (<https://www.thunderclap.it/projects/10016-yes-to-democracy-no-to-c-23?locale=en>. Raise your voice). "These efforts show that Canadians will stand up to defend a democratic and transparent elections process," adds Morse. "We need to stop voter suppression."

Morse attended the *Let People Vote* event with NSTU's Halifax County Local president Meg Ferguson, which took place outside of MP Megan Leslie's constituency office in Halifax.

Education Review Update

The Minister's Panel on Education recently outlined how it will ensure all Nova Scotians can participate in the review of the education system.

"We have been very busy designing ways that will give everyone - from individual parents and students, to groups and organizations - multiple opportunities to express their opinion," said panel chair Myra Freeman. "We want to ensure every person, community, organization and business can participate in the process."

The panel's plans include:

- launching an online survey
- inviting written submissions via email and mail
- gathering responses on Twitter
- creating a guide that can be used to facilitate discussion and input from youth.

"The views of all Nova Scotians are of critical importance and each completed survey and submission will be carefully considered," said Freeman.

The survey will be launched this month and will be available on the Education and Early Childhood Development website.

The Minister's Panel on Education was named by Education and Early

Childhood Development Minister Karen Casey on February 19 to find out what Nova Scotians think is working and what needs improvement in the education system.

Casey has also established a Partner's Advisory Group of diverse organizations and educational partners, including those representing students, families, teachers, school boards, universities, African Nova Scotians, First Nations, and Acadians.

"I have been appointed to this advisory group," says NSTU president Shelley Morse. "I'm looking forward to working with other members of this group in ensuring that teacher voice is included in the discussions of our system, and in advising members of the Minister's panel as necessary." At press time, Morse was attending a meeting of this advisory group.

These members will represent their organizations and respond to panel requests as needed.

The panel will gather the public's opinions on the education system and prepare a report that outlines the concerns and priorities identified by Nova Scotians. The report is due in October 2014.



people

Cumberland Local Meet & Greet

NSTU president Shelley Morse attended the Cumberland Local Meet and Greet in Amherst on March 20. This annual event was hosted by Cumberland Local president Wade Van Snick and organized by the Local's VP Public Affairs/Public Relations Julia Lavers. Morse made two presentations during the event. One to the Chignecto-Central Regional School Board *Teachers Make a Difference* recipient Chara Ross and the other to an Education Research Award recipient Holly MacDonald. Morse, along with Education and Early Childhood Development (ECD) Minister Karen Casey, Chignecto Central Regional School Board superintendent Gary Clarke, Cumberland North MLA Terry Farrell and school board members were among the attendees.



Above (l-r): CCRSB superintendent Gary Clarke; ECD Minister Karen Casey; VP professional development Holly MacDonald; Cumberland provincial executive rep Pat Hillier; Cumberland Local president Wade Van Snick; NSTU president Shelley Morse; Teachers Make a Difference recipient Chara Ross and Community College provincial executive rep Joe Salah.

Education Week Committee 2014



Above are members of this year's Education Week committee at their March 20 planning sessions which was held at the NSTU building. This committee is comprised of representatives from public education stakeholders in Nova Scotia: the NSTU; Nova Scotia School Boards Association (NSSBA); Department of Education and Early Childhood Development; Nova Scotia Federation of Home and School Associations (NSFHSA); Fédération des parents acadiens de la Nouvelle-Écosse (FPANE); and the Association of Nova Scotia Educational Administrators (ANSEA). The chair of the committee rotates between the partners. This year's chair is ANSEA representative, Diane Racette, Directrice régionale, CSAP.

Education Week will take place April 20 to 26, 2014. This year's theme, *Active Citizenship: Get Involved, Take Action, Be the Difference/Citoyenneté active: Implique-toi, agis, sois la différence*, was chosen through feedback from NSTU leaders and education partner representatives. The theme was suggested by Annapolis Local president Krista Wright.

The Provincial Education Week Coordinating Committee coordinates the Awards ceremony, which will take place on April 22 at Rocky Lake Junior High School. It also provides guidelines to school boards for the selection of candidates for teacher awards.

Standing: Cale Loney, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development rep; Angela Murray, NSTU rep. Seated: Janet Walsh, NSFHSA rep and Diane Racette, ANSEA rep. Missing: NSSBA representative Richelle MacLaughlin, and FPANE representative Natalie Aucoin.



2014—Pre-Retirement SEMINAR

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Education Research Award presentation



NSTU president Shelley Morse presented Holly MacDonald with her Education Research Award recognition plaque at the Cumberland Local Meet & Greet on March 20. MacDonald, an Early Literacy Support and Program Support teacher at Cumberland North Academy, who is the Local's VP of Professional Development received her Award for her research project *Helping the Struggling Reader to Develop Literacy Skills*. This project enhanced understanding of literacy skill development in early grade level students and established connections between curricular outcomes, direct intervention assessment, daily lessons and reflection.

Governance and Policy Committee



Above are members of NSTU’s Governance and Policy Committee at a meeting at the NSTU building on March 3. This committee, comprised of provincial executive members, develops and maintains an ongoing awareness, commitment to, and practice of good governance with the Provincial Executive and within the Nova Scotia Teachers Union as a whole. Committee members develop and review policy and regularly review the governance relationships between and amongst NSTU members, Annual Council, Provincial Executive, Locals, Regional Representative Councils, standing committees, Professional Associations, and NSTU staff.

Seated: Sally Capstick (Cape Breton District); Cindy MacKinnon (Pictou); Louis Robitaille (Community College) and Paul Boudreau (Halifax County). Standing: NSTU executive staff officer Debbie McIsaac; NSTU president Shelley Morse; Tammy Landry (Antigonish-Guysborough); NSTU administrative assistant & policy and special events facilitator Audrey Cuvilier; Michael Stewart (Lunenburg County); Stacy Thorburn (Shelburne-Queens) and chair of the committee, Kim Frank (Annapolis-Hants West-Kings). Missing: Joan Ling, NSTU’s executive director.

The deadline for the May issue of The Teacher is April 17.
Email: theteacher@nstu.ca

NSTU supports Ukraine’s Teachers’ Union

At the March 28, provincial executive, the NSTU pledged that \$1,000 be donated to the *Ukraine: Solidarity and Support Fund* being facilitated in Canada through the Canadian Teachers’ Federation (CTF).

In mid-March Education International, in which the NSTU is affiliated through its CTF membership, sought solidarity and support to help teaching colleagues from the Union of Education and Science Employees of Ukraine (STESU) whose headquarters in Kiev burned down during the country’s recent political turmoil.

The Trade Union House in Kiev, where the Federation of Trade Unions in Ukraine and STESU had their offices, was completely destroyed by the fire, leaving several hundred trade union workers without workplaces. All office equipment and supplies and all union documents were lost in the fire. STESU is struggling to resume activities at a time when the union movement should contribute to resolving political tensions in Ukraine peacefully and through dialogue.

A message of solidarity from CTF president Dianne Woloschuk was sent to STESU president Georgii Trukhanov, and international secretary Kateryna Maliuta-Osaulova on March 18 on behalf of 17 teacher organizations representing 200,000 teachers across the country. In it she states: “Teachers throughout Canada have been following closely the news coming from Ukraine. We understand that your union has suffered the loss by fire of your offices, records, and workplace, and that this loss has impeded your union’s ability to participate in the political processes now taking place within your country.”



NSTU SECONDMENT RESOURCE FILE

Secondment application forms are available on the NSTU website at www.nstu.ca.

To obtain the secondment application form go to the NSTU website:

- Select “The NSTU” from the drop down menu
- Select “Staff” from the drop down menu
- Select “Secondments”



- ABM Access
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- Chequing Accounts
- Chequing Overdraft
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- Overdraft
- Personal Loans
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- RRSP/RRIF
- Savings Accounts
- Seniors Accounts
- Student Loans
- Tax Free Savings Accounts
- Teleservice
- US\$ Chequing Accounts
- Youth Accounts

A wooden gavel resting on a wooden block.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Will be held Saturday, April 5, 2014 at 11 a.m.
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Shelley Morse
President, Nova Scotia Teachers Union



On behalf of the Nova Scotia Teachers Union and our public school, Community College and APSEA members, I congratulate the teachers and education partners who are making a difference in the lives of students, schools and communities through their commitment to this year's Education Week theme **Active Citizenship: Get Involved, Take Action Be the Difference/ Citoyenneté active: Implique-toi, agis, sois la différence.**

Whether it's engaging students first hand in democracy in action through the Student Vote program, preparing students to be contributing citizens through curricular and extra-curricular activities such as We Day, or instilling leadership through sport, the educators and partners recognized have developed critical thinking, problem solving, and collaboration with and among students to help them reach their full potential and recognize the important role they play and will continue to play in their home communities and beyond.

I also thank and acknowledge the Teachers Plus Credit Union, which has been a long-time sponsor of Education Week. Its continued support has helped to promote and highlight Nova Scotia's Education Week.

Please join me in celebrating the achievements and commitment of this year's Education Week award recipients.

Honourable Karen Casey
Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development



It is often said that education is about preparing the next generation to enter the workforce but we know the scope is much larger. Education shapes the next generation of Nova Scotian thinkers, innovators and leaders and prepares them for the world. As educators, we work to prepare our students for the careers of tomorrow but also all the challenges that tomorrow may bring. Our teachers help to shape our future, and this year's Education Week theme is about taking charge of tomorrow, today.

This year's Education Week theme, **Active Citizenship: Get Involved. Take Action. Be the Difference**, revolves around being an active participant in our communities. The educators and partners we are honouring this year have championed this theme through promoting community involvement in teaching, encouraging students to embrace their role as prominent members of their communities. This year's recipients personify active citizenship and help to foster critical thinking, problem solving and collaboration in their students, helping them understand the forces that have determined our past and our present and continue to shape our future.

Thank you for your investment in the future of our students and Nova Scotia.

Gary Clarke
President, Association of Nova Scotia Educational Administrators



On behalf of the Association of Nova Scotia Educational Administrators, it is my pleasure to extend congratulations and appreciation to the teachers and educational partners who are being recognized for making a difference in the lives of Nova Scotia students allowing them to succeed, become leaders and active responsible citizens. The dedication, support and commitment given by these leaders to ensure students attain the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to make a difference in their own communities and abroad are to be celebrated.

The 2014 Education Week theme, **Active Citizenship: Get Involved, Take Action, Be the Difference** recognizes the importance and responsibility of teachers and partners to provide students with the necessary tools to become our leaders of today and tomorrow and help shape the future. Success in our province is dependent on maximizing the successes and achievements of our students and giving them every opportunity to lead, get involved and make positive contributions to their local community and province. The teachers and partners being acknowledged here today are doing just that.

The Association of Nova Scotia Education Administrators is proud and thankful for the contributions of these outstanding individuals being recognized as part of Education Week 2014.

Charla Dorrington
President, Nova Scotia Federation of Home and School Associations



During the past year education in Nova Scotia has been at the forefront of our concerns and the system has been through many changes. As the President of Nova Scotia Federation of Home and School Associations (NSFHSA) I have experienced first hand and have seen how those changes have affected families in Nova Scotia.

The success of our children in school is the direct result of dedicated teachers, parents/guardians and the educational partners who continue to overcome obstacles and who continue to make our children their priority.

NSFHSA would like to congratulate the recipients of this year's Provincial Education Week Awards. You all exemplify the true meaning of this award and are very deserving. Without you doing what you continue to do day in and day out the view of education success rates in Nova Scotia would look very different.

Congratulations!

Pierre Lebreton
Présidente, Fédération des parents acadiens de la Nouvelle-Écosse



Cette année, le thème de la Semaine de l'éducation en Nouvelle-Écosse, «**Citoyenneté active : Implique-toi, agis, sois la différence**», souligne le travail exceptionnel des éducateurs néo-écossais qui vont au delà de leurs obligations pour favoriser la promotion de l'investissement communautaire en enseignement. La citoyenneté active des éducateurs en Nouvelle-Écosse encourage les étudiants à reconnaître leur rôle essentiel en tant que membres de leur communauté.

Les éducateurs et les parents jouent un rôle essentiel dans le développement global des élèves afin que ces derniers deviennent des membres responsables de la société. Les éducateurs ont avantage à montrer l'exemple en faisant la promotion d'une participation active, d'un apprentissage par le service, d'une citoyenneté numérique positive, d'une lutte contre l'intimidation et une conscience locale et globale. Ils leur transmettent d'importantes connaissances et les étudiants deviennent donc à leur tour des citoyens qui façonnent et déterminent le succès de notre avenir.

