

## Nova Scotia schools stand up against bullying

The wave of pink that swept Nova Scotia schools last fall has gained momentum thanks to *Stand Up Against Bullying Day*. Proclaimed last year, the day is recognized on the second Thursday in September.

"This is a very important day," said The Honourable Rodney MacDonald, Premier of Nova Scotia. "It is a day when we are wearing pink to let everyone know how much we care about each other and to let our friends, other students, and our parents know that bullying is wrong."

The Premier and Education Minister Karen Casey joined students at John MacNeil School in Dartmouth to mark *Stand Up Against Bullying Day* on September 11.

Inspired by Central Kings Rural High School students Travis Price and David Shepherd who rallied behind a new student bullied for wearing a pink

"The actions of these two young men, along with their fellow students who wore pink to school in support of another student, showed us all just how much of a difference individuals can make," said Minister Casey. "On a day like this, it is important that we continue to remind each other of our responsibility to focus on promoting positive behaviour and respect in our schools."

David Shepherd also spoke to the students and teachers at John MacNeil School and encouraged students to visit the newly launched website he and Travis Price created. The Force in Pink website ([www.forceinpink.ca](http://www.forceinpink.ca)) is designed to help students who are being bullied and give kids a place to come and talk to other youth. Shepherd and Price feel the reason their message was spread so loud and clear was because it was youth standing up for youth.

"Everyone deserves to be treated with respect," said Shepherd as he addressed the student body of John MacNeil School. "Sometimes those who are bullying are scared and insecure and they need help—you can be their friend."

Guests for the event also included NSTU president Alexis Allen, MLA Jim Smith, Peaceful

Schools International founder Hetty van Gorp and Halifax Regional School Board superintendent Carole Olsen.



NSTU president Alexis Allen chats with 'Force in Pink' founder David Shepherd, Education Minister Karen Casey and Nova Scotia Premier Rodney MacDonald at the *Stand Up Against Bullying Day* event at John MacNeil School on September 11.



Students at John MacNeil School celebrate *Stand Up Against Bullying Day*.

shirt, wearing pink has since become a powerful new symbol for students against bullying.

"We welcome programs and projects that help create safe, peaceful environments at schools and Community College campuses across Nova Scotia," says NSTU president Alexis Allen. "We hope the *Stand Up For Bullying Day* will highlight the importance of peace education, and the need for it to be an integrated part of the public school program in Nova Scotia."

The premier also announced the *Premier's Power of Positive Change Award*, which will recognize students for taking leadership in promoting positive attitudes, peace, tolerance and diversity

in their school or community. The Awards will be Registered Education Savings Plan grants, each worth \$2,000. The prizes will be awarded annually to 10 Nova Scotia students attending Grades Primary to 12. To be eligible, recipients must demonstrate leadership by organizing a school or community activity or show exemplary conduct in promoting positive attitudes or behaviour. Winners will be presented with awards at a reception hosted by the premier in June. For more information on the program visit the Department of Education website at [www.ednet.ns.ca](http://www.ednet.ns.ca).

## executive highlights

### September 26

- Received table officers' report;
- Revised the August 2009 Provincial Executive Meeting & Leadership Conference back to the original dates: **August 10-11, 2009** (PE Meeting) and **August 11-13, 2009** (Leadership Conference) due to a conflict in the date with another major conference (NSELCC);
- Approved two recommendations from the finance & property committee;
- Ratified Antigonish Local Constitution;
- Approved revisions to the *Operational Procedures on Technology Use at NSTU Meetings & Conferences* allowing access to the Internet to enhance meetings;
- Annual committee reports were filed and will be posted to the Members' Only website;
- Approved the site of the 2009 Executive Planning Conference for July 2-4, 2009;
- Ratified the constitutions of 13 Professional Associations;
- Ratified the amendment to the Annapolis Local Constitution;
- Approved a revision to the By-Laws (2009 Resolution) regarding associate members;
- Requested a meeting of the candidates from the 2008 NSTU presidential election to be held with the Provincial Returning Officer for input on various aspects of the campaign;
- Elected the award selection committee to oversee nominations for various awards to be given at Annual Council.

## Appeal decision upholds pension indexing regulations

A decision of the Teachers' Pension Plan Appeals Committee handed down on September 8 has denied an appeal by claimants George Walker, Norman Fergusson, Eldon Hastings and Phyllis Côté.

At issue was whether changes to regulations governing indexing of pensions in 1981 created a vested—as opposed to discretionary—right to indexing. If, in fact, a vested right to indexing was created by these regulations then, the claimants argued, a reduction of one per cent enabled by the 1993 regulations—and subsequent regulations changing the indexing formula in 1999 and 2006—were outside the authority of the Teachers' Pension Plan.

The claimants, who referred to themselves as the "Class of 1993" argued unsuccessfully that an October 27, 2007 decision by the Nova Scotia Pension Agency (NSPA) administrator denying their request erred in law.

The claimants had requested payment of pension benefits based on the indexing formula in place at the time of their respective dates of retirement, which were prior to changes introduced to the Teachers' Pension Plan as of January 1, 1994.

Three days of hearings before the appeals committee were held last February. The respondent, The Teachers' Pension Plan Trustee, Inc., successfully argued that the concept of "vesting" is misleading, not in relation to the claimants pensions themselves, but in relation to the indexing formula, which it asserted was "a completely different matter."

In upholding the Trustees' argument, Appeals Committee Chair Bruce Archibald observed "(the claimants') pensions, like others, were saved from collapse and they continue to receive annual indexed increases from a defined benefits plan, albeit not at the levels which they had hoped. However, this legally mandated result does not appear to the Appeals Committee to be unfair in all of the circumstances."



# people

## Former NSTU president receives Golden Leaf Award

Former NSTU president Greg O’Keefe recently added another “golden” award to his belt. O’Keefe, who was one of six Nova Scotia teachers to receive the Commemorative Medal for the Queen’s Golden Jubilee in 2002, was presented with a Golden Leaf Award from the Canadian Association of Educational Publishing (CEPA) on September 24.

“I’m very thankful tonight to all involved with this,” said O’Keefe when he officially received his award at the Cape Breton Local’s first general meeting of the school year. “I’m usually never at a shortage for words.”

O’Keefe won a Golden Leaf Award of Excellence for Writing – Column for his column *Now, where are my Cheesies???* It appeared in the Winter 2008 edition of NSTU’s professional magazine *Aviso*.

He’s been providing the Back Page column for *Aviso* since the inception of the magazine in 1986. In introducing O’Keefe, executive staff officer and editor of *Aviso*, Monica Maloney described him as NSTU’s own Alan Fotheringham (Canada’s best read political columnist). “He’s a senior statesman for the organization, and a permanent fixture with *Aviso*,” she said. “Greg is an outstanding example of the quality educators in this province with Cape Breton roots.”

“We had such a strong positive response to Greg’s *Cheesies* article that *Aviso* staff submitted the article as an entry in the column category of the 2008 Golden Leaf Awards,” she continued.

She said that readers often comment about how Greg’s column makes them chuckle and brightens their day.

“I always try to convey to the present teaching force in the province the importance of keeping one’s humour in challenging times,” said the former senior high teacher. “I often poke fun at myself and know the importance of laughing at yourself.”

O’Keefe’s winning column appeared in the issue of *Aviso* that focused on healthy living. “I’m flattered and humbled to receive this award, and am amazed that I’ve had a ‘20-year contract’ with *Aviso*,” he said. “As long as they keep calling, I’ll keep writing.”

“He has great loyalty to our Union,” said NSTU president Alexis Allen. From chairing Council Service Award luncheons, to the Violence in Schools Conference, and the HELP Initiative (Honduras Education and Learning Project), O’Keefe is a living legend around the NSTU. He was named an honorary member of the NSTU in 1998 and received a special award at Council 1991. He was NSTU president from 1978 to 1980, Canadian Teachers’ Federation president from 1982 to 1983 and Education International vice-president from 1993 to 1995. He was also a vice-president of the Cape Breton Local.

Greg O’Keefe’s wife Mary, also a retired teacher, celebrated a milestone during the Cape Breton Local meeting. She had attended her first union meeting 40 years earlier.

*Aviso* also took home two other Golden Leaf Awards at the annual Canadian Educational Press Association (CEPA) conference last June in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. Besides O’Keefe’s award for his column, *Aviso* assistant editor Ken Langille and graphic designer Lawrence Maberley received an award for cover art for the Winter 2008 issue on Healthy Living, and Meredith Greene received a Golden Leaf for Writing – Professional Development Feature for her article *Pulling Rank: Comparing Schools under the Guise of Accountability*, which appeared in *Aviso*’s Fall 2007 issue.

