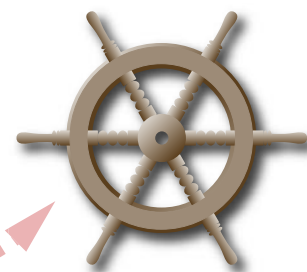


Charting Your Course FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



PD, the NSTU and You

By Betty-Jean Aucoin, Ron Brunton and Danny Eddy
EXECUTIVE STAFF OFFICERS, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

—NSTU mission statement

For more than a century, the Nova Scotia Teachers Union has taken the lead in supporting the professional development of its members. The NSTU is dedicated to maintaining and promoting excellence in teaching, encouraging lifelong learning, influencing educational trends through research and evaluation, and disseminating information.

The Nova Scotia Teachers Union supports its 11,000 members, working in over 400 public schools and 13 community college campus sites, with professional development program offerings that assist individual members, school and campus staffs, locals and regions through workshops, conferences, committees, professional associations and other provincial structures.

This is done through the many professional development initiatives available through your NSTU Local. But it's not the NSTU's professional development.

It is PD for the asking and it's yours.

Conference Day is our flagship with over 2,000 workshop offerings attended by over 8,000 members annually. All of this is organized by NSTU members, on their own time and most frequently providing the expertise that guides colleagues forward in curriculum, pedagogy and leadership.

The NSTU annual August Leadership Development Conference provides a leadership curriculum designed to enable and enhance the ability of members to contribute to a strong, progressive and vital union. Over 200 members from every region and Local in the province participate. These members return to their Locals, regions, schools, campuses and colleagues to promote leadership and on-going professional learning.

One vehicle for encouraging professional development is the committee involvement of members. From the Appeals Committee to the Teachers With Administrative Responsibilities (TWAR), members explore the issues and concerns relevant to the growth of teacher and student learning. From these committees and from your provincial executive, topical conferences are suggested and developed. As an example, the provincial executive, through the Equity Committee, has organized the up-coming Equity Conference focusing on GBLTT issues. The NSTU has a long track record of hosting such conferences like this as we saw with the *Time To Learn, Time To Teach* forum that focused on the intrinsic

connection between teacher workload and student learning and the *Coming Together: Collaboration & Quality Public Education* conference that explored accountability in education.

Professional development doesn't stop there. The NSTU provides a broad spectrum of engaging, relevant, and purposeful workshops. They are available to all members through their schools, their campuses, their Locals, and their regions, and through special focus groups. They are provided at no charge as a benefit of NSTU membership.

Individual members benefit from the professional development focus of the NSTU not only through the liaison with the Department of Education and Nova Scotia Community College that comes through many of the standing committees, but also through access to funds that support their professional growth. These grants include support for study, travel and research. In all of our collective agreements we have recognized the significance of on-going professional learning of our members through Article 60 for P-12 members and the Professional Development Article for Community College members.

The NSTU is also committed to advancing professional learning by engaging our partners in education. The Faculty Learning College Portfolio is an innovative vehicle to encourage on-going professional growth for our Community College faculty members. New and innovative curriculum projects in the P-12 system are supported through the Program Development Assistance Fund (PDAF). Both of these are protected through inclusion in their respective collective agreements.

Other partnerships that enhance members' professional growth include CONTACT, which focuses on teaching strategies, and Developing Successful Schools (DSS) which focuses on effective leadership practice that enhances student learning; both are organized and hosted each year by the Atlantic provinces' teacher organizations. Both



NSTU members at the recent annual PD conference, one of the many PD offerings for NSTU members. From left to right: Lori Richard (Inverness Local), Darlene Bereta (Northside-Victoria Local), Joan MacIsaac (Antigonish Local), Joyce Lively (Cape-Breton Local) and Susan Robinson-Burnie (Annapolis Local). Standing is Susan Taylor-Foley (Lunenburg County Local) who was a workshop leader at the conference.

opportunities allow NSTU members to enhance their professional practice through networking with colleagues from each of the other three Atlantic provinces.

We have joined with the Department of Education, the regional school boards and the teacher education universities in the Nova Scotia Education Leadership Consortium (NSEL) to provide practical modules that develop and enhance leadership in the classroom, the school, and the system.

We also work as closely as possible with the teacher education universities in Nova Scotia to ensure our new members have a good understanding of the importance of professional learning and that their professional organization is one of the major resources

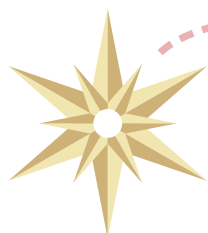
available to assist that learning as they enjoy a rewarding career in teaching.

The Sheonorail Foundation is unique. Organized by the NSTU in 1999, the arms-length foundation supports members developing anti-violence projects from one end of the province to the other. These projects are shining examples of teachers and faculty accepting extraordinary challenges to reduce violence in our society, in our schools, and on our campuses.

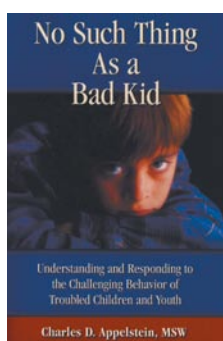
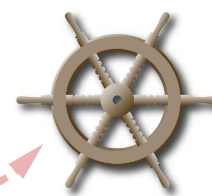
The NSTU is committed to the belief that effective and meaningful professional development is not done to members. Professional development is done by you, for you.

It's PD for the asking and it's yours.

**The winner of the January PD book giveaway
Reading and Literacy A-Z Teacher Plan Book #7
is Kristin Innes from
John Martin Junior High School in Dartmouth.**



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Email your name, home address, and school or campus name with PD in the subject line to theteacher@nstu.ca by February 27th to be eligible for the draw.

This month's giveaway is *No Such Thing as a Bad Kid: Understanding and Responding to the Challenging Behaviour of Troubled Children and Youth* by Charles D. Applestein, MSW and published by The Gifford School, Boston Mass (1998).

This book is a must read for any faculty, professional support staff, teacher or principal who is working with children/youth who demonstrate challenging behaviours. This book provides the reader with a deeper understanding of problem behaviour while providing concrete, tangible and realistic strategies for supporting students in developing greater self control.