Notre culture acadienne et francophone est un aspect important du quotidien des enfants; ils le vivent à travers la musique, l'art, le leadership et autres dans notre propre réalité. Il est important pour la survie de notre communauté et la fierté de nos jeunes que les enseignants et les parents puissent démontrer des exemples de citoyenneté active. C'est ce qui rendra les étudiants plus conscients de la fierté de leur culture et de leur langue pour assurer la pérennité de notre communauté acadienne et francophone.

En cette semaine de l'éducation je lève mon chapeau à tous les éducateurs et parents qui œuvrent sans cesse pour le bien être de nos enfants, malgré les défis qui se présentent chaque jour. La Fédération des parents acadiens de la Nouvelle-Écosse reconnaît l'effort et le temps consacré pour encourager les jeunes à vivre leur culture et d'assurer sa continuité.

Jamie Stevens
President, Nova Scotia School Boards Association

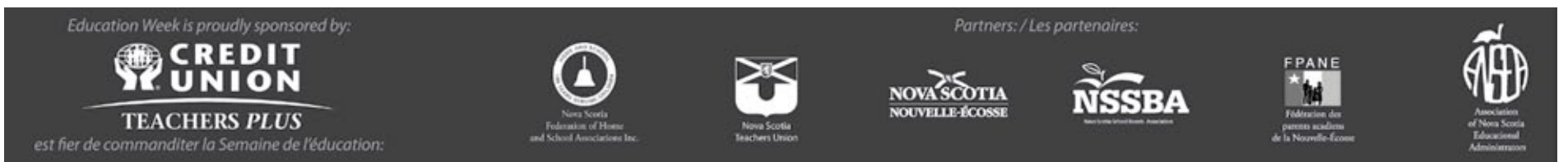


This year's theme **Active Citizenship: Get Involved, Take Action, Be the Difference**, provides an opportunity to acknowledge teachers in their encouragement of students to be more active in their communities and to make a difference.

On behalf of the Nova Scotia School Boards Association (NSSBA), it is with pleasure that I congratulate the Education Week 2014 Award Recipients. There are so many teachers who are going above and beyond their regular duties that it must have been a difficult decision to choose the winners.

With the difficult times that we have experienced in public education over the past few years, teachers have had to do more with less, but they never let the students down. NSSBA is grateful for the dedication and professionalism that Nova Scotia teachers bring to the classroom.

Congratulations again to all of the award recipients on being recognized for your outstanding commitment to the students of Nova Scotia.



Online Report Card Survey Launched

A committee aimed at ensuring that report cards are meeting the needs of students and their families wants to hear from parents, students, principals and teachers.

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development wants input on what is working well and areas for improvement with provincial report cards.

The committee, which includes students, parents, teachers, principals, and school board staff, launched the survey on March 21, at <http://www.ednet.ns.ca/reportcardreview>.

“It is important that parents, guardians and students are getting constructive feedback that helps them know where a student is in their learning and how they can do better,” said Education and Early Childhood Development Minister Karen Casey.

“I want report cards that are clear, helpful and accessible for all parents and students and that is why we are looking at how report cards are structured, and their content.”

“It’s pertinent that teachers, who are on the front lines of learning provide their input,” says NSTU president Shelley Morse. “I encourage our members to submit their feedback through the report card survey.”

The committee will use the survey to identify what is working and what can be improved in order to provide clear information to students and families, and to support teachers in maximizing the learning and achievement of all students.

The committee is expected to report to the minister on April 30.

“We need to ensure that report cards are an important and valuable tool in the overall learning process that will help our children succeed,” continued Casey.

Suggestions and feedback will be accepted until April 11.



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New Brunswick Teachers' Federation
Nova Scotia Teachers Union
Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association
Nunavut Teachers' Association

Institute Resource Person JOHN CLARKE

John Clarke has facilitated programs that promote the development of enhanced teaching practice, the creation and maintenance of positive and successful school cultures and the establishment of quality work environments. He has been a trainer, facilitator and presenter for schools, school districts and professional organizations across Canada, the United States and Australia for 25 years.

John is a Training Associate for Thinking Collaborative (www.thinkingcollaborative.com), offering “Adaptive Schools” and “Cognitive Coaching” Seminars to schools, school districts and organizations. John also, presently, works with school districts to create long term professional development plans aimed at student achievement, enhanced teacher practice and organizational success.

Special Qualifications

John has over 30 years experience as a counsellor, teacher and principal at the Junior and Senior High School levels. He holds a Master’s Degree in counselling psychology.



Program Overview

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- distinguish among the five forms of feedback
- use data to mediate thinking

2014 Candidate for CTF

Pam Langille



LOCAL EXPERIENCE (KINGS)

Offices:

- Table Officer (2009-Present)
- 1st Vice-President (2012-Present)
- Chair, Member Services Committee (2012-Present)
- Chair, Resolutions Committee (2012-Present)
- Chair, Nominating Committee (2013-Present)
- Vice-President of Professional Development (2009-2012)
- Chair, Professional Development Committee (2009-2012)
- AVRSB Teachers’ Centre Board of Directors (Kings Local Rep, 2009-2010)

Committees:

- Member Services Committee (2009-Present)
- Resolutions Committee (2009-Present)
- Finance Committee (2013-Present)
- Professional Development Committee (2009-Present)
- Public Affairs/Public Relations Committee (2008-2012)
- New Teacher Committee (2008-2009)
- Substitute Teacher Committee (2008-2009)
- School rep (2008-2009)

REGIONAL EXPERIENCE (AVRRC)

Offices:

- Chair – REWC (2012-Present)
- Secretary - AVRRC (2012-Present)

Committees:

- AVRRC Member - Kings Local 1st Vice-President (2012-Present)
- Regional Economic Welfare Committee (2012-Present)
- Regional Grievance Committee (2012-Present)
- Regional Job Security Committee (2013-Present)
- Regional Finance Committee (2012-2013)
- AVRRC - Member-At-Large (2011-2012)

PROVINCIAL EXPERIENCE

Offices:

- Chair - Ad hoc Committee on Member Engagement (2012-2013)

Committees:

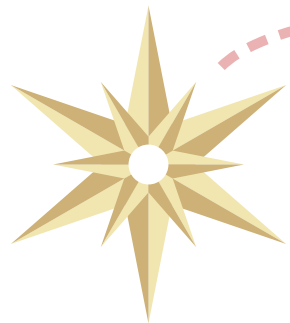
- Member Services Committee (2013-Present)
- Ad hoc Committee on Member Engagement (2012-2013)
- Resolutions Committee (2009-2011)
- Substitute Teacher Committee (2008-2009)
- Council Delegate (6 years)
- John Huntley Memorial Internship participant (2008)

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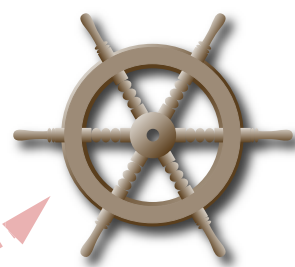
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Charting Your Course FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



The TRANSformation of Equity in Schools

by Gérard Cormier, Executive Staff Officer, Outreach Programs & Equity Services

When looking back on Nova Scotia public school classrooms over the years, it becomes apparent that education about equity issues has undergone some major changes. It was not all that long ago when segregation existed in Nova Scotia be it based on race, gender, religion, or ability. Racial segregation legally ended in 1954, most religious and gender segregation ended in the late 1960s, and the 1980s saw the inclusion of special needs students.

However, it was not until the early 1990s when legal protection was afforded Aboriginals, gays and lesbians with changes to the Nova Scotia Human Rights Act.

All of these societal changes are eventually felt in the classroom as schools are mini societies and as such are a reflection of them. Educators working within the system, however, had received very little to no education in some of these areas beyond courses in special education. Professional development opportunities were also limited to non-existent. Educators may not have had a direct voice in the societal changes that were happening but they were certainly expected to be able to deal with the issues that would arise within the educational setting.

Across the country teacher professional associations saw the creation of committees that would help educators deal with equity issues in the classroom. These committees had a variety of names such as Women in Education Committee, Diversity Committee, Equity Committee, Social Justice Committee, and Human Rights Committee just to name a few.

Their work was, and continues to be extremely important as they help create inclusive policies for their organization as well as provide valuable professional development opportunities and resources

for their members. For example, in 2009, the NSTU was the first teacher professional association east of Montreal to host a conference dealing with sexual minority issues in schools. It was entitled *Taking Pride in Equity* and was one of the most successful PD events to date. Finally, equity committees also monitor legislative changes that may occur, which may have an impact on education.

The NSTU Equity Committee is doing just that. In 2012, the Nova Scotia Human Rights Act was amended to add gender identity and gender expression as protected grounds in the Act. This amendment affords educators a valuable opportunity to assess and gain a better understanding of the needs of transgender students and educators and how we as an organization can attempt to ensure that transgender NSTU members and students have equal opportunity to education regardless of gender identity. This is extremely important work given that the results of EGALE Canada's school climate survey, *Every Class In Every School*, show that the instances of transphobia that transgender students face in education are even greater than the instances of homophobia faced by gay and lesbian students.

This past year the NSTU Equity Committee has been proactive on several fronts. Firstly, it reviewed NSTU Policy 19 Anti-homophobia and Anti-heterosexism and suggested amendments to the policy, which would make it inclusive of gender identity and gender expression. The amendments were sent to the NSTU provincial executive for their approval. At its February meeting the provincial executive accepted the proposed amendments and have sent them on to be considered by Annual Council in May. Furthermore, the NSTU Equity Committee will be instrumental in the creation of materials

that will be made available to NSTU members such as posters and pamphlets. Also, issues of gender identity and gender expression will be on the committee's radar as they plan the upcoming fall NSTU Equity Conference.

Finally, it should be noted that NSTU staff have been working on a Department of Education and Early Childhood Development committee,

which has been developing new provincial guidelines to be implemented in the near future. These guidelines will focus on supporting transgender and gender non-conforming students and staff in schools. The TRANSformation of Canadian society will be reflected in Nova Scotia schools and classrooms in part due to the above-mentioned initiatives taken on by the NSTU.

Lieutenant Governor's Respectful Citizenship Award

NSTU Equity and Outreach executive staff officer Gérard Cormier attended the first Lieutenant Governor's Respectful Citizenship Award ceremony on February 26. He is shown with student members of the Riverview High School Gender and Sexuality Alliance (GSA), from Coxheath, Cape Breton.

Of the 126 students nominated for the award, 68, both individual and as teams, were selected for 16 awards, two for each school board in the province. They were chosen by an advisory committee of representatives from the Office of the Lieutenant Governor, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, Nova Scotia Teachers Union, Nova Scotia School Boards Association, Nova Scotia Federation of Home and School Associations and La Fédération des parents acadiens de la Nouvelle-Écosse. Cormier was the NSTU representative on the advisory committee.



From left to right: Charles Sheppard (Cape Breton-Victoria Regional School Board - School Services Coordinator); students Carissa Kauffman, Mitchel Hill, and Jesse Coulson; Serena Matheson (teacher advisor to Riverview GSA), and Gérard Cormier. Missing from photo: Students Jasmine Ho and Miles Virick.

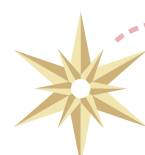
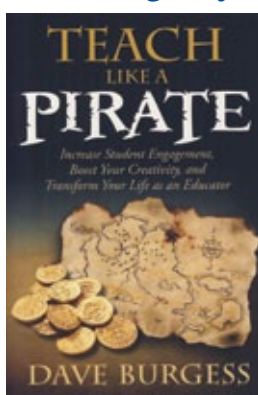
fresh

Putting new members in the KNOW!

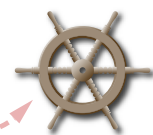
Email your name, home address, and school or campus with "FRESH" in the subject line to theteacher@nstu.ca by May 2 to be eligible for the draw.

Teach Like a Pirate
by Dave Burgess

This much talked about teaching resource by Dave Burgess and published by Dave Burgess Consulting, is a wonderful addition to any teacher's library. With over 30 hooks and 170 brainstorming ideas, teachers will reignite their student's passion for learning.