CEPA has sponsored the Golden Leaf Awards since 1994 and has been providing excellence in educational publishing for over 40 years. It provides a national identity in educational communications, assists members in their professional development, and offers networking opportunities with colleagues across Canada. Next year’s conference will take place in Fredericton, New Brunswick.



NSTU president Alexis Allen presented Greg O’Keefe with his Golden Leaf Award at the Cape Breton Local meeting on September 24.



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## Equity Committee

The NSTU Equity Committee held its first meeting of the school year on Friday, September 19. The committee’s primary mandate for this year is planning the upcoming Equity Conference, which will take place April 24 and 25 at the Delta Halifax. The conference is entitled *Educators: Taking Pride in Equity* and will focus on GBLTT issues in education. It’s the first education conference of its kind in Atlantic Canada.



Shown clockwise from the bottom are: Meg Richardson (Halifax County), Kathy Lee Brickenden (Halifax City), Scott Murchison (Cape Breton), committee chair Mark MacPhee (Halifax County), NSTU staff liaison Gérard Cormier, provincial executive member Deborah Mitchell, Belinda Josephson (Lunenburg County) and Laura McCulley (Kings).

## Community College Rep Retreat

Close to 50 Community College Local NSTU reps and members of their executive got together for their annual rep retreat on September 19 and 20. This year’s event took place on the Eastern Shore of Nova Scotia at Liscombe Lodge. Community College members participated in workshops including Running Effective Meetings, The Roles and Responsibilities of Campus Reps and the ABCs of Building Community. Shown with NSTU president Alexis Allen are Todd Verge, an IT instructor and faculty member at the IT Campus, Seanna Blanchard, a professional support member who is a training coordinator at the Waterfront Campus, and Trevor Adams, a communications instructor and faculty member also from the Waterfront Campus.





# Community College Local enters 10<sup>th</sup> year

At the Community College Local's annual rep retreat, the Local marked the beginning of its tenth year. It will officially celebrate its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary in the spring of 2009, but the close to 50 NSTU reps from the 14 campuses and sites from around the province, and members of its executive, and NSTU staff came together September 19 and 20 at Liscombe Lodge on the Eastern Shore of Nova Scotia to mark this fact.

Three past presidents, Bob Scott, Scott McKellar and Damian Hall, and the current president of the Local Louis Robitaille reminisced about the last decade.

Damian Hall, who was the Local's third president from 2004 to 2008, and is currently serving on the provincial executive, a position he held from 2000 to 2004, was always a member of the NSTU.

"We used to be part of the Locals in which the campuses were located," says Hall, who is a faculty member at the Pictou campus.

A vote among Community College faculty and professional support staff took place in June of 1997. After that vote the NSTU became the bargaining agent for the faculty and professional support bargaining units previously covered under the NSTU contract, two NSGEU contracts, civil service contracts and personal services contracts. Two new agreements were ratified between the NSTU and the College in June and August of 1998. "We got between 100 and 125 new members after that vote," says Hall.

"I was elected in the spring of 1999," says Bob Scott, the Local's first president. A retired faculty member from the Marconi Campus, he served in that position until 2002. "In 1999 we had somewhere in the vicinity of 600 members."

"We've grown about 25 per cent since then," says Hall.

"We're knocking on the door of 800 members now," comments another former Local president Scott McKellar. "We're almost the fourth largest Local just about to catch Colchester-East Hants in numbers."

McKellar served as the president from 2002 to 2004, then he was elected to the provincial executive where he served until his term ended on July 31. He also served as NSTU's secretary-treasurer from 2005 to 2007, the first Community College member to hold a table officer position.

"A challenge back in '99 was getting the Local up and running and attracting good people to become involved," says Scott.

"Before 1999 we didn't have anything that focused on our members, and our concerns and our employer, and now we do," adds McKellar.

Current president Louis Robitaille talks about the growth of the College system. "The number of employees in the past 10 years has risen from around 1,000 to 1,600, but the number of faculty members has only increased by about 20 per cent. Faculty members used to make up between two thirds to three quarters of employees of the College but now we are about half."

"But, the professional support bargaining unit has almost tripled," says Hall.

As far as professional development, Hall, McKellar, Robitaille and Scott agree that the Nova Scotia Community College is pretty good at granting professional development where it's needed for members to do their jobs.

Robitaille, who is also vice-president of the Association of Adult Educators, a professional association of the NSTU knows the importance of PD for his members. "I'm a firm believer in PD and am very interested in developing mentorship opportunities for reps and alternate reps so we can strengthen the abilities of our volunteers and have a greater pool of volunteers to draw from. We want to make our members better at their jobs while recognizing the benefits of their union membership."

The Local also strives to get their members involved in NSTU standing committees so the members from the public school system can learn more about their role in education in Nova Scotia.



Seated are Community College Local president Louis Robitaille, NSTU president Alexis Allen, provincial executive member Damian Hall. Former Community College Local presidents Bob Scott and Scott McKellar are standing.



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Alex

## from the nstu president

### Growing awareness of Cyberbullying in schools

The second Thursday of September has been proclaimed *Stand Up Against Bullying Day* by Rodney MacDonald, the Premier of Nova Scotia. This proclamation was made in recognition of the efforts of Central Kings Rural High School students Travis Price and David Shepherd who wore pink in support of a student who was being bullied at their school. Students and teachers were asked to wear pink this year on September 11th as a symbol that bullying of any form is unacceptable. I was pleased to be at John MacNeil School in Dartmouth with the Premier and Education Minister Karen Casey as they officially launched, *Stand Up Against Bullying Day*. The NSTU applauds this initiative and encourages all to do whatever is necessary to make our schools safer for students and staff.

Bullying, as you know, can take on many forms. Types of bullying range from threats of physical abuse to verbal, written or emotional abuse. Unfortunately, in our world today, cyberbullying has also become a concern. This type of bullying uses technology as the means to harass students or staff through email, blogs, social networking sites, cell phones, and text messages (to name a few).

At Annual Council 2007 NSTU delegates unanimously called for a policy on the appropriate use by students and NSTU members of new and emerging technologies. A motion was then brought from the Nova Scotia Teachers Union to the Canadian Teachers' Federation's (CTF) 2007 AGM. From there, CTF formed a National Work Group and developed a strategy and an action plan to address the many challenges presented by cyberbullying within the context of schools and the professional lives of educators.

Council 2008 passed NSTU's policy, spelling out the appropriate use new and emerging technologies, and this past July, at CTF's AGM, delegates passed an extensive Cyberconduct and Cyberbullying Policy. Within the policy, cyberbullying is defined as "the use of information and communication technologies to bully, embarrass, threaten or harass another. It also includes the use of these technologies to engage in conduct or behaviour that is derogatory, defamatory, degrading, illegal or abusive."

CTF worked with Vector Research + Development Inc. to develop and conduct a survey to seek public opinion around the issue of cyberbullying. The study was done online from February 27 to March 11, 2008 and received responses from 2,523 Canadians across the country. The findings showed that:

- 34 per cent of Canadians surveyed knew of students in their community who had been targeted by cyberbullying in the past year while one in five was aware of teachers who had been cyberbullied;
- 9 in 10 Canadians believe that an effective measure to prevent cyberbullying by students is for parents to become more knowledgeable and more responsible in monitoring their child's activities with the Internet and electronic communication devices;
- 86 per cent believe that an effective measure to prevent cyberbullying by students is to have teachers trained to respond to cyberbullying when it impacts them or their students;
- 96 per cent believe that school boards should develop and enforce policies that hold their students accountable when they are identified as cyberbullies;
- About 7 in 10 Canadians think that school boards should hold students accountable when the cyberbullying originates outside the school, such as from the student's home. (CTF survey 2008)

CTF President, Emily Noble, explains that "The guiding principles of our national policy are based on the premise that safe and caring schools that promote healthy workplaces for teachers and healthy learning environments for children and youth should be a national priority. Our policy speaks strongly to the need for education as a key element in addressing, preventing and protecting students and teachers from cyber-related harm. It also speaks to the roles and responsibilities of parents and guardians, schools, school boards and school districts, teachers, students, teacher organizations, ministries of education and government."

We will continue to work with the CTF and our own members on this emerging issue and keep the education partners in Nova Scotia informed and educated. Involving all levels in education is an important way to be part of the solution to the problem of cyberbullying. By working together, we can move toward making our schools and Community College campuses a safer environment for all staff and students.