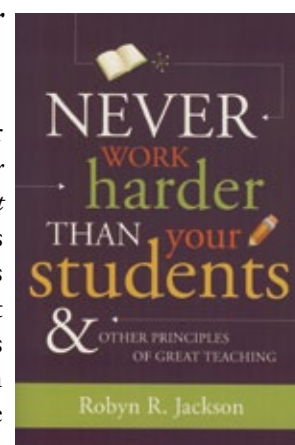
Charting Your Course FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



Email your name, home address, and school or campus name with "PD Giveaway" in the subject line to theteacher@nstu.ca by May 2 to be eligible for the draw.

Never Work Harder Than Your Students & Other Principles of Great Teaching
by Robyn R. Jackson

Robyn Jackson teaches educators how to be a master teacher by developing a master teacher mindset. *Never Work Harder Than Your Students & Other Principles of Great Teaching*, published by ASCD, explores seven principles of master teaching such as: start where your students are, know where your students are going and expect to get your students to their goal. Jackson incorporates personal stories with each principle to guide teachers in their journey to mastering their classrooms and reap the rewards of their hard work.



Amy MacLeod joins Canada’s Academy of Outstanding Principals

Congratulations go out to Halifax Regional School Board principal Amy MacLeod, principal of Ash Lee Jefferson Elementary School in Fall River, who was recently chosen as one of the 2014 Canada’s Outstanding Principals™ by The Learning Partnership.

“I was really surprised, humbled and honoured,” says the Newfoundland native on hearing the news she was Nova Scotia’s successful recipient in January.

MacLeod, now in her 23rd year of teaching and 12th year in administration is currently in her third principal role. She received her “outstanding principal” nod from her work at Basinview Drive Community School, where she was principal for five years. Amy was nominated by the Halifax Regional School Board and supported by members of the Basinview Drive Community School community, SAC members, former teachers, vice-principals and her current supervisor, Pamela Nicholson-Comeau. Her first principal role was at St. Stephen’s Elementary, and prior to that, she was vice-principal at Shannon Park School. She started out in the public education system in Nova Scotia as a primary teacher and vice-principal at Sir Charles Tupper School.

MacLeod knows the important role she and her fellow administrators play. “As an administrator you have responsibility for students and staff, our roles extend beyond being building managers, we are instructional leaders,” she says.

One of her nominators, former vice-principal Janice Murray, also knows first hand the important role MacLeod plays, “I have never worked with anyone other than Amy who was able to instill professional leadership in her team of teachers so well.”

In explaining how MacLeod motivated teams of teachers to plan and implement Learning Cafes, parent information evenings and school-based professional development days Murray says, “This is professional growth from the grass roots; where learning becomes practice! Teachers who are empowered to lead one another are leaders in the classroom. They’re willing to implement new practices and they’re honest in discussing what worked and what didn’t work.”

Murray also adds that, “Amy has a presence that exudes caring. Whether she is talking with a student, a parent, staff member or community member, she is always, ‘in the moment.’ It’s that ability to listen to others and to read what they need that makes her outstanding.”

MacLeod’s passion and commitment to continuous school improvement and student achievement for all learners, shared leadership style and evidence of positive partnerships with parents and community contributed to her nomination.

MacLeod was recognized for her work in promoting PEBS (Positive Effective Behavioural System) and developing a Mental Health & Wellness committee while at Basinview. “PEBS is a way of doing business—it’s about showing mutual respect for one another that extends beyond the walls of the classroom. It’s important that we support students to become well-rounded citizens so that they understand the value of tolerance and diversity.”

The Mental Health & Wellness Committee was comprised mostly of parents, teacher liaisons, the vice-principal, and MacLeod. “It was created out of need,” says MacLeod.



Amy MacLeod (left) is shown with Ash Lee Jefferson’s core French teacher Leslie Hill (right) and some of her Grade 5 students.

“We were seeing an increased number of students experiencing anxiety at a rapid rate and younger rate, and we wanted to do what we could to help and support parents in dealing with the issue.”

MacLeod says that the proactive nature of this committee helped to provide early intervention for students. “We know early intervention is the key,” she says.

Under her leadership the school also created a Girls Talk group, which involved Grade 5 students in helping them navigate self-image and pop culture. “With the support of “Health Promotions” grants, we also created a “Boys Connect” group to give boys the opportunity to get together and talk about what’s relevant to them.”

MacLeod was recently seconded to the Halifax Regional School Board as a supervisor of school administrators for both the Prince Andrew High and Musquodoboit Rural High families of schools, and the Flex Centre in Bedford.

Her continued focus on students has been the impetus behind her leadership. “I believe my service is to students first, it’s all about developing and allocating services to students. Student success is the driving force behind every decision I make. My leadership role as principal is critical in improving student achievement, for all learners,” she says. “As an instructional leader, I use every opportunity available to engage in classroom practice conversations with teachers. It makes sense that we would focus our attention on helping teachers become better at their jobs. When teachers learn, students learn.”

She also knows the priceless value of relationship building. “It’s important to remember to take time for laughter and take the time to build relationships with staff, teachers, parents and students,” she says. “It’s an integral part of being a leader. “It’s important to build trust and genuine relationships, to take the time and effort so people will feel valued.”

She is among 40 exceptional educators from every province and territory chosen this year. As part of Canada’s Outstanding Principals program, MacLeod participated in an executive leadership training program at the University of Toronto’s Rotman School of Management, from February 23 to 27. The program introduced them to leadership and management practices and theories presented by current business leaders and instructors.

“What a great opportunity to network with administrators,” says MacLeod. “We have a lot in common and it’s wonderful to have a forum to share ideas and collaborate with on educational matters.”

MacLeod is now a member of an assembly of 311 education leaders who have received this honour over the past nine years, becoming members of The Learning Partnership’s National Academy of Canada’s Outstanding Principals. The Academy offers principals ongoing networking, mentoring and professional development opportunities so that they can continually enhance their leadership skills.

For more information on this program and The Learning Partnership visit: <http://www.thelearningpartnership.ca>.

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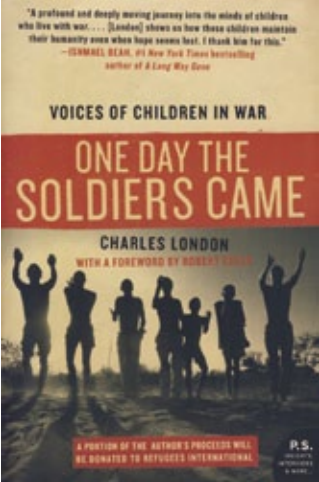
EQUITY BOOK REVIEW

Nova Scotia Teachers Union

Email your name, home address, and school or campus with “EQUITY” in the subject line to theteacher@nstu.ca by May 2 to be eligible for the draw.

Voices of Children in War: One Day the Soldiers Came
by Charles London

Charles London, a well-known journalist and writer, explores the world of refugee children in this moving book entitled, “Voices of Children in War: One Day the Soldiers Came”, published by Harper Perennial. London takes the reader on a journey with these children through their stories of survival and creates a firsthand portrait of their unique experiences.



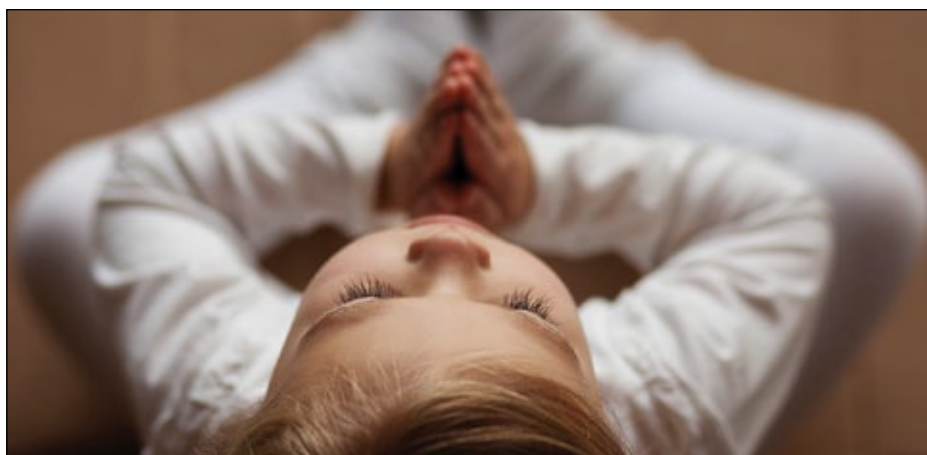
Thirty-three years ago when I started the path of meditation and mindfulness, many friends and colleagues believed I had lost my mind. In actuality, I had only begun to find it.

Over the years, I have had the privilege of sharing the power of mindfulness to thousands of teachers and students. This has revealed a path to a peaceful way of life that for many, previously seemed impossible. The youngest recipient of these teachings was the three-year-old child of a peer who was diabetic. After a painful incident with a needle, she developed an intense fear of them. We took a trip to the park and used the clouds in the air to settle her mind. Thereafter her mother would use imagery of the clouds to help alleviate her fears before administering her needles.

The story that made the most impact on my life was an 18-year-old alternative education student who, after receiving my teachings in the classroom, came for help. He was going to jail for a year for vehicular homicide. He knew the only way to survive being confined in prison was to rely upon the meditation tools he had learned.

Students today are dealing with unprecedented stressors—academic anxiety, low self-esteem, depression, peer pressure and substance abuse. People of all ages are beginning to turn to this thousand-year-old practice, which is time tested and proven to be a great aid in dealing with life's challenges and an effective tool for increasing concentration.

Mindfulness is the ability to live with present moment awareness, in a



non-judgemental way. Its focus may be one's breath, or the practice of observing one's thoughts without giving meaning to them. Many say they could never still the mind but that is not the goal. In fact, as children many of us engaged in this practice without any guidance. Remember the times you lay on the grass, becoming so engrossed in your surroundings—crickets buzzing, leaves fluttering and clouds drifting by—that you lost track of time? This was being mindful. Today, our minds are so inundated with information that our balance and well-being are threatened. We need to return to being that child, fully present in the moment.

Let's explore a simple exercise in becoming more mindful. Begin by sitting on a chair, holding your torso tall. Imagine your spine as a series of lego blocks, securely fastened to the earth while extending toward the sky. Close your eyes and become aware of your breath, as it flows in and out of your nostrils. In your mind's eye, continue watching the breath flow all the way down to the belly pushing gently on

the wall of the abdomen and then let it flow back out again.

The mind will want to create drama and distraction. Past events might flash before your eyes. As each thought arises, allow it to flow through your mind without any judgement. Just watch it arise and fall away. When you notice yourself follow a disturbance in your mind, label it as thinking and come back to the breath process. Just five minutes of this each day can have dramatically positive effects on your well-being.

Science is now showing that meditation changes the structure of the brain, holding tremendous potential for all of us. The cortex associated with attention, sensory awareness and emotional processing is thicker in meditators. As we continue to meditate, we are literally changing the neural pathways of the brain, allowing us to release habitual reactions to stress and create new routes that allow us to apply reasoning to a situation. This does not mean we become emotionless robots, but rather that we gain the ability to interact with life instead of react to it.

Through my years of teaching meditation, I have found that students are very receptive to walking meditation. A mindfulness meditation walk in nature not only draws students awareness to their bodies and their senses but also to the natural world around them. Encourage them to observe the details of nature, as they walk slowly and mindfully. As the wind blows across their face, invite them to completely experience the sensations. Each time their mind wanders, they label it thinking and return to being the witness. Back in the classroom, they can record what they observed. Most students are astonished by the detail of their lives and moments of peace they overlook each day.

Mindfulness is a movement that is revolutionizing school environments, requiring very little capital to initiate. The only thing it does require is the training and discipline to "Do everything with a mind that lets go."

Blair Abbass is a retired teacher of 32 years and a contributor to the PSP Yoga 11 course. He is currently writing a Mindfulness Meditation Manual, which is being overseen by Catherine Rahey and piloted in the classroom by Lyndsay Welsford for both regular stream and special needs students within the South Shore Regional School Board.

The Early Intervention Program (EIP) invites NSTU members to sign up for our Wellness email list at Be_Well@nstu.ca

Please contact Erin at ekeefe@staff.nstu.ca and provide your NSTU email address. This list provides information about the EIP and other wellness topics.