### Une sensibilisation croissante à la cyberintimidation dans les écoles

Le deuxième jeudi de septembre a été proclamé « Journée de lutte contre l'intimidation » par Rodney MacDonald, premier ministre de la Nouvelle-Écosse. Cela a été fait en hommage à l'initiative des élèves de l'école Central Kings High, Travis Price et David Shepherd, qui ont décidé de porter du rose en soutien d'un élève qui était victime d'intimidation dans leur école. Le 11 septembre de cette année, les élèves et les enseignants ont été invités à porter du rose pour symboliser le principe que l'intimidation est inadmissible, sous quelque forme qu'elle soit. J'ai eu le plaisir d'assister, à l'école John MacNeil de Dartmouth, au lancement officiel de la « Journée de lutte contre l'intimidation » par le premier ministre et la ministre de l'éducation, Karen Casey. Le NSTU applaudit vivement cette initiative et vous encourage à faire ce qui est nécessaire pour rendre nos écoles plus sûres pour nos élèves et notre personnel.

L'intimidation, comme vous le savez, peut prendre de multiples formes. L'intimidation peut aller de menaces de violence physique à de la violence verbale, écrite ou psychologique. Malheureusement, dans notre monde d'aujourd'hui, la cyberintimidation est également devenue une préoccupation importante. Ce type d'intimidation fait usage de la technologie pour harceler les élèves et le personnel par le biais de courriels, de blogues, de sites de réseautage social, de téléphones mobiles et de messages textes (pour n'en nommer que quelques-uns).

Lors de l'assemblée générale annuelle 2007, les délégués du NSTU ont unanimement réclamé une politique sur l'usage approprié des technologies nouvelles et émergentes par les élèves et les membres du NSTU. Le Nova Scotia Teachers Union a ensuite présenté une motion à l'AGA 2007 de la Fédération canadienne des enseignantes et des enseignants (FCE). À partir de cela, la FCE a formé un groupe de travail national et a mis au point une stratégie et un plan d'action pour aborder les nombreux problèmes posés par la cyberintimidation dans le contexte des écoles et de la vie professionnelle des éducateurs.

L'AGA 2008 du NSTU a adopté une politique exposant clairement l'usage approprié des technologies nouvelles et émergentes et, en juillet dernier, lors de l'AGA de la FCE, les délégués ont adopté une politique exhaustive sur le cybercomportement et la cyberintimidation. Dans le cadre de cette politique, la cyberintimidation est définie comme « l'usage des technologies d'information et de communication pour intimider, embarrasser, menacer ou harceler quelqu'un. Cela comprend également l'usage de ces technologies pour se livrer à des comportements méprisants, diffamatoires, humiliants, illégaux ou offensants. »

La FCE a travaillé en collaboration avec Vector Research + Development Inc. pour mettre au point et mener un sondage au sujet de la cyberintimidation. Le sondage a été disponible en ligne du 23 février au 11 mars 2008 et 2523 Canadiens de tout le pays y ont répondu. Les résultats ont révélé ce qui suit :

- 34 % des Canadiens interrogés connaissaient des élèves dans leur communauté qui avaient été la cible de cyberintimidation durant l'année écoulée et un Canadien sur cinq connaissait des enseignants qui avaient été victimes de cyberintimidation.
- Neuf Canadiens sur 10 sont d'avis qu'un moyen efficace pour éviter la cyberintimidation par les élèves est d'inciter les parents à s'informer et à se responsabiliser davantage afin de surveiller les activités de leur enfant sur Internet et sur les autres moyens de communication électronique.
- 86 % sont d'avis qu'une mesure efficace pour éviter la cyberintimidation par les élèves est d'apporter aux enseignants une formation leur permettant de réagir à la cyberintimidation lorsqu'elle les touche personnellement ou qu'elle touche leurs élèves.
- 96 % sont d'avis que les conseils scolaires devraient élaborer et mettre en œuvre des politiques visant à tenir les élèves responsables lorsqu'ils sont accusés de cyberintimidation.
- Environ sept Canadiens sur dix pensent que les conseils scolaires devraient également tenir les élèves responsables lorsque la cyberintimidation provient de l'extérieur de l'école, par exemple de la résidence de l'élève. (Sondage de la FCE 2008)

La présidente de la FCE, Emily Noble, a donné l'explication suivante : « Les lignes directrices de notre politique nationale sont basées sur le principe que la priorité nationale devrait être de rendre les écoles plus sûres et plus humaines afin d'offrir un lieu de travail sécuritaire pour les enseignants et un environnement d'apprentissage sécuritaire pour les enfants et les jeunes. Notre politique souligne clairement la nécessité de la sensibilisation, qui est un élément clé pour aborder et prévenir la cyberintimidation et protéger les élèves et les enseignants contre les préjudices qu'elle

peut causer. Elle traite également des rôles et des responsabilités des parents et des tuteurs, des écoles, des conseils scolaires et des districts scolaires, des enseignants, des élèves, des associations d'enseignants, des ministres de l'éducation et du gouvernement. »

Nous allons continuer à travailler en collaboration avec la FCE et avec nos propres membres sur cette nouvelle question et à tenir les partenaires de l'éducation en Nouvelle-Écosse bien informés et bien renseignés. Il est important d'inclure tous les niveaux scolaires pour trouver une solution au problème de la cyberintimidation. En travaillant ensemble, nous pouvons contribuer à rendre nos écoles et nos campus plus sûrs pour tout le personnel et tous les élèves.

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MILEAGE	You can drive your car as much as you want. But don't forget in general, the higher the mileage, the lower the resale value.	You are allowed a specific number of kilometres in your lease contract (usually around 24,000 km/yr). If you exceed this limit, you will incur additional fees and they can be hefty.
UPKEEP	You can modify your vehicle, so if you want to paint it purple and install monster subwoofers, there's nothing to stop you except your own good taste. Once your warranty is expired, you're on the hook for repairs.	Beyond repairs covered in your warranty, you are responsible for normal upkeep. Damages considered excessive could result in a charge at the end of the lease term.
IN THE END	You build equity in your car and stand to enjoy five or so relatively repair-free years after your car is paid off.	You don't build any equity. You don't have to try to sell your car when your lease is up. (But you could choose to buy it if your lease has a purchase option.)

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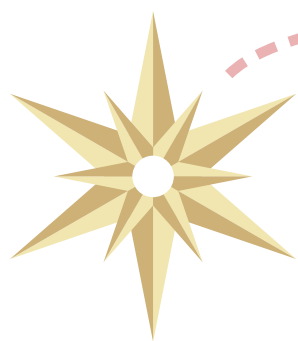
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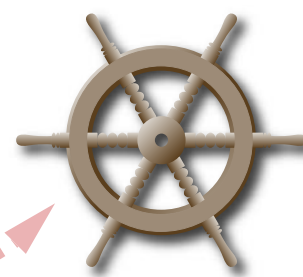
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# Charting Your Course FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



## Teaching to the Curriculum: Bringing Media Literacy Outcomes and Expectations into the Classroom

by Jane Tallim, Co-Executive Director, Media Awareness Network

Television, movies, the Internet, video games, and music are popular forms of media that occupy much time in our daily routines. This is especially true of children and youth. In a time when young people are growing up in front of computers and televisions—and often know more about technology than most adults do—it is more important than ever to ensure that they understand and think critically about the media that form such an important and enjoyable part of their daily lives.

Media literacy is the ability to bring critical thinking skills to bear on all media. It is the ability to interpret and value media content and to understand media's cultural, political, commercial and social implications.

Media education is the process through which we become media literate, a process that is grounded in the sound pedagogical approach of starting learning where kids are and acknowledging and building on the positive, creative and pleasurable dimensions of our popular culture.

Gone are the days when teachers would integrate media activities into their classes as fun fillers. Canada is now a world leader in recognizing the importance of fostering literacy throughout a wide range of language systems that include mass media and multimedia.

According to the Atlantic Canada English Language Arts curriculum, media literacy deals with the culture and lifestyle of students. They enjoy thinking and talking about what is going on in the media. For teachers, it is an opportunity to have students examine how they are influencing and being influenced by popular culture.

The recognition and endorsement by all Canadian provinces and territories

of media literacy across the curriculum provides an immediate “green light” to teachers who are interested in teaching media studies. No longer consigned to language arts, outcomes and expectations for media literacy can be found in such diverse subject areas as health, consumer education, personal development, global studies, civics, multi-cultural/anti-racism programs, information technology, music, and visual arts.