**For previous
The Well Teacher
articles, go to
www.nstu.ca**

**Click on Communications
» NSTU Publications
» The Teacher
» The Well Teacher**

executive highlights

March 28, 2014

- Filed Table Officers Report;
- Selected members to the Council Elections Committee for Annual Council 2014; Ron Robichaud, Chair, Community College; Virginie Latour, CSANE; Melina McNeil, Halifax County; Jonathan Church, ATA.
- Selected members to the Council Steering Committee for Annual Council 2014; Margaret Joiner, Chair, Community College; Neil MacIsaac, Antigonish; Bruce Abriel, Dartmouth.
- Approved a recommendation that Annual Council 2014 bestow NSTU Honourary Membership to Bill Redden, former NSTU Executive Director;
- Approved a recommendation that a donation of \$1,000 be approved for the CTF Urgent Action Appeal – *Ukraine: Solidarity and Support Fund*;
- Referred a funding request from AEA to the Finance & Property Committee for review;
- Approved an amendment to Operational Procedures regarding Negotiations;
- Approved the granting of two Local Service Awards be awarded at Annual Council 2014;
- Approved Audited Financial Statements as of July 31, 2013 to be forwarded to Annual Council 2014;
- Approved a recommendation that the Personnel Committee provide a report which outlines the frequency in which staff officers are in their regions;
- Approved four resolutions to Annual Council 2014 amending By-Laws and Standing Orders.



NOVA SCOTIA TEACHERS UNION

2013 - 2014 COMMITTEES

At the March 28 Provincial Executive meeting, the following NSTU members were appointed to the committees listed:

STANDING COMMITTEES

Council Elections Committee for Annual Council 2014:
Ron Robichaud, Chair, Community College; Virginie Latour, CSANE; Melina McNeil, Halifax County; and Jonathan Church, ATA

Council Steering Committee for Annual Council 2014:
Margaret Joiner, Chair, Community College; Neil MacIsaac, Antigonish; Bruce Abriel, Dartmouth

NSTU Leader Profile

WALLY FIANDER - Digby-Yarmouth

NSTU Provincial Executive



Wally Fiander’s NSTU first foray into the NSTU was a kind of a “baptism by fire” experience. During his second year of teaching he was attending a Yarmouth Local meeting and, “I ran out to take a phone call, and when I returned I was told that someone nominated me for the VP of economic welfare,” he says. “That was it! There was no looking back.”

The VP economic welfare position, now known as first vice-president can be highly demanding. He reminisces about that early experience. “That year we had a staffing crisis,” he says. “I got my pink slip.” He recalls that “Strike Binders” were sent to Locals. “Two weeks later, the pink slips were rescinded, and no permanent teacher lost their job.”

Fiander started teaching 18 years ago, and has spent his teaching career as a Science 10 teacher at Yarmouth Consolidated Memorial High School. “I got my permanent contract 17 years ago and became the school rep.” Fiander says he was fortunate to start his involvement with the Local during a time when former provincial NSTU president Brian Forbes was the Yarmouth Local president.

He must have done something right, because after serving a term and half as the VP of economic welfare he was elected as the Local president, a position he initially held for three years (2002 – 2005). “I was then an acting president when former president Eileen Coady was seconded to the NSTU staff for a term (2006-07).” He also served as the Tri-County Regional Representative Council (RRC) Chair from 2003-2005. “Then I was first-vp, then VP of PA/PR, then back to RRC Chair (2010-11),” he adds. Fiander has also served on several provincial committees including member services, appeals, Distance Education and was the NSTU rep on the Science 10 curriculum review.

In 2011 he started serving as a provincial executive member. He has one year left of his second two-year term.

The reason he initially got involved remains a motivating factor for his continued contribution. “I got involved as a new teacher because of a workload issue. I needed help with what was being loaded on, so I went to the NSTU and they encouraged me to take a stand. The NSTU has been there to empower me as a professional.”

“It was more about helping myself at first, but what I’ve learned from the union that’s been invaluable is what my rights are and where I stand.”

He has continued to help many other teachers through the many NSTU leadership positions he has held. “It’s like an addiction,” he admits. “And while I don’t know what I’ll do next, I will remain involved in some way.”

While he wants to continue to be involved he also knows it’s important to encourage others. When he was involved with the NSTU’s structure review process about 10 years ago, this became evident. “What came out of that is the importance to step aside and allow other members to get involved in leadership roles—get new blood.”

He remains concerned about succession planning and how that affects the profession and the NSTU. “We had a big rush of retirements when I got involved and I went from being a newbie to an experienced member, within three years. We’re starting to lose the experience and history, it’s going out the door.”

He also worries that with a declining teaching force and NSTU membership it’s more difficult to find people to get involved. “This, coupled with the challenges of teaching make it more difficult to persuade people that getting involved with the Union is worth the extra effort.”

Fiander, who comes from a family of 18, is the father of Liam 10 and Kate 12. And while he and wife Sarah have a much smaller family than the one he grew up in, he’s surrounded by his family of students on a daily basis and he and his wife have been very involved with Education First (EF) Educational Tours taking groups of students to Europe. During the March Break he travelled to Europe with 33 students from a number of Tri-County Regional School Board schools.

His wife Sarah is also a teacher, and literally works around the corner. She teaches English 10 & 11 at YMCHS. “We actually don’t see a lot of each other during the run of a day, but we use the time we travel home from school to pick up our kids to decompress about the day.”

As he thinks about his last year—for now—on the provincial executive he recalls how it started. “The first year was very eye-opening. I thought I had a pretty good handle on things,” he jokes. Since then, he has served on the nominating, public affairs and currently the public affairs/public relations committees through his provincial executive role.



Wally Fiander and his wife Sarah are shown with Martin Luther King III. They were fortunate enough to meet him at the We Day event at the Halifax Metro Centre on November 27, 2013.

The Teacher
has two issues
remaining.

The deadlines are
April 17
(May issue)

May 23
(June issue)

Contact:
Sonia Matheson at
1-800-565-6788 /
477-5621

theteacher@nstu.ca
smatheson@staff.nstu.ca

YOGA IN SCHOOLS

7th Annual Summer Institute Teacher Training

A course that inspires growth, connection and inner peace.

This program will provide teachers with an introduction to Mindfulness Meditation, Yoga, Yoga II, Yoga for Special Needs and Autism, with physical practice and experiential activities. These hours are part of the optional 200 hr certification which is required to teach Yoga II in schools. Graduates of the 200 hr certification program will receive all yoga programs designed by Jenny.

“This program has CHANGED my life personally and professionally!! I have learned the importance of taking time for myself.”

—Daneen Dymond, Yoga in Schools Graduate, NB

“Joy and gratitude are palpable throughout the journey. This course is changing many lives, having lasting effects within the education system.”

—Sue Stevenson, Principal, Parrsboro High

THIS PD WORKSHOP WILL LEAVE YOU FEELING REFRESHED, RENEWED AND INSPIRED.

Who can attend: This program is suitable for all teachers/specialist especially Phys. Ed., support staff and guidance.

Leaders: Jenny Kierstead, author of 6 yoga school programs and National award-winning educator, is founder of Breathing Space Yoga Studios. She has trained and mentored the many teachers introducing yoga to their schools. Blair Abbass has been teaching meditation and stress reduction for students and teachers for over 25 years and was the first teacher to bring Yoga II to HRSB.

Date(s): July 21st to the 24th

Location: Chocolate Lake Hotel, Halifax

Time: 9:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. **Fee:** \$ 500 + HST (check local PD for funding)

Contact: Jenny Kierstead and Blair Abbass (902) 444-YOGA (9642) / info@BreathingSpaceYogaStudio.ca

*Alternative start date Full program September 20/14

FOUR DAYS THAT CAN TRANSFORM YOUR LIFE AND YOUR TEACHING CAREER



Community College Members Make a Difference



Nova Scotia
Teachers Union

Role of librarians changing in information age

Stories by Connie Thiesen

Special Features Writer

(This article was reprinted from the Chronicle Herald, NSTU Advertorial, November 22, 2013.)



Photo: Joe Robichaud

Carly Brake is quick to tell you she is not the stereotypical librarian of yesteryear.

“I do hear some of the old jokes still, but I also have some people who are like ‘you don’t fit the image I have in my head,’” says Brake, a Professional Support IT Campus Librarian in Halifax.

“I don’t really have an indoor voice. I tend to be a very loud talker, among other things. They’re thinking of that stereotypical image of the more stern or serious older woman who has their hair in a bun, or with the glasses perched on her nose, who is shushing people...but that’s not what we’re really about and in fact, when I have people who are interested in the field and talk to me career-wise, one of the first things I say to them is ‘what’s amazing is how much of my job is about interacting and dealing with people.’”

Brake says with the expanse of information now available online, the need to help people find the right information has been heightened.

“We want to make sure students have the skills they need to be lifelong learners because part of lifelong learning is not only knowing when you need information, but how to find it and how to determine what’s the best information for you,” explains Brake.

As part of the new digital reality, NSCC has moved toward providing support to students when and where they need it.

That includes Live Help, an online chat service provided in tandem with other academic libraries in Nova Scotia which offers student resource support six days a week, including five days a week until 10 p.m. A streaming video collection, ebooks, new databases and subject guides to support the information needs of each program are also now part of the library’s offerings. To help students make the most of the resources, workshops, both in person and virtually, are provided.

Brake’s ability to quickly wade through vast amounts of information hasn’t gone unnoticed. She’s especially proud of the title “ninja librarian,” as one student dubbed her.

“What’s great is seeing the people who are happy or actually make a point to stop and say ‘thank you’ or ‘I got a great mark on that paper.’ I do it because I believe in it, but it is nice to get a thank you from people or to get recognition.”

Brake is one of 156 registrars, librarians, counsellors, student support workers and training coordinators at NSCC campuses across the province represented by the NSTU Professional Support bargaining unit.

“Our professional support members work to support NSCC students’ needs, to ensure they are successful in their programs and courses,” says NSTU president Shelley Morse.

Competition helps students learn to think outside the box



Photo: Joe Robichaud

While NSCC has never won the ROV underwater robotics competition outright since it started entering teams about seven years ago, community college faculty member Peter Oster says it has caught the attention of industry.

Marine Advanced Technology Education holds the annual event somewhere in North America each year that challenges students at the junior high, high school and college and university level to take part in an ocean disaster scenario that involves building and designing an underwater vehicle to accomplish a mission.

Students from programs ranging from mechanical technology to business get involved, with a core group of six usually travelling to present the project. This year’s competition will take place in Thunder Bay, Michigan in June.

“They learn how to think outside the box because they’re not only dealing with what we already taught them, but they’re running into new problems,” explains Oster, who teaches at the School of Trades and Technology at the Waterfront Campus in Dartmouth. “That student will also learn mechanics, problem-solving...you build something and you try it and it doesn’t work so you have to go back to the drawing board...there’s a lot of learning there.”

Oster says with the prevalence of ocean-related business in N.S., local industry is especially keen on the competition.

“When companies hear the student is in the ROV, their eyes light up and they know that this student was doing more than just what he was supposed to do in school, he was going beyond and believe me when they work on this ROV they spend a lot of time here — weekends and weeknights working on this, trying to make sure they are ready for the competition. It almost becomes a full-time job building this thing,” said Oster.

Former student Cory Cauvier was involved with the competition both years of his Electronic Engineering Technology Program. While there were a lot of late nights, Cauvier says he loved every minute.

“I learned more from the ROV competition and the design than I did from my schooling. The schooling gave me the foundation, but the ROV gave me the direction of where and how the industry does stuff and that’s based on documentation, timelines, understanding how much you can do in a certain, given allotted time,” explains Cauvier.

His experience with the competition eventually led him to make contact with his future employer. Cauvier was presenting the ROV at the school’s annual Tech Showcase, post-graduation, when his now-boss at GeoSpectrum Technologies Inc. in Burnside stopped by to talk to him about the project. Cauvier emailed over his resume and four months later was called in for an interview.

Cauvier is now a senior electronic technologist helping engineers do design work. The growing company specializes in underwater acoustics used in applications from whale observation to security.

He says he’s not the only one whose involvement with the ROV helped him land a job.

“They pretty much ask you on interviews more questions about the ROV team and how it affected us and what we learned from it and troubleshooting it...they asked us more questions about that than the schooling itself,” says Cauvier. “Any project like that that’s competitively-based really hones your skills because you know there’s a timeline, there’re consequences, leadership-building and I think that it was a huge benefit towards me and my fellow ROV’ers for sure.”