Media education encourages young people to probe media artefacts, prompting them to pose questions such as: Who is this message intended for? Who wants to reach this audience, and why? From whose perspective is this story told? Whose voices are heard, and whose are absent? What strategies does this message use to get my attention and make me feel included? How do the unique elements and codes of a specific genre affect what we see, hear or read? How might different audiences interpret the same media production?

To be media literate in this new environment young people need to develop values and a range of critical thinking, communication and information management skills. Teachers want to help (85 per cent believe helping young people to think critically about Internet content is an important part of their job<sup>1</sup>) but cannot without the proper tools and resources.

### Working with curricular outcomes

For teachers who are interested in integrating media education into their classrooms, Media Awareness Network (MNet) offers a number of free, bilingual, media education resources—lessons, activities, games and interactive learning modules—which are linked



to media literacy curriculum outcomes and expectations for every province and territory in Canada. Housed in the “For Teachers” section of MNet’s extensive website ([www.media-awareness.ca](http://www.media-awareness.ca)) is a handy lesson library search tool that permits teachers to access any one of hundreds of free lessons for Grades P-12, according to grade level and topic.

Teachers can also find lessons through MNet’s Media Education in Canada section, where media-related outcomes and expectations extracted from provincial and territorial curricula are linked directly to supporting lessons and resources.

### Getting Involved

To mark the importance of media education, from **November 3 to 7, 2008** MNet and the Canadian Teachers’ Federation are co-leading Canada’s third annual **National Media Education Week**. This week shines a spotlight on the innovative ways that Canadian

educators and students are promoting media literacy in their classrooms.

<sup>1</sup>Media Awareness Network, 2005.

During the week, teachers and students are encouraged to celebrate, discuss and think critically about media. Why not take this opportunity to join colleagues across the country in making media education happen at your school? The supporting website for the week ([www.mediaeducationweek.ca](http://www.mediaeducationweek.ca)) has many ideas, resources and activities to get teachers started. Media create a shared environment and are, therefore, great catalysts for learning. No matter what the grade level or discipline, there are countless opportunities to stimulate and engage students through media education.

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NATIONAL  
**media**  
EDUCATION WEEK

November 3-7, 2008

### “Think Critically, Act Ethically – Inside and Outside of the Classroom”

The purpose of National Media Education Week is to promote media education and encourage media literacy activities throughout Canada. This year the focus is on encouraging young people to practise ethical behaviour when using new technologies.

The Media Awareness Network and the Canadian Teachers’ Federation are working with education organizations, libraries, and community, parent, and youth-based groups to organize and promote a variety of media education events leading up to and during the week, including: youth forums, media production workshops, classroom activities, panel discussions, parent information sessions, professional development workshops and conference presentations.

For ideas and resources, visit the official Web site  
[www.mediaeducationweek.ca](http://www.mediaeducationweek.ca)

## TEACHERS NEED A BREAK TOO



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# 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](mailto:theteacher@nstu.ca) by November 21 to be eligible for the draw.

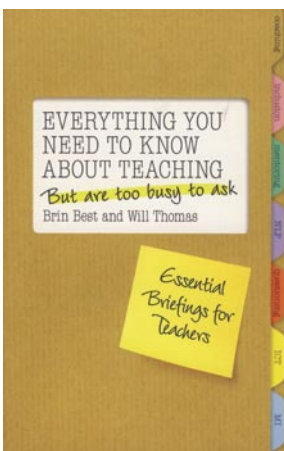
When speaking with new members from across the province, one of the most frequent comments they make is how busy they are. In this ever increasing fast-paced educational environment a recent publication, *Everything You Need to Know about Teaching but are Too Busy to Ask*, is a welcome addition to any educator's library. Written by award-winning authors Brin Best and Will Thomas, it's published by Continuum International Publishing Group.

This resource provides briefings on 50 key topics such as differentiation, inclusion, multicultural awareness, thinking skills, and so much more.

Each briefing contains the following:

- an authoritative and independent summary of the topic
- cross-references to other listings
- suggestions for further reading
- questions and action points

This resource will help educators enhance their own professional knowledge as well as benefit their students.



## EQUITY COMMITTEE BOOK REVIEW

Email your name, home address, and school or campus with EQUITY in the subject line to [theteacher@nstu.ca](mailto:theteacher@nstu.ca) by November 21 to be eligible for the draw.

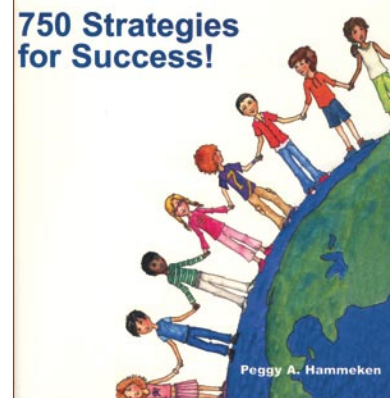
This month's equity book giveaway is *The Teacher's Guide to Inclusive Education: 750 Strategies for Success*. It is written by Peggy A. Hammeken and published by Corwin Press. This 343-page comprehensive resource is filled with strategies, reproducible forms, and a resource section.

Some highlights of the guide are:

- the 'nuts and bolts' of setting up an inclusive program
- reading and written language accommodations and teaching strategies
- strategies for daily assignments and assessments
- teaching strategies for mathematics
- support for organization and instruction
- strategies for improving student behaviour

### The Teacher's Guide to Inclusive Education

#### 750 Strategies for Success!



Educators concerned about students who simply need additional support to be successful in the classroom will also want this resource in their library.

### 2008 Presidential Campaign Expenses

*Russell Comeau*

Postage.....	\$908.14
Printing .....	\$164.27
Other Promotional Costs .....	\$423.75
<b>TOTAL.....</b>	<b>\$1496.16</b>

### 2008 First Vice-Presidential Campaign Expenses

*Wally Fiander*

Posters.....	\$97.15
Pens .....	\$423.75
Juice/Stickers .....	\$312.75
Lobsters .....	\$100.00
<b>TOTAL.....</b>	<b>\$933.65</b>

### 2008 First Vice-Presidential Campaign Expenses

*Shelley Morse*

Posters.....	\$35.83
Lanyards .....	\$158.00
Plastic Card Holders.....	\$18.46
Neon Labels.....	\$67.80
Water .....	\$84.88
Fortune Cookies .....	\$160.85
<b>TOTAL.....</b>	<b>\$525.82</b>

### 2008 First Vice-Presidential Campaign Expenses

*Keith Skinner*

Posters.....	\$39.15
Pins.....	\$169.50
Supplies .....	\$45.15
Paper.....	\$18.03
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Entries must be postmarked by January 14, 2009.  
Entries postmarked by December 1, 2008 are eligible for  
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# Occupational Therapy Tips for Working with Students with Autism

By Leticia Richer, EIP Case Coordinator

October is National Occupational Therapy month in Canada. This year's theme is a continuation of last year's theme of "Yes I Can." Occupational Therapists (OTs) help people to maximize their independence in performing their activities of daily life. They work with infants, children, youth, adults and the elderly to help them achieve their goals. OTs see value in participation in meaningful occupations such as personal care, work or school. This OT Month we will focus on occupational therapy with children with Autism, since October is also Autism Awareness Month in Canada.

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is also known as "autism." It is a neurological disorder where a child's behaviour is delayed and atypical. It is diagnosed based on observation of specific behaviours and disabilities by a multidisciplinary team of doctors and other trained professionals. Children with ASD are found to have social, behavioural and communication/language delays with limited interests and activities. There are five Autism Spectrum Disorders listed in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM 4). The three most common are Autism Disorder, Pervasive Developmental Disorder Not Otherwise Specified, and Aspergers Disorder/Syndrome.

The term "spectrum" refers to a range of severities of impairment. There may be particular communication, social and behavioural characteristics in common, but the conditions cover a wide spectrum with individual differences in number and kind of symptoms, severity of symptoms (mild to severe), age of onset, levels of functioning, and challenges with social interactions.

Autism occurs in 1 in 200 people in Canada and is not related to race, ethnicity, family income, lifestyle or parenting (Autism Society Canada). It varies widely in severity

and symptoms. Patterns of symptoms include: difficulty with social interaction; unusual responses to people or attachments to objects; avoidance of eye contact and/or communication; restricted interests; restricted behaviours or seemingly purposeless repetitive behaviour; and/or extreme sensory sensitivity.