Making tax time accessible to all Canadians!

Canadians with disabilities and those who live with them know that, over a lifetime, the costs of overcoming barriers can really add up. That’s why the Canada Revenue Agency offers credits and benefits for Canadians with disabilities to help offset these costs—from childhood through the school years to the workforce to retirement.

If you have a severe and prolonged impairment in physical or mental functions and you are eligible for the **disability tax credit (DTC)**, you may be able to reduce the amount of income tax you pay in a year. Talk to a qualified medical practitioner about the disability tax credit and ask if you may be eligible. You can apply for the DTC by filling out the application, having your disability tax credit form certified by a qualified practitioner, and submitting it to the CRA for approval. You may also be able to transfer any unused parts of this disability amount to another supporting person to reduce his or her federal tax owing.

Do you care for a child with a disability? If your child is under 18 years old and eligible for the DTC, you may be able to reduce the amount of income tax you pay in a year by claiming the disability amount for a dependant. In addition, you can apply for the **child disability benefit**, which is a tax-free, monthly benefit to help families facing these circumstances. You may also be eligible for the **family caregiver amount** of up to \$2,040 in calculating certain non-refundable tax credits. Take advantage of the credits and benefits available specifically to help families dealing with disabilities with their expenses throughout the year.

For long-term financial planning, the **registered disability savings plan (RDSP)** helps reduce financial worries for those with a disability and their loved ones. In particular, the RDSP helps parents and others contribute up to \$200,000 for the long-term financial security of a person who is eligible for the DTC. To find out more, go to www.cra.gc.ca/rdsp.

The purchase and use of supports and support services like talking textbooks, job coaching services, and Braille note-taker devices are eligible expenses that you may be able to claim as part of the **disability supports deduction**. These expenses must have been incurred as a result of your being employed or carrying on a business, conducting research based on a grant, or attending an educational institution.

Part of the CRA website is dedicated to persons with disabilities and the specific tax scenarios that may affect them. Go to www.cra.gc.ca/disability, where you will find information on how to determine if your impairment may qualify you for the DTC.

The CRA prides itself on making its services accessible to all Canadians. If you are visually impaired, the CRA offers publications and forms in alternative formats—such as Braille, large print, etext, and MP3 audio. If you have a hearing or speech impairment, you can use teletypewriter services by calling 1-800-665-0354. Or, with your written permission, the CRA will speak to an operator-assisted relay service for you or arrange to have a sign language interpreter available at a meeting. Call 1-800-959-8281 for more information.

If you need help filing your income tax and benefit return, have a modest income, and a simple tax situation, contact the Community Volunteer Income Tax Program, which runs volunteer tax clinics across the country. To find a volunteer tax preparation clinic, go to www.cra.gc.ca/volunteer.

Remember, the deadline to file your individual income tax and benefit return and pay any amount owing is April 30—don’t wait!

Don’t miss the latest CRA news or tax tips – follow the CRA on Twitter: @CanRevAgency



NSTU STANDING & OTHER COMMITTEES



Would you like to serve the NSTU at the Provincial Level?

The NSTU needs input from the widest-possible cross section of its members to make the most effective contribution to education. Members serve on most provincial standing committees for a maximum of two years,* so we are constantly in search of skilled and interested persons to make our committee structure operate successfully. Committee membership is open to Active and Active Reserve Members.

**NSTU Operational Procedures state: Appointment to a committee will be for one defined term of two years. In extraordinary circumstances, an extension of one year is permissible.*

- **APPEALS** - reviews applications for assistance on appeals under Section 26 of the Education Act and decides if the appealing teacher is to receive legal assistance from the Nova Scotia Teachers Union.
- **COMITÉ DE PROGRAMMATION ACADIENNE** - studies the curriculum and all proposed changes in it as it relates to Acadian schools under the direction of CSAP and reports its findings to the Provincial Executive.
- **CURRICULUM** - studies the curriculum of schools and proposed changes and reports the findings and recommendations to the Provincial Executive. **NOTE: Three appointments will be made, one of which is available to a CSANE member.**
- **EQUITY** - is concerned with matters pertaining to the status of women, equity and diversity issues.
- **FINANCE & PROPERTY** - prepares the annual budget for Council, keeps informed of the Union's financial position, supervises the payment of accounts, forwards financial statements to Executive meetings, determines the amount of travel expenses to Council and checks every NSTU expenditure on property.
- **MEMBER SERVICES** - identifies bargainable items; prepares background information related to merits of negotiable items; identifies trends and developments in teacher bargaining across Canada; reviews economic forecasts; considers Council resolutions; plans workshops for REWC negotiations; reviews results of the most recent contract bargaining. **NOTE: One appointment will be made to the Member Services Committee to a Community College member.**
- **PDAF** - reviews applications for financial assistance to support innovative curriculum projects and awards grants to successful applicants.
- **PENSION** - studies pension resolutions and keeps the Executive informed of trends and changes affecting teachers' pensions. **NOTE: Two appointments will be made to the Pension Committee, one from the Annapolis Region and one from the South Shore/Tri-County Region.**
- **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT** - reviews and develops policy programs and ideas intended to improve the effectiveness of teachers as professionals and to advance education through research in Nova Scotian classrooms.
- **PUBLIC AFFAIRS/PUBLIC RELATIONS** - promotes the involvement in public affairs by encouraging NSTU members (and others) to take an active part in government affairs pertaining to public education. Examines and reviews NSTU public relations and communications programs.
- **TEACHERS WITH ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES** - provides a voice, within the NSTU, for teachers with administrative responsibilities.
- **SHEONORAIL BOARD OF DIRECTORS** - the Sheonorail Foundation is an arms-length charitable agency created to fund school and campus-based projects and research directed at reducing violence in schools and Community College campuses. The Board of Directors is the governing body of the Foundation; it develops Foundation policy, mandates Foundation initiatives and approves project funding.
- **SUBSTITUTE TEACHER** - advises the Provincial Executive on issues affecting and of concern to substitute teachers. **NOTE: Appointments to the Substitute Teacher Committee are made at the October meeting of the Provincial Executive. Therefore, the deadline for receipt of applications to this Committee is October 10, 2014.**
- I would be willing to serve on any committee.

Applications must be received in Central Office by Friday, June 27, 2014

Note exceptions: Substitute Teacher Committee (October 10, 2014)

Standing Committees will be appointed at the Executive Meeting scheduled for **August 2014**.

Applications may be made online, [click here to download](#) from the NSTU website at www.nstu.ca (under Structure/Provincial Executive/Committees) and forward to: Nominating Committee, Nova Scotia Teachers Union, 3106 Joseph Howe Drive, Halifax, N.S. B3L 4L7

The NSTU reserves the right to re-advertise any position if a sufficient number of applications are not received by the deadline.

June deadline for
The Teacher
is May 23.
Contact
theteacher@nstu.ca

Student engagement was the impetus behind Sandy Simms' PDAF project, *Tech Up @ Oceanview*. Through the use of technology in conjunction with conventional instruction and electronic media, "I wanted to increase student engagement throughout the learning process, to better meet students' needs by motivating learning, fostering independence and simplifying communication for students," says Simms.

Through the project, junior high students at Oceanview Education Centre in Glace Bay are getting hands-on technology access to acquire learning outcomes in the Grade 8 math and science curriculum. Through a grant of \$4,475, Simms purchased 27 Android tablets, Bell Aliant Learning Centre access for 560 students, external drives for storage, surge protected power bars and other storage drives. The Grade 8 science and math teacher has enabled students in each of his five classes to be engaged with texts and video content

relevant to the curriculum using the tablets and supporting materials. "The materials have been infused throughout the math and science curriculum, but will become a natural extension of any in-class exploration of all study areas," he says.

Simms, a former coal miner, now in his 12th year of teaching has been integrating technology into his core subjects on a regular basis, and with the PDAF grant he has been able to make it an integral part of his teaching and learning environment. "Using technology to deliver, manage and guide students through the learning process is no longer an optional approach in educating students but an essential element for all students, regardless of their abilities."

What he loves about using the tablets and associated materials in his teaching is an added element in meeting all students' needs. "The beauty of this system is the ability to differentiate instruction in a confidential and non-threatening manner," he comments.



Oceanview Education Centre teacher Sandy Simms is shown with students in his Grade 8 Science class.

The use of tablets, software and Internet assets in his classroom has also helped to further create a working environment that encourages working together. "It also encourages the exchange of ideas on the student to student and student to teacher level," he adds. He has allowed students to explore a variety of electronic texts, written, visual and video connected to the curriculum that not only connect with science and math, but also outcomes in English Language Arts and Communication Technology. "This project also helps parents communicate and participate more in their child's education."

Simms has already seen success with this project. "If students seek out opportunities to integrate technology to assist with their learning, I've been successful," he comments. "Thus far, the interactive learning process for both my math and science classes has been excellent due to the increased interest on the part of the students."

He says the learning curve was very fast and his students rose to the challenge. "They like it, it motivates them." Each Monday,

students can livestream assignments and homework that is due at the end of each week. Students can do this at home as well, and have a better opportunity to catch up, if they've missed class time.

Not only is Simms thrilled with the increase in student engagement and students taking more charge of their own learning, but he's also greatly reduced paper in his classroom through the *Tech Up @ Oceanview* project. "I've virtually done away with paper in my science classes."

The PDAF program encourages innovative program development in Nova Scotia's public schools. Co-sponsored by the NSTU and the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development with an annual sum of \$200,000, it provides financial support for projects directly related to the Public School Program. For more information visit the Professional Development portal of the NSTU website at www.nstu.ca or contact NSTU executive staff officer Betty-Jean Aucoin at 1-800-565-6788 or 477-5621 or bjaucoin@nstu.ca or pd@nstu.ca.



Overseas opportunities for Teachers in the Nova Scotia International Programs

Recruitment is underway for September 2014 openings in the Nova Scotia international programs. Teach in an exciting environment or apply your school leadership expertise to a new set of challenges. Nova Scotia programs in China (grades 10-12) and the UAE (grades P-12) offer:

- competitive pay
- annual return flights
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- paid holidays

Live and work in a new culture, teaching the Nova Scotia curriculum. We are always seeking teachers with commitment and energy for positions in the Nova Scotia international programs.

To learn more, email us at:
internationalprograms@gov.ns.ca

From time to time, opportunities arise throughout the year for short-term positions. If you would like to learn more, please contact us at the above email address for more information.

'A mind that is stretched by a new experience can never go back to its old dimensions.' Oliver Wendell Holmes



The Program Development Assistance Fund (PDAF) committee met on February 28 to vet the most recent round of applications for PDAF grants. This committee and fund is administered jointly by the NSTU and the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. NSTU public school members are eligible for individual grants of up to \$5,000. From (l-r): Alex Bruce (ECD rep), Betty-Jean Aucoin (NSTU staff liaison), NSTU committee representatives Milton Bonnar (Northside-Victoria Local), and Roy Bourgeois (ECD rep). Missing: Erin Moser (Halifax County Local).

Twelve projects were approved to receive funding for this round of applications. They are: *Math Mini Lessons* (Matthew Siereys); *CNC Vinyl Cutting* (Rob MacIlreith); *Welcome to Halifax, The Beautiful Place We call Home* (Laura Slaunwhite); *Apprenons les sons* (Courtney Chiasson); *Instrumental Music Portfolio Learning* (Pam Mason); *Duck, Duck, Goose* (Loreen Allen); *Berwick Talent Board* (Gloria Armstrong); *Threads* (Anna Whalen); *Let's Play Ball! A Grade 10 Venture at RECA* (Tommy Samson); *Now You Don't See Me, Now We Do* (Preman Edwards); *The Use of 3D Printers in Education technology, science, engineering, social entrepreneurial skills in ALL students* (Ann Wentzell); and *Write Here, Write Now* (Melissa Doherty). **The next deadline, the final one for this school year, is June 1, 2014.**

“Digital natives” turn to parents and teachers for digital literacy skills, new study finds

Canadian youth are not as digitally literate as adults may think they are, according to new research released on March 31, 2014 by MediaSmarts. Though today’s young people have grown up immersed in digital media, they still rely on parents and teachers to help them advance their skills in areas such as searching and verifying online information.

MediaSmarts, a Canadian not-for-profit organization, surveyed over 5,400 students in classrooms across the country on their Internet behaviours and attitudes for its Young Canadians in a Wired World study. The fourth report from the survey findings – Experts or Amateurs? Gauging Young Canadians’ Digital Literacy Skills – explores the level of young people’s digital literacy, how they are learning these skills and how well digital technologies are being used in classrooms to support digital literacy.

The research shows that although students are actively engaging with digital media through social networking, gaming and video streaming, they are learning and applying only the digital skills they consider essential to the context of the task. For example, across all age groups, youth use a variety of strategies to verify online information, but will often only put their skills to use if they see an immediate benefit to doing so, such as for a school project. Youth are eager to learn more skills, with teachers being one of their main sources of information; however, there are often technological barriers in the classroom such as blocked websites and a lack of access to digital devices.

“Young people are mistakenly considered experts in digital technologies because they’re so highly connected, but they are still lacking many essential digital literacy skills,” says Jane Tallim, Co-Executive Director of MediaSmarts, “Parents and teachers are playing a crucial role in teaching them to navigate the digital world, but we need to ensure that digital literacy programs reflect youth’s lived experiences so they will find the skills relevant enough to learn and apply them.”

- Key findings include:
- 53 per cent of girls have learned how to search for information online from teachers compared to 38 per cent of boys.
 - Parents (47per cent) and teachers (45 per cent) are the main sources for learning about searching for information online.
 - 61 per cent of students use more than one search engine to find information online.
 - 35 per cent of students in Grades 7-11 use advanced search engine tools.
 - 80 per cent of students have received instruction in evaluating and authenticating online information.
 - 46 per cent of students (29 per cent in Grade 4 and 72 per cent in Grade 11) agree with the statement, “Downloading music, TV shows or movies illegally is not a big deal”.
 - 36 per cent say that they have had trouble finding something they need for their school work due to filtering software.
 - 41per cent of Grade 9 students say their teachers have used social media to help them learn.

To view the full report visit <http://mediasmarts.ca/ycww/experts-or-amateurs-gauging-young-canadians-digital-literacy-skills>. Follow the conversation using hashtag #YCWW.



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The Teacher, April 2014, Page 13

Cape Breton students celebrate African Heritage

On Wednesday, February 26 students from Tompkins Memorial School in Reserve Mines, Cape Breton held an African Heritage Month celebration in which they sang and played a variety of African spiritual songs, folk songs and instrumental pieces. “This was a part of our school’s ongoing celebration of African Heritage,” says principal Kelly McNenley. “Celebrating heritage and culture is an ongoing theme at Tompkins as students continue to recognize the value of celebrating diversity.”

Music teacher, Linda Bryden helped the students from Grades Primary to 6 prepare for this concert which entertained parents, community guests and Tompkins students.



Grade 5 students perform Take Time In Life, (song, instruments and movement).



NSTU CAMPAIGN GUIDELINES

NSTU Annual Council 2014 delegates running for Council Committees (CTF Delegate, Discipline, Professional, Pension, Appeals or Resolutions) have until **April 17** to submit their platforms for publication in the **May 13** issue of *The Teacher*. The information should be given or sent directly to *The Teacher* office at theteacher@nstu.ca.

Complete Campaign Guidelines are found here: <http://nstu.ca/default.asp?id=190&sfid=content.id&search=600&mn=1.373.375.385>



Grade 2 students presenting the song There’s a Little Wheel a Turnin in my Heart.

AUGUST 11-12, 2014

MOUNT SAINT VINCENT UNIVERSITY
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ANNE DAVIES & SANDRA HERBST LEADING EQUITABLE ASSESSMENT PRACTICES



Anne Davies



Sandra Herbst

Anne Davies and Sandra Herbst, two of the world’s foremost experts on assessment for learning, introduce the concept of Assessment Leadership for Learning and how you can move your system forward — whether your system is a school, a cluster of schools, a department, or an entire district.

This two day conference is a partnership between the NSELC and Education Leadership Canada® and will run in a workshop format allowing participants the opportunity to focus on Formative Assessment through the lens of equitable assessment practices for all students. Embedded in the two days will be multiple opportunities for reflection, processing and questioning where do we go from here? These sessions are designed for school teams and/or school communities who will provide an opportunity to plan together. Each team will receive supportive materials such as PowerPoints, graphic organizers and a loaded NSELC memory stick.

Register
Starting April 1
www.nselc.ca

REGISTRATION FEE

\$470 (plus tax)
(includes continental breakfast, nutrition breaks and lunch each day)

WORKSHOP AGENDA

Registration: 7:30 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.
Day One Workshop: 9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
Day Two Workshop: 8:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

HOTEL RESERVATIONS

Email patricia.drake@msvu.ca



Education Leadership Canada®, a division of the Ontario Principals’ Council, offers multiple professional development opportunities for current and aspiring school leaders.

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The Nova Scotia Educational Leadership Consortium is a non-profit organization comprised of partners who share a common interest and commitment to public education. The NSELC offers a wide variety of professional learning programs which develop and expand learning for educators who are or aspire to be educational leaders. These programs are based on current research and best practices, and provide educators with the skills development they require to become more effective leaders.

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Teachers who make a difference

Chara Ross

Chara Ross was not aware of the NSTU’s *Teachers Make a Difference* program when she learned she was the Chignecto-Central Regional School board recipient randomly chosen and being recognized as one of nine teachers who makes a difference for students.

The *Teachers Make a Difference* campaign, now in its second year, helps to raise the positive profile of NSTU members, giving students the opportunity to nominate a public school teacher, APSEA or Community College member who has made a big difference in their life, and contributed to their school and community.

“I had no idea about the *Teachers Make a Difference* campaign,” she says. “Our librarian posted the info on our bulletin board,” she says. “I know of one of the students that nominated me, and it blew my mind that they actually took their own time to do that.”

She says that being recognized in this way, “Makes teaching all worth it, and that the work you are doing is sinking in,” but admits, “It’s difficult to accept the award in a profession where everyone strives to make a difference and is making a difference.” Ever the humble teacher—true to her profession, Ross says, “It’s sometimes hard to reflect that back on yourself.”

It’s clear that Ross has made a difference in the lives of her students. She received four nominations through the program this year. Here are some the comments included in her nominations:

“My teacher makes a difference because she makes it fun and easy to understand and complete the outcomes.”

“She is amazing! She is all for expressing ourselves in the classroom. Every day when I go into the class she talks to me like she’s my friend, which makes it easier to talk to her about things I can’t with my parents. Honestly she always makes learning fun and easy to grasp. Every kid that goes into her class leaves it with a smile.

“This teacher makes a difference because she is someone that you can talk to about things that may not even have to do with the subject. I have got my best marks in this class and science isn’t even my subject!”

“Mrs. Ross makes a difference because she explains what she’s teaching about and doesn’t rush us to do the things that need to be done. I like her because I find it easier to focus and get good grades because she does a lot of fun stuff that has to do with learning about that certain subject. I think that if more teachers were like her, so many people would have outstanding grades. In my opinion, she’s the best.”

Now in her ninth year of teaching, Ross has a busy schedule of teaching at Parrsboro Regional Elementary and Parrsboro Regional High Schools. Splitting her time between the P to 6 and the Grades 7 to 12 buildings, which are right beside each other, she has 11 teachables, “I spend my mornings in the high school and my afternoons teaching phys ed at the elementary school.” Ross is the P to 6 phys ed specialist and teaches Grade 8 & 9 science and healthy living. The Amherst native has also taught at Northport Elementary and EB Chandler schools.

NSTU/St. FX continue collaboration with another Mock Annual Council

Pre-service teachers got a taste for how teacher organizations conduct their annual general meetings through a “mock council” March 6 at St. Francis Xavier University.

This was another feature of a unique collaboration between the NSTU and St. Francis Xavier University’s School of Education that has been ongoing since the fall of 2004.

This tradition has been part of the NSTU University liaison program with St. FX, which began as a way to teach about unionism and the role teacher organizations play in developing the teaching profession. Student participants organize themselves into Locals, and research, write, and present resolutions that fall under a number of categories including curriculum and governance. President Shelley Morse was the acting chair residing over the Mock Council, and NSTU executive staff officers Betty-Jean Aucoin and Jack MacLeod were on hand along with St. FX School of Education faculty to help facilitate the process.



Back (l-r): NSTU president Shelley Morse; Dr. Robert White, professor; NSTU member services executive staff officer Jack MacLeod; Dr. David Young, professor; students Melissa Campbell, Piel Paul, and Frank Webb; and St. FX BEd program manager Garnet Patterson. Front (l-r): BEd students James Stewart, Emily Kehoe, Zoe Fielding, and Cindy Bernard; and NSTU professional development executive staff officer Betty-Jean Aucoin.



NSTU president Shelley Morse presents Chara Ross with her *Teachers Make a Difference* certificate.

NSTU president Shelley Morse presented Ross with her certificate and school cheque at the Cumberland Local Meet & Greet on March 20. “This is the first Cumberland Local event I’ve attended,” she says. “It’s really nice to meet everyone and I know I need to make more time to get involved with the Local.” Ross, the mother of a 2.5-year-old son, also spends time coaching for her school.

She says she’s splitting the \$300 cheque between both her school’s breakfast program and library. “We have a need in both areas, and already have students looking to order books they want, and I know that many students rely on our breakfast program.”



Legal advice.

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coming events

April is...

Day of Pink – April 9 (<http://www.dayofpink.org/>); Anniversary of the Battle of Vimy Ridge – April 9 (<http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/history/first-world-war/vimy-ridge>); National Volunteer Week – April 6-12 (<http://volunteer.ca/nvw2014>); Daffodil Month - Cancer Awareness (<http://www.cancer.ca/en/get-involved/events-and-participation/find-an-event-near-you/daffodil-month/?region=ns>); Parkinson's Awareness Month (<http://www.parkinsonmaritimes.ca>); Oral Health Month (National Dental Hygienists Week - April 6 to April 12 (<http://www.cdha.ca>); National Organ and Tissue Donor Awareness Week - April 20 to April 27 (<http://www.legacyoflife.ns.ca>); World Hemophilia Day - April 17 (<http://www.wfh.org/en/news--events/events/world-hemophilia-day-2014-EN>); Earth Day - April 22 (<http://www.earthday.ca/>); World Malaria Day - April 25 (<http://www.who.int/campaigns/malaria-day/2014/event/en/>); National Day of Mourning - April 28 (<http://www.ccohs.ca/events/mourning/>)

APRIL 9

Day of Pink

April 9 is the Day of Pink, International Day against Bullying, Discrimination, Homophobia and Transphobia in schools and communities. Everyone is invited to celebrate diversity by wearing pink and organizing activities in workplaces, communities and schools.

The NSTU is one of 11 teacher organizations promoting this initiative. International Day of Pink is a program of Jer's Vision Canada's Youth Diversity Initiative (<http://www.jersvision.org/>), an organization (anti-bullying and anti-discrimination) recognized for its work with youth groups.

For more information on how to get involved visit: <http://www.dayofpink.org/>

APRIL 10 TO 13

National Orff Conference

The NSTU is a proud bronze sponsor of the National Orff Conference, **Ensemble 2014**, is taking place at the Halifax Marriott Harbourfront Hotel from April 10-13. Join your music colleagues in choosing from over 40 workshops (in French and English) that will inspire your classroom teaching and strengthen your music program.

For more information go to <http://orffcanadainconference2014.com/>

APRIL 14 TO MAY 9

CBC's Canada Writes celebrates Shakespeare's 450th with writing challenge, young-adult literary series

From April 14 to May 9, CBC's Canada Writes is running the "Shakespeare Selfie" writing challenge, and we're giving away

an iPad mini especially to entrants aged 12 to 18. Shakespeare used selfies all the time. But instead of a camera, he used a quill. And instead of "selfies," they were called "soliloquies." Canada Writes will be asking Canadians to take a Shakespearean character, situate him or her in a present-day scenario, and write a new soliloquy or monologue for that character. For more information on how to enter: <http://www.cbc.ca/books/canadawrites/2014/03/celebrating-shakespeares-450th-with-new-writing-challenge-and-ya-fiction.html> We're also pairing this with a new series of Shakespeare-inspired young-adult fiction by Canadian authors.