## Common traits of autism include:

- Resistance to change
- Odd repetitive motions
- Preference for being alone
- Aversion to cuddling
- Avoidance of eye contact
- Inappropriate attachment to objects
- Hyper-activity or under-activity
- Over or under-active sensory responsiveness
- Unresponsive to verbal cues
- Uneven gross/fine motor skills, such as difficulty grasping objects, or dressing themselves
- Repeating words or monologues
- Laughing, crying, or showing distress for unapparent reasons
- Tantrums, and possible aggressive and/or self injurious behaviour

Source: Geneva Centre for Autism - [www.autism.net](http://www.autism.net)

Occupational Therapy helps the child with autism by addressing areas that interfere with the child's ability to function in life tasks. Children with autism require ongoing assessment of their needs as they grow and change. Occupational Therapy goals are set to enhance and maintain play and socialization, to increase a child's ability to be independent, to help to increase school readiness skills, and to improve overall quality of life. OTs may use play as a medium for therapy.

The following are tips for teachers working with students with ASD, from Registered



Occupational Therapist Joanne MacDonald Burns of Yarmouth, Nova Scotia.

- Consider the unique sensory needs of kids with ASD. Many kids with autism have difficulty processing sensory information and some seek out certain sensory experiences. Consider having a sensory room or sensory corner in the classroom where kids can engage in appropriate sensory activities based on their sensory needs.
- Consider the unique learning styles of kids with ASD. Many kids with ASD are visual learners and learn best when things are presented to them in a visual way. Kids with autism are also 'system learners'—when things are presented in terms of numbers or patterns.
- Remember the 'first then' concept. This works really well for kids with ASD, e.g. first complete two math questions, then go for a drink to the water fountain.
- Use a visual schedule. This works extremely well for kids with ASD. Sometimes kids with ASD exhibit undesirable behaviours because they do not know what is expected of them and when certain activities will end.
- Use of a visual timer on child's desk. Many kids with ASD do not have a good understanding of time. A visual timer helps with this and also helps them get through tasks they don't like so much.
- Use priming for special events. Sometimes things like assemblies or fire drills or other unexpected events can be very tough for kids with ASD. Use 'priming' to help the child prepare. Give them plenty of warning and practice the event before it happens. Social stories (Carol Gray) are also great for kids with ASD to help explain certain situations or events.
- Keep routines consistent and predictable.
- Kids with ASD often crave deep pressure and movement. Deep pressure is very calming for kids with ASD. Doing 'heavy work' like carrying heavier items can provide this deep pressure. Have them run errands for you

that offer deep pressure and movement.

- Recognize that kids with ASD sometimes need to move to learn. Consider having the child sit on a "move and sit" cushion during class or a bean bag chair for circle time.
- Be careful not to reward undesired behaviour. Sometimes adults unintentionally reward negative behaviour by providing negative attention to undesired behaviours. For example, if the child hits another student, spits, or bites himself, and the teacher becomes very upset and provides attention (although negative), the behaviour may inadvertently be reinforced. If a child engages in a behaviour for attention and attention is not given, the behaviour will quickly drop off.
- Tell the child what to do, instead of what not to do. Sometimes it's hard for kids with ASD to understand negative instructions. For example, instead of saying, no hitting, say hands by sides.
- Give simple, clear, one step instructions.
- And, of course, always consider referring the child to an Occupational Therapist. OTs will be especially helpful for sensory activities. Sometimes people have a hard time wrapping their heads around sensory integration.

## References and reputable websites with accurate and reliable information on ASDs

- Autism Central – [www.autismcentral.ca](http://www.autismcentral.ca)
- Autism Connects – <http://www.autismconnects.ca>
- Autism Society of Canada – <http://www.autismsocietycanada.ca>
- Canadian Autism Intervention Network – [www.cairn-site.com](http://www.cairn-site.com)
- Health Canada's Autism website – [http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/dc-ma/autism/index\\_e.html](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/dc-ma/autism/index_e.html)



## NOVA SCOTIA EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP CONSORTIUM

Are you involved in a **Professional Learning Community (PLC)** in your school?

Did you do **Module One - Working with People** before **Insights** was included in that program (prior to November, 2004)?

## Insights Workshop-Discovering the Leader in You

The Insights Discovery system is designed to build an awareness of self and others which will enhance the development of a positive collaborative school culture so critical in developing successful Professional Learning Communities. This awareness can contribute to more effective communication and a greater satisfaction in the complex and rewarding work of educators.

Promoting a common language in teams of professionals is crucial in today's environment. If we don't work hard to find the common link among all of us, it becomes increasingly difficult to achieve a shared vision or desired outcome. The Insights Discovery experience allows each participant to better understand his or her own style of communication while increasing appreciation for others' styles and the contribution each makes to a successful learning community.

The beauty of the Insights Discovery System is that, by its nature and design, it promotes a culture of inclusion, and the learning goes on well after the initial introduction. Groups report that they have found a positive difference in individual sensitivity, awareness, and performance, as well as in staff meetings, with enhanced one on one communication and overall team and leadership effectiveness.

Newly scheduled one day Provincial Insights Workshops:

- Workshop # 1  
Thursday, November 13, 2008 4:00 pm-9:00 pm (in the Halifax region)
- Workshop # 2  
Friday, November 14, 2008 9:00 am-3:00 pm  
(in a location determined by proximity to majority of registrants)

Register on-line at [www.nselc.ednet.ns.ca](http://www.nselc.ednet.ns.ca) or call 422-3270 for more information.  
Registration deadline: October 24, 2008

did you  
**KNOW?**

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@nstu.ca](mailto:ekeefe@nstu.ca) to provide her with your NSTU email address. The **Be\_Well@nstu.ca** list will provide information about the EIP and other wellness topics.





# Are you an Educator 2.0? Shedding some light on the meaning of Web 2.0

By Maggie McFarlane, MA, MLIS  
NSTU LIBRARIAN

You’ve heard it bantered about everywhere, right? If it’s not Web 2.0, it’s Media 2.0, or Law 2.0, or, goodness knows, Cooking 2.0. This little catchphrase has caught on like wildfire in the past few years. Are you confused by what Web 2.0 actually means? Don’t worry—you are not alone. Misconceptions abound on the meaning of Web 2.0, but the reality is surprisingly simplistic!

The term “Web 2.0” seems to have emerged around 2004 after the first O’Reilly Media Web 2.0 conference (O’Reilly is an American Media company). According to Wikipedia, “Web 2.0 is a term which describes the trend in the use of World Wide Web technology and web design that aims to enhance creativity, information sharing, and, most notably, collaboration among users. These concepts have led to the development and evolution of web-based communities and hosted services, such as social-networking sites, wikis, blogs, and folksonomies.”

Think of the “old” Internet or World Wide Web—Web 1.0—as being composed of websites, email, and search engines. Basically, it was a place where you could really only “surf” and search for information.

Web 2.0, on the other hand, is user-driven, and relies heavily on interaction, conversations, and networking. The focus of Web 2.0 is people, to put it simply. Websites are no longer the domains of webmasters and programmers—the new creative content managers of the World Wide Web are the users of the world. In short, **you**. And, very likely, your students.

The foundations of Web 2.0 are already well entrenched. Here are a few of the major components of Web 2.0 that you can use in your classroom and at home:

- RSS (really simple syndication)—RSS is a web feed used to publish frequently updated content such as blog entries, news headlines, and podcasts in a standardized format. Have you considered setting up an RSS from your classroom blog? Students can receive updates on assignments, class schedules, reading lists, test dates, etc. Don’t have a classroom blog? See below!
- Wikis – A wiki is a collection of web pages designed to enable anyone who accesses it to contribute or modify content. Wikis can be used to create collaborative websites and are powerful tools for classroom projects.
- Blogs – A blog (a contraction of the term “web log”) is a website—usually maintained by a single person—that contains commentary, descriptions of events, or content. A typical blog is composed of text, images, and links. Readers are generally permitted to leave comments on a blog. Blogs are a great tool for the classroom; they can be easily set up, can include an email sign up for an RSS feed, and can provide students with the opportunity to leave commentary and interact with the site.
- Commentary – Commentary has become an important part of the interactivity of the Web 2.0 world. Users now have the ability to comment on blogs and on photos/videos on social networking sites, as well as on commercial and media sites (newspaper websites, book/video/audio sites, etc...)

- User ratings – Are you hoping to buy a new fridge? How about a TV? Or the new Wii? Websites like Best Buy, Futureshop, Sears, Chapters, and so on, now offer users the ability to “rate” products and leave comments about products to share their experience with other potential buyers.
- Audio & Video – Streamed audio and video has changed the web forever. Did you miss the newest preview for Harry Potter? Head straight to YouTube. Got a fantastic short video of your brother’s disastrous fall on the ski hill? Upload it to Facebook! Media streaming (provided your bandwidth is high enough) has resulted in the end of “downloading” media files. Users can now enjoy audio and video content directly from websites; sharing their own self-generated audio and video content is as easy as plugging in a USB cable (or not, if you’re lucky enough to have wireless!) and connecting to the Internet.
- Instant messaging – Whether you prefer IM (Instant Messenger) or prefer to use one of the embedded instant messaging services (Facebook, Gmail), there’s no need to email back and forth and back and forth if you need to have a simple chat. Think that instant messaging is just for fun? You might be surprised to learn that libraries all over the world are now offering Virtual Reference using instant messaging—day or night, you can now have reference questions answered by a professional librarian.
- Social networking sites – Social networking has created powerful new ways to communicate and share information. Logging in to a social networking site has become an everyday ritual for millions of people and it appears that—despite some worries—these sites are here to stay. Are they just for fun? On the contrary, people, organizations, events, and governments are now all using sites like Facebook and myspace to promote their message to millions of users.
- Tagging & folksonomies – According to Wikipedia: “A tag is a non-hierarchical keyword or term assigned to a piece of information (such as an Internet bookmark, digital image, or computer file). This kind of metadata helps describe an item and allows it to be found again by browsing or searching. Tags are chosen informally and personally by the item’s creator or by its viewer, depending on the system. On a website in which many users tag many items, this collection of tags becomes a folksonomy.” “Tagging” is nothing new to librarians—we assign subject headings to absolutely everything! But tagging in the Web 2.0 world is informal and uncontrolled—it is more akin to keyword searching, which is far more intuitive to the average user. Face it—you have been tagged somewhere on the web!
- Social bookmarking – Social bookmarking can be a major boon for educators. Wikipedia provides a good description of social bookmarking: “In a social bookmarking system, users save links to web pages that they want to remember and/or share. These bookmarks are usually public, and can be saved privately, shared only with specified people or groups, shared only inside certain networks, or another combination of public and private domains. The allowed people can usually view these bookmarks



chronologically, by category or tags, or via a search engine.” Are your students working collaboratively on a project but doing research individually? Setting up a social bookmarking site (del.icio.us is one of the best known sites) allows students to research individually while at the same time sharing their findings with their classmates.

Think of Web 2.0 as being in perpetual Beta mode. Everything you use is always being improved upon or experimented with or altered. Web 2.0 is always in flux, it’s always changing. It is, however, fundamentally about interactivity and the user experience. It is, in many ways, a social phenomenon that is forcing the web to

be more open, more collaborative, and less restrictive.

Of course, this social phenomenon comes with a few caveats; teachers and students alike are reminded to exercise good judgment when putting information online. Determining who has access to your online information and taking the time to adjust and test your privacy settings is essential; being a savvy user and understanding the importance of protecting your information and your identity is all part of the brave new online world.

So, are you an Educator 2.0? With the way the web is changing we could very well be asking the question “are you an Educator 3.0” in just a few years. Happy blogging!

## NOVA SCOTIA Department of Education

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• Sydney	November 4, 2008	Delta Hotel, Sydney
• Yarmouth	November 26, 2008	Rodd Hotel, Yarmouth
• Truro	February 3, 2009	CCRSB 60 Lorne Street, Truro
• Halifax	February 24, 2009	Dartmouth Teacher’s Centre

**For further information contact** coveyfp@gov.ns.ca



# NOTICES

## Peaceful Schools International launches "School Twinning for a Small Planet"

Are you interested in helping your students make new friends in West Africa, develop an understanding of global issues, get involved in peace and environmental action, while meeting curriculum outcomes? If so, consider *twinning for a small planet*. Using our free on-line resources you can help your class correspond with a class in rural Sierra Leone; share photos, videos and other materials with your students; and engage in optional joint actions with your twin class on eight investigation topics. We ask for a simple commitment of two class letters to be sent via email to your twin class, with options for additional activities if you choose. Our Sierra Leone-based volunteer teacher will facilitate communication between classes and can provide you with more information about your twin school or class. Visit [www.peacefulschoolsinternational.org](http://www.peacefulschoolsinternational.org) and go to the "Resources" link for resources and more information.

## Attention Entrepreneurship Educators

Are you looking for resources to enhance your entrepreneurship curriculum? CEED's Reality of Entrepreneurship is an exciting program designed to support teachers in achieving curriculum outcomes while giving high school students the chance to experience real-life entrepreneurial challenges.

Students from across Nova Scotia will compete to develop business ideas that create positive environmental change. Focusing on the environmental theme, competition tasks cover the topics of opportunity identification, business planning, development of a marketing plan, running a business venture and evaluation of a venture.

Registration deadline for fall 2008 competition is **November 7**. For more information and to register visit [www.ceed.info/reality](http://www.ceed.info/reality) or contact Liz Smith at [Liz.smith@ceed.info](mailto:Liz.smith@ceed.info), 902-421-2333 ext. 111 or toll free 1-800-590-8481.

## Meaning of Home Contest for Habitat for Humanity

From October 6 to November 14, students in Grades 4, 5 and 6 can enter the Meaning of Home writing contest in support of Habitat for Humanity.

By entering, students have the chance to make a difference in their community - the winner will be part of the ultimate gift: A \$60,000 contribution towards the building of a Habitat home in or near the winner's community.

Teachers can incorporate the writing contest into their classroom activities and assignments. As you know, one of the key elements of language learning is to interact and connect with individuals. The writing contest provides students with the opportunity to produce an original piece of work that reflects their capacity for independent critical thought. The activity challenges students to think creatively about a topic that directly impacts their lives—the meaning of home—and write about it.

Download a complete, ready-to-go Education Module—including a lesson plan, activity ideas, writing tips and a Habitat for Humanity fact sheet—and full contest details at [www.meaningofhome.ca](http://www.meaningofhome.ca). Also available in French at [www.sensdunchezsoi.ca](http://www.sensdunchezsoi.ca).

## The Climate Project-Canada

The Climate Project-Canada is a non-profit organization and registered Canadian charity dedicated to educating the public about climate change through presentations by trained volunteers. Anyone wishing a presentation in their school should visit [http://climateprojectcanada.org/index\\_en.htm](http://climateprojectcanada.org/index_en.htm) and fill out the posted request form.

## Save Farzad! Send an online message to President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad now!

Education International (EI) launched an urgent action appeal August 14 in a bid to save Farzad Kamangar, a 33-year old teacher and former trade unionist from the Kurdistan Province of Iran, who is currently at risk of being executed following a ruling issued at an unfair trial.

EI has written to the Iranian Government to request a fair trial for Kamangar and other union activists who are under arrest. In spite of joint efforts from various national and international organizations to have his death sentence commuted, the Supreme Court upheld it on July 11, 2008. In addition, Iranian trade union colleagues and human rights activists who show solidarity with Kamangar are being subjected to pervasive intimidation by the Iranian authorities.

EI calls on its member organizations, partners and individual teachers to support its appeal. Send an online message to the Iranian president to appeal for a review of the case of Farzad Kamangar: [www.ei-ie.org/savefarzad](http://www.ei-ie.org/savefarzad) or write to the Iranian authorities. For more information, please visit: [www.ei-ie.org/savefarzad](http://www.ei-ie.org/savefarzad).

## The world is your classroom

Experience the personal and professional growth that comes from a year of living and working in another country! The Canadian Education Exchange Foundation facilitates reciprocal teacher exchanges for the teachers of B.C., N.B., N.S., Ont., & P.E.I. as mandated by each provincial Ministry of Education. Destinations include the United Kingdom, Denmark, Germany, Switzerland, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Australia and some U.S. states. Applications are now being accepted for the 2009-2010 school year. For more information: visit [www.ceef.ca](http://www.ceef.ca), email: [cwilk@ceef.ca](mailto:cwilk@ceef.ca), or phone 705-739-7596.

## Get involved with NSYES!

Nova Scotia Youth Experiences in Science (NSYES!) was formed in 2001 to initiate, promote, and support science experiences for Nova Scotia youth and celebrate the accomplishments of our young scientists.

At its inception, NSYES! took on as first tasks supporting those regions in Nova Scotia that had regional science fairs and helping to establish fairs in areas where none existed. To raise the profile of regional science fairs, NSYES! began running a team-building event called Team Nova Scotia Showcase. Students from all ten regional science fairs who are going on to the Canada-Wide Science Fair are invited to attend. They receive team jackets, display their projects and participate in activities designed to help team members get to know each other.