APRIL 15 DEADLINE

Teachers Institute on Canadian Parliamentary Democracy

April 15, 2014 is the deadline for applications for the next Teachers Institute on Canadian Parliamentary Democracy. Teachers are encouraged to apply online and visit the Teachers Institute website, at www.parl.gc.ca/teachers for program information and other details.

APRIL 17

Ballet Jorgen's Romeo & Juliet schools-only matinee performance

Ballet Jorgen is presenting a schools-only matinee performance with live orchestral accompaniment by Symphony Nova Scotia on April 17 at 10:30 a.m. at the Rebecca Cohn Auditorium, Dalhousie Arts Centre. Tickets are only \$10! This is a rare opportunity for your students to experience both the power of classical ballet and live orchestra. For tickets, please call the Rebecca Cohn box office at (902) 494-6406. For info: contact Peggy Walt, Atlantic Coordinator (902) 422-5403.

APRIL 22

Earth Day Canada

Teachers and students interested in our environmental impact should visit Earth Day Canada at <http://www.earthday.ca/> for information, ideas, activities and resources. Earth Day Canada contains links for teachers, students, and communities to help them find ways to help keep our Earth clean, happy and safe for generations to come. Although Earth Day falls on April 22 each year, the Earth needs our help all year long!

MAY 4 TO 7

Seeing Beyond the Horizon Conference

Seeing Beyond the Horizon: the 2014 Canadian Conference for educators, parents and professionals of children and youth who are blind or partially sighted will take place May 4 to 7, at the Marriott Harbourfront Hotel in Halifax.

If you are a parent, educator or professional who works with or provides direct service to children and youth living with blindness or partial sight, this conference is for you. Presented by APSEA (Atlantic Provinces Special Education Authority) and CNIB, this national conference offers a wide variety of informative and innovative workshops.

Formerly known as the Canadian Vision Teachers' Conference, this four-day event allows participants to network and share knowledge, expertise and experiences within the field of blindness, low vision and deafblindness.

The Seeing Beyond the Horizon conference draws approximately 300 participants from coast-to-coast. To learn more or to register today, visit apsea.ca/pep2014.

MAY 7

It's A Girls World

The Canadian Safe School Network is offering a one-day PD event dedicated to exploring issues affecting school-aged girls in both the classroom and the community.

Growing up in the digital age, facing the pressures of an often-misogynist media, and trying to stand out from the crowd can be daunting for 21st century girls.

This conference will examine issues including relational violence, hypersexualization, social aggression, sexual harassment & exploitation, eating disorders and depression.

Featured Speakers Include: Jeff Perera, White Ribbon Campaign; Kim Katrin Crosby, The People Project; Debbie Chiodo, CAMH (The Centre for Addiction & Mental Health); and Joanna Anderson & Ali Henderson, Sheena's Place.

The event will take place on May 7 at the Moteccasino Place Suites Hotel in Toronto, with a registration fee of \$175. Full program information & registration can be found at www.canadiansafeschools.com/events/29/.

MAY 15 DEADLINE

All Things Marine – Early Bird Deadline May 15, 2014

This Summer the Huntsman Marine Science Center in St. Andrews, NB, is offering a week long institute for teachers. Teachers and adults will have a chance to explore the beautiful Bay of Fundy while studying one of Canada's richest biological productive ecosystems. Please visit www.huntsmanmarine.ca or email TDean@huntsmanmarine.ca for more information.

MAY 16 TO 18

The Bluenose Marathon

With over 16,000 expected participants, the Scotiabank Blue Nose Marathon is once again under way. This year it will be a weekend long event to accommodate the higher than normal participant enrollment and to extend the fun! The Johnson Insurance 5K run will take place on Saturday May 17th at 3:00 p.m. along with the Doctors of Nova Scotia Youth run at 11 a.m. All other races will take place on Sunday, May 18. Please visit www.bluenosemarathon.com for information on registration, race times and how to get involved.

MAY 20 DEADLINE

Governor General's History Award for Excellence in Teaching

Nominees for this year's Governor General History Award for Excellence in Teaching are now being accepted. Please visit <http://www.canadashistory.ca/Awards/Teaching> to access the complete nomination form.

(continued on page 17)

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Aviso Editorial Content team

NSTU's *Aviso* Editorial Content team met at the NSTU building on February 28 to review articles for the winter edition and plan for the spring edition of *Aviso*. *Aviso* is NSTU's magazine, now in online only format, that is written by NSTU members for the teaching profession. It is produced three times a year and each issue and article correspond to themes that are developed by NSTU's Professional Development committee.



From (l-r): Simon Wilkin, editor; Nadine Arnold (Colchester-East Hants Local); Paul Hamer, NSTU's graphic designer; Holly MacDonald (Cumberland Local); and NSTU support staff Marcia Hirtle. Missing: Dave Johnson (Kings Local).

aviso

We Want to Hear Your Story

Submissions are encouraged from Nova Scotia's public school teachers, community college faculty and professional support staff. Please mail to:

AVISO, 3106 Joseph Howe Drive, Halifax, NS, B3L 4L7

Or email submissions to aviso@nstu.ca

Manuscripts submitted should reflect AVISO's mandate as a professional journal for Nova Scotia's teaching profession. Manuscripts will not be returned. Any manuscript chosen to appear in AVISO may be edited for clarity, style, length and consistency.

Contributor guidelines are available to interested writers on the NSTU Website — www.nstu.ca

Please ensure email attachments are Microsoft Word, Rich Text Format or Text Only.

Original pictures or images related to submitted content are appreciated.

The themes for the 2013-2014 academic year AVISO editions are:

Spring – Lifelong Learning

Racontez-nous votre histoire

Nous encourageons des soumissions des enseignants des écoles publiques, du personnel enseignant et de soutien des collèges communautaires. Veuillez envoyer vos soumissions à :

AVISO, 3106 chemin Joseph Howe, Halifax, NS, B3L 4L7

Ou bien envoyez vos soumissions par courrier électronique à : aviso@nstu.ca

Les manuscrits soumis devraient refléter la mission d'AVISO en tant que revue professionnelle des enseignants de la Nouvelle Écosse. Les manuscrits ne seront pas retournés. Les manuscrits sélectionnés pour la publication dans AVISO pourront être édités pour ce qui est de la clarté, du style, de la langue et de la cohérence.

Les directives relatives aux collaborateurs sont disponibles en consultant le site Web du NSTU — www.nstu.ca

Les manuscrits envoyés par voie électronique doivent être en format Microsoft Word, Rich Text Format ou Texte seulement.

Les photos/images originales reliées aux soumissions sont appréciées.

Les thèmes des éditions d'AVISO pour 2012-2013 sont les suivants:

Printemps – Éducation permanente

(continued from page 16)

Six recipients will win \$2,500 along with a trip to Ottawa to receive their award from his Excellency, The Right Honourable David Johnston during a special ceremony.

JUNE 17 TO 19

Courage & Renewal Retreat: Now I Become Myself

A unique retreat-based approach to renewing personal identity, professional integrity and vocational vitality. Contact Tatamagouche Centre www.tatacentre.ca or 902-657-2231.

JULY 10 TO 11

EDUfest 2014

EDUfest 2014 session *Classroom Talk, Engagement, and Children's Literate Development*. Peter Johnson will be in Wolfville on July 10-11 to explore with teachers P-8 how the classroom choices we make, particularly our language choices, influence the qualities of the classroom learning community and how to make those choices wisely. The qualities of the learning community we build will impact children's comprehension, social relationships,



by Sarah Tutty, Curriculum Committee Chair and Marc Breagh, Curriculum Committee member

On February 28 the curriculum committee gathered to discuss curriculum-related issues in Nova Scotia public schools. In attendance for the meeting were Sarah Tutty, Darlene Baretta, Jason Ralph, Kathy Fougere, Sophie

Pedneault, Steve Trussoni, Marc Breagh, our provincial executive liaison Pat Hillier and staff liaison Debbie McLissac. This was the second of three meetings for members in the 2013-2014 school year.

The morning's conversation was inspired by a visit from Jim Rice, former Director of Evaluating Services. Rice was recently reassigned from this portfolio in assessment to oversee data collection and culmination for the Educational Review Panel from the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. The purpose of his visit was to update us on what is happening on the large-scale assessments front. However, members of the curriculum committee had many questions regarding the educational review process; and so we begin there. Rice explained that the role of the review panel was to sift through all of the recommendations submitted and find trends in these. This information would then be analyzed in the next phase of the review process, at which point the Partner's Advisory Committee, of which the NSTU is a member, would then be consulted.

Here is an overview of the four phases of the process set forth for the Educational Review Panel:

- 1) From April to June the Review Panel gathers general input.
- 2) From June to October the Panel organizes the input. During this phase the NSTU, as a member of the Partner's Advisory Committee, will have the opportunity to review the results of the information gathered by the Education Review Panel.
- 3) From October to January/February the report is to be finalized and recommendations are being made to Minister Casey.
- 4) In February or April is the release of the action plan by the Minister.

Rice then gave an overview of the current large-scale assessments taking place: Grade 3 English Reading and Writing demands 90 minutes over two days and is given a two-week window of completion. Grade 4 Math follows the same schedule as Grade 3 English and will be aligned to both new WNCP-influenced and current curriculum. The Reading, Writing, and Mathematics assessment in Grade 6 follows 90 minutes over four days, conducted also over a two-week span. Grade 8 Reading, Writing and Mathematics takes 90 minutes over four days; these days may also be split over a two-week time period. The Nova Scotia examinations take place in English 10, Mathematics at Work 10, are taken over two dates (which are predetermined by the Department) Mathematics 10, and Mathématiques 10 are administered over one day.

In the afternoon, we met with Ann Blackwood and Sharon McCready to discuss the ongoing changes to our Math Curriculum. Sharon reviewed the rationale for adopting the Western and Northern Canadian Protocol (WNCP). The main points Sharon made were that the WNCP is driven by evidence-based research. It offers a fix to some of the concerns in the current program. Basic facts are being covered and automaticity is also practiced. There is less content but the rigor is still there and the program has been changed to reflect what worked best in other provinces.

The Report Review Committee, which includes students, parents, teachers, principals, school board staff, and NSTU staff met on February 10 to review the current provincial report card template which has been in use province-wide for the past two years. The mandate of the committee is to:

- review current research on effective approaches to reporting on student learning and engaging parents and students in the process of assessment, evaluation and reporting;
- share their experience and expertise related to what is working and what needs improvement;
- examine data collected through online surveys of students, parents, teachers, and administrators to identify what is working and what can be improved

The on-line survey was released on March 21 and will be open until April 11. The next meeting of the Review Committee is tentatively set for April 25 to study the results of the surveys and make recommendations for improvements in a report to Minister Casey by April 30, 2014. Fill out the survey to share your perspective on the Provincial Report Card. <http://www.ednet.ns.ca/reportcardreview>

The mandate of the curriculum committee was also reviewed with NSTU staff and discussion as to how the committee could contribute to policy of the NSTU through the mandate. Our last meeting of the school year is scheduled for April 11. If you have questions or concerns, please contact any one of the members of curriculum committee.

intelligence, and how they handle challenge, adversity, uncertainty, and difference. Fee: \$100 Student/substitute teacher fee: \$50.

For more information or to register (after April 8), go to the EDUfest 2014 website <https://edufest.ednet.ns.ca>

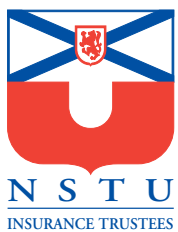
AUGUST 11 TO 13

EDUfest 2014

EDUfest 2014 session *Online Mapping across the Curriculum: Engaging Students in Technology-Based, Inquiry-Based Learning!* Ashleigh Harris, Environmental Systems

Research Institute, Inc. (ESRI) Canada; Jean Tong, Environmental Systems Research Institute, Inc. (ESRI) Canada will work with teachers Primary to 12, on August 11-13 at Dalhousie University, to integrate easy-to-use Web maps with ArcGIS Online that can be created by students and integrated into curriculum content across several subjects, across all Grades. Fee: \$40 Student/substitute teacher fee: \$20.

For more information or to register (after April 8), go to the EDUfest 2014 website <https://edufest.ednet.ns.ca>



CAREpath - The Cancer Assistance Program

All active and retired NSTU members received information with respect to a new program provided by the NSTU Group Insurance Trustees, CAREpath. If you, your spouse or dependent children suspect having cancer, are diagnosed with cancer, or living with cancer, CAREpath is a service that is ready and able to provide you with support.