Since the need for research scientists and sci-tech entrepreneurs is becoming critical, it is important that our young people become aware that science can be fun, and the opportunity of a lifetime. NSYES! is building partnerships with government departments

and the private sector to help convince young people to keep their science options open.

Both active and retired teachers can play a part in this rewarding endeavor. You could help with a regional science fair committee or with the provincial organization. You could volunteer as a mentor, in person or on-line, to students who need help developing a project idea.

For more information, contact Cliff Coveyduc, Executive Director, at 902-424-8641 or [coveydc@ns.gov.ns.ca](mailto:coveydc@ns.gov.ns.ca).

## Iron Science 2008, Atlantic Playoffs

Discovery Centre in Halifax is hosting Iron Science 2008. The Iron Science challenge is a celebration of science teachers. It champions the creation of high-quality creative approaches to teaching science and engineering and shines a spotlight on skilled and courageous teachers from across Canada.

The Atlantic Playoffs are being held in Halifax on October 31. The winner of the Atlantic Division wins an all-expense paid trip to Calgary for the finals on November 21 at the University of Calgary along with the honour of being an Iron Science teacher, an Iron Science lab coat, a prize for the school of their choice and a prize package valued at \$250. The winning team of the finals will be awarded a SMART Board 600i interactive whiteboard system and a Senteo interactive response system, valued at over \$5,300!

Iron Science teams should include four participants, two of whom hold valid teaching certificates. The team may invite a member from outside the realm of science education such as an athlete, musician or celebrity. At least one of the team members is expected to act as "colour commentator," clearly explaining the demonstration to the audience.

The event follows a format similar to the famous iron Chef Television series, with teams of teachers presenting spectacular and imaginative feats of science and engineering. Each team will be allowed 10 minutes for presentation. The presentation should involve several scientific disciplines such as chemistry, biology and physics and be designed for a general audience.

For more information visit [www.iron-science.ca](http://www.iron-science.ca). Travel, accommodations and substitute teacher fees are taken care of.

## Interested in Media Education? Curious about teaching media literacy?

Take a 5 minute survey. You could win one of 5 sets of Scanning Television 2, the award-winning classroom resource worth \$375.

The Canadian Association of Media Education Organizations (CAMEO), the Media Awareness Network, and the Canadian Teachers' Federation want to know if you are interested in teaching media literacy and may be looking for professional development offered by experienced educators across Canada.

Would you kindly invite teachers to fill out this quick and easy online survey: <http://freeonlinesurveys.com/rendersurvey.asp?sid=pprjkssr5cgy2db482640>. Survey runs until November.

# Waste Reduction Week

Clean Nova Scotia  
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## October 19-25th



## Environmental Superhero Contest

Hey Kids ages 7-9 in Nova Scotia!

What imaginary power would your very own superhero have to help save the Earth from pollution? Draw your own superhero, tell us about its powers and tell us why you, the artist, are a 'Super-Person' working to reduce waste every day. One entry per child on an 8 1/2 x 11 piece of paper. Use both sides if needed.

Enter to win one of 10 exciting prizes! Prizes include professional drawings of the top three entries or one of seven Super-Person capes!

All entries must be received by October 31, 2008  
For more details go to [www.clean.ns.ca/wrw](http://www.clean.ns.ca/wrw) or call 420-7927 or 1800-665-5377



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By e-mail: [ekeefe@nstu.ca](mailto:ekeefe@nstu.ca)  
or CALL: 1-800-565-6788

\*Please include: your first, middle and last name; professional number, school or campus, and Local.



# I have been injured on duty, now what?

Teachers in public schools in Nova Scotia are not covered by the Workers' Compensation Act. However, a teacher who is injured in the performance of his or her duties is entitled to coverage under Article 26 of the Teachers' Provincial Agreement—Injury on Duty.

Article 26 provides up to two years paid leave for a teacher who has been approved for injury on duty and is absent as a result of the injury. Article 26.07 also provides the following coverage:

*Where a physician prescribes, as a result of an injury under 26.01, any health care service, product or device, and where such services are shown to be medically appropriate for the injury claimed, reimbursement may be authorized for the costs of such health care service, product or device beyond that provided for with Total Care.*

Transportation, meals and necessary accommodation expenses will also be considered. All expenses, except metrage, claimed under this Article must be supported by receipts.

### Tips for Teachers

- Report injury to immediate supervisor at earliest possible time
- Complete school incident form—keep a copy and give a copy to immediate supervisor
- Complete Injury on duty form – keep a copy and send a copy to the Director of Human Resources

The injury on duty form should be available at each school and/or on the Board's website.

- Keep a copy of all prescriptions, doctor's notes, referral for treatments, etc.
- Keep receipts for all expenses (meals, accommodations, etc.)
- Contact NSTU for expense guidelines and claim form

For further information contact NSTU member services via phone at 1-800-565-6788 or email at [nstu@nstu.ca](mailto:nstu@nstu.ca).

*Disclaimer: This summary and partial text is provided solely for the purpose of explaining the principal features of the identified articles. All rights with respect to the Teachers' Provincial Agreement and Regional Agreements shall be governed solely by the document executed and issued by the parties.*

did you  
KNOW?

The Nova Scotia Teachers Union Mentorship Program was created to help address the long term staffing needs of the NSTU. It is intended for individuals who may be interested in applying for Executive Staff Officer positions within the NSTU. It offers an opportunity to job shadow and discuss with current staff a variety of topics and provide insight into the types of skills and training necessary to be successful.

The Program sees two participants, one in member services and one in professional services, spend a total of four consecutive days in their respective areas.

Participation in this program is not a prerequisite for employment with the Nova Scotia Teachers Union, nor does such participation imply or guarantee preference in hiring with the Union.

**The deadline for the first application is October 15, 2008 for November 2008 and January 15, 2009 for April 2009. Application forms are available through your NSTU rep or on the NSTU website at [www.nstu.ca](http://www.nstu.ca).**

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\*Candidates will be notified of specific date and location

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SINGLES AND TEACHING COUPLES  
MAY APPLY

\*High School Teachers must be/willing to become members of the Ontario College of Teachers.

\*\*Only those selected for an interview will be contacted.

APPLY BY email

Send resume and references by :  
OCTOBER 31, 2008

Attention to: F. Hanson  
E-mail: [cisrt@sympatico.ca](mailto:cisrt@sympatico.ca)

# Change to Certification Appeal Process

Section 17 of the Governor-in-Council Education Act Regulations was recently amended to place a statutory time limit on appeals of the decisions of the Registrar of Teacher Certification (the Registrar) relating to classes of teacher certificates. As a result of this regulatory amendment, affected persons will have a maximum of 180 days (from the date on which they receive notice of the decision of the Registrar) to appeal a decision of the Registrar as it relates to their class of teacher certificate. For the purpose of administering this regulation, **November 15, 2008** has been established as the commencement date for the **180-day time limit**.

On the basis of this regulatory amendment, persons who wish to appeal a decision of the Registrar that was received on or before September 15, 2008 must file their Request for Review with the Certification Appeals Committee no later than May 13, 2009 (which is 180 days subsequent to the commencement date of November 15, 2008).

For those who wish to appeal a decision of the Registrar that is received after November 15, 2008, the affected person will have 180 days from the date on which they receive notification of the decision of the Registrar to file their Request for Review.

For more information about this appeal process, contact: Ms. Gaye Rawding, Chair, Certification Appeals Committee, Nova Scotia Department of Education, PO Box 578, Halifax, NS B3J 2S9; [RAWDINGG@gov.ns.ca](mailto:RAWDINGG@gov.ns.ca).