CAREpath's goal is to support, not replace, health services provided by your doctors. The CAREpath navigation system provides your own personal CAREpath cancer nurse backed by an oncologist specializing in your specific cancer, who is there to support you and your immediate family through scheduled telephone discussions, every step of your cancer journey. Your CAREpath team follows the most up-to-date guidance for cancer treatment and care to ensure that you receive the very best treatment.

Your personal CAREpath oncology team will be your own cancer experts at your side from the first time you call, through your treatment and into survivorship. You can expect CAREpath and your personal CAREpath oncology nurse to provide:

- ◆ Emotional support for cancer patient and your immediate family
- ◆ Assessment of cancer treatment plan and options
- ◆ Explanation of tests and treatments
- ◆ Questions to ask on first and subsequent visits to the oncologist
- ◆ Expert advice and support through all treatment phases
- ◆ Information on how to access other support services, if necessary
- ◆ Guidance to alternate treatment locations, if required or requested
- ◆ Specialized advice and support on how to reduce risk of a recurrence or new cancer
- ◆ Advice on issues survivors may face including delayed effects of treatment

CAREpath understands that you may already have a good doctor guiding your treatment. CAREpath's goal is to enhance the care you are currently getting, not challenge it. CAREpath does not replace the doctor/patient relationship you have with your family doctor or treating oncologist. They are there to help you prepare for your

oncology visits, which insure you fully understand the purpose of your appointment, making it easier to discuss treatment issues and communicate with your specialist.

It is important to note that there are no costs to you if you utilize these services. The CAREpath navigation system is a service provided by the NSTU Group Insurance Trustees.

Contacting CAREpath

There are three ways to contact CAREpath and learn more about their services. They can be contacted by telephone at 1-866-883-5956, on line at www.carepath.ca and through email at info@carepath.ca. The NSTU Group Insurance Trustees are very pleased to be able to provide this very important service to both active and retired members of the Nova Scotia Teachers Union.

If you have any questions please contact: Joan Ling at jling@staff.nstu.ca, 477-5621 (local), 1-800-565-6788 (toll-free), or Allan MacLean at amaclean@staff.nstu.ca, 477-5621 (local), 1-800-565-6788 (toll-free).



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**refer to brochure or the NSTU Member Diary for access*



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resources



Digital Resources for Teachers

Visit our website <http://medialibrary.ednet.ns.ca> to access these and other digital classroom resources!

- *Educational Videos*
- *Branching Out*
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- *ImagesProject*
- *Education Portal*
- *Nova Scotia Virtual School*

Social Studies Videos!!

To order any of the titles listed below, please click here: <https://medialibrary.ednet.ns.ca/videos> or send me an email with the titles you are interested in (mediadub@ednet.ns.ca).

El Contrato Social Studies 7; Law 12; Sociology 12

Follow Teodoro Bello Martinez as he makes an annual migration from his home in Central Mexico to Southern Ontario to pick tomatoes for conditions and wages that locals will not accept: abusive bosses, unhealthy conditions, and paying for benefits they don't receive. Despite fears of repercussions, the workers voice their need for dignity, respect, and better working conditions. (51 min.)

DNA and Dollars Biology 11-12; Sociology 12; Global Geography 12; Bioethics

This film takes the viewer behind the scenes in clinics and laboratories to meet some of the major players in Canadian genetic research and into the homes of patients who have donated their DNA in the hope of finding treatments or cures for diseases. (48 min.)

Hannah's Story Social Studies 7-9

Hannah Taylor's capacity to help others is huge. When she was just 5, she saw her first homeless person. An experience that both troubled her and drove her to do something about it. Under Hannah's leadership, *The Ladybug Foundation* has raised over a million dollars, literally making change for those lacking life's basic needs. (29 min.)

If the Weather Permits Sociology 12; Global Geography 12; Canadian History 12; Inuit Culture

Elisapie Isaac, a young filmmaker born in Nunavik, decides to return to her roots on this breathtaking land and as the fundamental question: Can Inuit culture survive in the modern world? To bridge the gap between the young and old, she lets Naalak, an elder, and Danny, a young policeman from Kangirsujuaq, tell us what they think. (28 min.)

Law & Disorder: Animated Justice Law 12; Sociology 12

How does the law affect us in our daily lives? How do we balance the freedoms, rights and responsibilities of the individual against those of a group or society? This compilation of five animated films uses humour to explore complex subjects such as: citizen's freedoms, rights and responsibilities, as well as consumer protection, advertising standards, prejudice and racism. The program could be used to explore contract law, religious freedoms and tolerance, or freedom of expression. (16 min.)

7 Steps to Social Involvement Social Studies 7-9; Global Geography 12

In this video, Craig and Marc Kielburger empower students to get involved and make a positive difference at a local, national and international level. Participants are introduced to the 7 Steps of Social Involvement and equipped with the knowledge, skills, and motivation to become creative, compassionate, and committed young leaders. (64 min.)

Souvenir of Canada Social Studies 10-12

Join internationally celebrated author Douglas Coupland on a journey to find out what makes Canadians, Canadians. This film offers a satiric take on "Canadian identity" by emphasizing images and icons associated with Canada and raising issues in a thought-provoking way. (70 min.)

Making Tracks

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- Learn how to **teach active transportation safety and skills** to students
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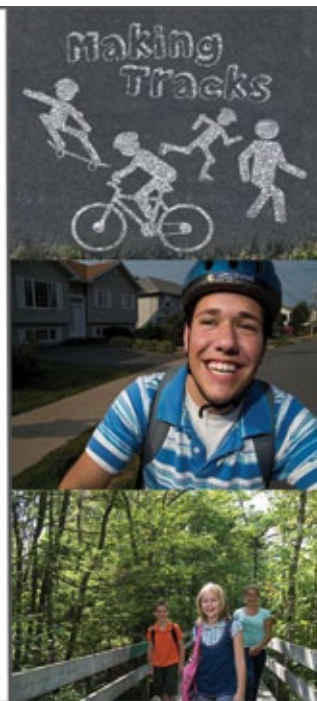
Making Tracks is approved by the Nova Scotia Department of Education and connects with multiple physical education and leadership cross-curricular outcomes. Its flexible modular hands-on design can easily fit your classroom, and after school program needs.

Learn more about Making Tracks:

www.saferoutesns.ca | mt@ecologyaction.ca | 902.442.0209



Making Tracks is offered through the Ecology Action Centre with support from the Government of Nova Scotia, Mountain Equipment Co-op, St. Francis Xavier University, and Skate Pass99



EDUCATION WEEK 2014 APRIL 20 TO 26

Promotes community involvement in teaching
Recognizes students' role as community members
Leads by example
Service learning
Positive digital citizenship
Anti-bullying efforts
Local & global awareness
Fosters critical thinking, problem solving & collaboration
Students actively engaged become the citizens who shape and determine the success of our future.



GET INVOLVED
TAKE ACTION
OF THE DIFFERENCE

Partners:



Education Week is proudly sponsored by:



Suzuki Speaks Sociology 12; Economics 12; Global Geography 12; Environmentalism

Suzuki Speaks captures the passion and vision of world-renowned scientist and environmentalist Dr David Suzuki, who delivers the most important message of his career: humans and our place in the universe. (45 min.)

This is Daniel Cook Social Studies P-2

This 2-DVD series features six-year old Daniel Cook who explores the world around him through his own candid questions, resulting in a show that entertains as well as it teaches. Simple, pure, and honest, this is a series that allows children to view everything from Daniel's perspective, seeing what he sees and learning what he learns. Each episode consists of five six-minute segments. (60 min.)

Understanding and Using Maps and Globes Social Studies 4-6

This 2-DVD program is designed to present students with explanations of how maps and globes are used to represent key concepts about our planet. Part one (19 min.) explores maps and part two (23 min.) presents information about globes. The segment covering globes also includes material about using charts, graphs, and tables. (42 min.)

Reminder: Nominate your choice
for exceptional teacher by April 15.
www.canadianfamily.ca/contests



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The NSTU wants to hear from you:

Please follow the link to fill out an online survey on
member engagement/satisfaction.

Legerweb.com/NSTUMemberSurvey

This survey is a follow-up to the work of the
2012-13 ad hoc Committee on Member
Engagement. The NSTU is interested
in knowing members' awareness,
satisfaction and engagement in NSTU's
programs and services.

Deadline June 1, 2014. Thank you in
advance for participating in this survey.
By filling out the survey you have a chance
to win NSTU branded items.



For previous issues of The Teacher,
visit www.nstu.ca or contact theteacher@nstu.ca

2014 REGIONAL ELECTION INFORMATION FOR LOCALS



All regional elections will be conducted by electronic vote.

Region	Close of Nominations	Date of Election
Annapolis-Hants West-Kings	Kim Frank	Acclaimed
Antigonish-Guysborough	April 8	April 23
Cape Breton District	March 7	April 8
Colchester-East Hants	March 21	April 22
Community College	Louis Robitaille	Acclaimed
Dartmouth	March 28	April 30
Halifax City	Shawn Hanifen	Acclaimed
Halifax County	March 20	April 10
Inverness-Richmond	Sheila Hawley	Acclaimed
Lunenburg County	April 1	April 23

The John Huntley Memorial Internship Program

The remaining deadline for application for the John Huntley Memorial
Internship Program for the 2013-2014 school year is
April 15.

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

For up-to-date Deals & Discounts
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Classified rates are \$2.00 for the first 15 words; 25¢ per additional word
upon presentation of a professional or NSCC Employee number.

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

To book, call **Sonia Matheson at 1-800-565-6788**
or email theteacher@nstu.ca

E-BOOK AVAILABLE - Behind the Teacher's Desk,
e-book by Chris Williams, a novel about hard-working,
devoted teachers. Available on Amazon Kindle,
iBookstore, Kobo and 8 other e-book sites.

TATAMAGOUCHE CENTRE YOUTH CAMP - Join youth,
ages 15-19 on August 25-29 for a camp that focuses
on social justice, the environment, culture and diversity.
Contact Tatamagouche Centre: www.tatacentre.ca or
1-902-657-2231.

TRAVEL AGENT - "Do you need to get away? I can
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TEACH OVERSEAS AND SEE THE WORLD - Maple Leaf
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For background and application information visit our
website at www.mapleleafschools.com or contact
Archie MacEachern at archie@mapleleafschools.com

ELEMENTARY FRENCH JOB SHARE PARTNER WANTED
- Seeking a qualified teacher with elementary French
methods for a 40-50% job share in elementary Core
French for the 2014-2015 school year in the Halifax/
Dartmouth area. Please email sunflowers2020@hotmail.com

JOB SHARE - Qualified resource teacher looking to
job share 20% within the HRSB 2014-15 school year.
Presently job sharing. annmgiovannetti@gmail.com

JOB SHARE - Teacher with many years of teaching
experience, both in elementary and secondary, looking
for a one-day job share in Metro for the upcoming
school year 2014-15. Please contact Donna Myers
Keating: 902-469-2165.

TEACHER EXCHANGE - Permanent resource teacher with
AVRSB interested in an exchange with SSRSB or HRSB
for the 2014-2015 school year. A permanent exchange
is desired. If interested, please contact sgiovannetti@staff.ednet.ns.ca

TEACHER EXCHANGE - Permanent junior/senior high
learning center/resource teacher with the HRSB is
looking to exchange positions with a teacher from
CCRSB for the 2014-15 school year. A permanent
exchange is possible. If interested, please contact me
at deani2009@hotmail.com

TEACHER EXCHANGE - Permanent elementary teacher
with SSRSB interested in exchange within an hour of
Halifax. Looking to exchange within SSRSB, but also
HRSB or AVRSB. Permanent exchange desired. Contact:
dmacburnie@staff.ednet.ns.ca

TEACHER EXCHANGE - Permanent Jr. High French and
social studies teacher with the CBVRSB is seeking an
exchange to HRSB for the 2014-2015 school year. A
permanent exchange is possible. If interested please
contact amjbenoit@staff.ednet.ns.ca

TEACHER EXCHANGE - Permanent elementary teacher
with HRSB interested in exchange with a permanent
elementary teacher from CBVRSB for 2014-2015 school
year. Possible permanent exchange desired. If interested
please contact clarkd@staff.ednet.ns.ca