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[www.nstu.ca](http://www.nstu.ca)

**AAE (Association of Adult Educators)**  
NSCC Strait Area Campus, Port Hawkesbury

**AEA (Association des Enseignants Acadiens)**  
École du Carrefour, Dartmouth

**AST (Association of Science Teachers)**  
Halifax West High School, Halifax

**ATA (Art Teachers Association)**  
Citadel High School, Halifax

**ATEC (Association of Teachers of Exceptional Children)**  
World Trade Centre, Halifax

**ATENS (Association of Teachers of English of Nova Scotia)**  
Park Place Ramada Plaza Hotel, Dartmouth

**ATYA (Association of Teachers of Young Adolescents)**  
Riverside Education Centre, Milford

**BETA (Business Education Teachers Association)**  
NSCC IT Campus, Halifax

**EDANS (Educational Drama Association of Nova Scotia)**  
Prince Andrew High School, Dartmouth

**FSTA (Family Studies Teachers Association)**  
Hebbsville Academy, Hebbsville

**MTA (Mathematics Teachers Association)**  
Central Kings Rural High School, Cambridge

**NSLTA/AELNE (Nova Scotia Language Teachers Association/Association des Enseignant(e)s de Langues de la Nouvelle-Écosse)**  
École Ridgecliff Middle School, Beechville

**NSMEA (Nova Scotia Music Educators' Association)**  
Dartmouth High School, Dartmouth

**NSSCA (Nova Scotia School Counsellors Association)**  
Avon View High School, Windsor

**NSTALL (Nova Scotia Teachers Association for Literacy and Learning)**  
South Colchester Academy, Brookfield

**NSTEA (Nova Scotia Technology Education Association)**  
Bedford South School, Bedford

**PETA (Primary Elementary Teachers Association)**  
Auburn Drive High School, Dartmouth

**PISA (Psychologists in Schools Association)**  
Dr. Tom Parker Building (NSTU), Halifax

**SAA (School Administrators' Association)**  
NSCC Pictou Campus, Stellarton

**SPAA (Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists Association)**  
Best Western Glengarry, Truro

**SSTA (Social Studies Teachers Association)**  
Lockview High School, Fall River

**TAPHE (Teachers Association for Physical and Health Education)**  
Truro Junior High School, Truro

The Teacher, October 2008, Page 11



# Summering in South America through Project Overseas

By Andrena Teed

Like many teachers, I spent some time this past summer in professional development, but this professional development experience was vastly different. Under the auspices of *Project Overseas*, my professional development experience took me to Guyana for three weeks in July. Guyana is in South America, bordered by Suriname, Brazil and Venezuela, and is the third smallest country on the mainland of South America. There, I presented language arts professional development workshops for teachers in Paramakatoi, a remote village in the southwestern part of that country. I gained professionally, but more importantly, I was giving professionally.

Despite being a regional administrative centre in the southwest part of Guyana, Paramakatoi has no telephone connections (not even cell phones work there) and no power lines. There is a radio link to Georgetown, the capital of Guyana. BN-2 Islander airplanes land on a bitumen airstrip, bringing in persons, such as our group of four Canadians, coming to Paramakatoi to work or volunteer on a project.

This *Project Overseas* program was offered at the Paramakatoi High School. It has very basic

and pencils, because they were often the only tools available in the remote classrooms. I used local resources almost exclusively during my lessons—for example, excerpts from textbooks readily available in the schools.

My co-tutor, Iola John (Paramakatoi), offered her services as a local resource person for the teachers, and was keen to emphasize that the teachers should be in regular contact with the Local Education Officer and Regional Education Officer. Realizing the emphasis of her presentations, I reinforced them as often as possible, especially encouraging the teachers to contact their Local and Regional Education Officers with their queries about course content and requests for resources.

In conjunction with an Alberta colleague, I presented units about gender equality during the afternoon sessions. I encouraged discussion about gender equality and HIV/AIDS issues during my morning (language arts) lesson times, to help link the afternoon session topics into the more academically oriented morning sessions.

Of the teacher participants, a handful had the luxury of flying to Paramakatoi. Most teach-



*Teed is shown above Kaieteur Falls, named for a Patamona chieftain, Kaie, who sacrificed himself by paddling over the falls in a canoe to create peace with the Caribisi, with whom they had been at war for many years. The vertical drop over Kaieteur Falls is 741 feet, but the water moves with deceptive slowness just above the falls.*

classroom resources—blackboards and chalk for teachers, and scribbles and pencils for students. Textbooks are usually shared between two, three, or sometimes four students. Desks and chairs are crowded into classrooms to accommodate the number of students in each class.

The teachers attending the professional development workshop, offered as a joint venture between the Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF) and the Guyana Teachers' Union (GTU) came from Paramakatoi and the outlying villages. The teacher participants ranged from secondary school graduates who would be teaching for the first time this September, to teachers with many years of experience. Because they would be away from home for up to a month, many came with their small children, including toddlers and babies.

Language arts was my specific portfolio at the professional development workshop in Paramakatoi. I endeavoured to present interesting and interactive lessons, introducing instructional games, and the use of poetry or excerpts from literature (found in the secondary school level textbooks) as inspiration for compositions. Every day we played a language-based game, such as Boggle, or Scrabble, created crosswords, or played with dominoes that indicated parts of speech instead of dots. The games were a huge success, and I was challenged to create variations on a theme for each lesson. In typical teacher style, I threw the challenge back to the teachers, and they responded by bringing or creating games themselves. Our biggest obstacle was to create games that required only paper

ers attending the workshop walked from their villages. No other transportation was available to them. Some walked for a day, most walked for two or three days, a few walked for four days, and a couple of teachers walked for five days to attend this professional development opportunity.

The trip through the rainforest can be dangerous. Although there were a few stories of animal sightings, no one had a close encounter with venomous snakes or jaguars this year. Last year a participant was bitten by a snake while she was travelling home, but she arrived safely this year, with an interesting scar to display for the interested Canadians. While we were there, a jaguar was killed about an hour from Paramakatoi. It had been killing chickens, and there was some concern that it might become more brazen and develop a taste for persons. Better safe than sorry seemed to be the modus operandi with jaguars.

Near the village the rainforest was not hazardous. Nearly every afternoon, two of my colleagues and I followed paths, puffing our way up the steep, high hills surrounding the village. We considered ourselves fortunate to have any breath left when we reached the top. The Patamona Amerindians who lived in Paramakatoi could run up those hills. As well as moving up and down 45 to 80 degree paths with ease, their concept of travelling time was slightly skewed from ours. For example, we'd be told that our planned destination should be about an hour's walk away, followed immediately by the caveat that for us it would probably be two



*Above is the Guyana Teachers' Union (GTU) building. GTU organized the professional development workshops.*

hours or slightly more. And whomever was giving directions and time was always correct. We were indeed much slower moving along those paths than the Patamona were.

The four Canadian teachers lived in luxury in the Paramakatoi Guest House, a village hostel for visitors from away. We each had our own room, complete with bed and mosquito net. There was a kitchen where we prepared tea or Milo (a malted chocolate drink) in the mornings. There were inside toilets, and a shower stall with a tap in the wall and running water. Our meals were taken at the other guest house, euphemistically called the 'doctor's house' because it is theoretically reserved for a doctor (of which there is none). One of the GTU persons, Desiree Vanlewin, prepared meals for all of the CTF and GTU persons presenting professional development workshops. We ate well—local food, which included plenty of roti (a type of flat bread similar to naan) or rice with various curries. It was all delicious.

Of course there were plenty of opportunities for tourist activities. We took a one-day tour of Kaieteur Falls, Guyana's highest waterfall. It included a meal stop at the luxury resort, Baga-mara, where Mick Jagger stayed during World Cup Cricket. The GTU took us on a tour of Georgetown and the surrounding area. We had a couple of days after our assignment finished

to rest in Georgetown before we returned home, or went on to other holiday options in the Caribbean. The Canadian High Commissioner feted us. We had the opportunity to discuss our impressions of Paramakatoi with the High Commission's Secretary for development projects and the CIDA representative there.

This year three Nova Scotia teachers were selected as participants in the Canadian Teachers' Federation's (CTF) *Project Overseas*—one to Guyana (me), and two to Africa—one to Togo (Hilarion Melanson) and one to Burkina Faso (Lee Cantwell). This is an international development service CTF has been offering to developing countries around the world for the past 45 years. Teacher organizations in Canada contact the Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF) with a request for assistance, and then a plan is developed to send Canadian teachers as volunteers to assist with professional development workshops in CTF identified countries of need. *Project Overseas* is conducted in conjunction with the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), Canada's development assistance department. For more information on *Project Overseas* or to obtain order forms for the Summer 2009 session contact Lillian Pottie at the NSTU at lpottie@nstu.ca or visit the CTF website at www.ctf-fec.ca.



*A typical teacher washroom is shown: Hmmm. And we complain about our facilities?*

*Andrena Teed, who has been teaching since 1979 started a new position in September as a Literacy Support Teacher for the Tri-County Regional School Board. She has taught English, social studies, communications technology, and tourism. She has worked in schools in Germany, Botswana, the UK and Ontario as a classroom teacher, department coordinator, and librarian and in non-formal and development education, in community groups and international organizations in Canada and overseas. She moved to Nova Scotia in 2004, from Botswana, where she was a resident since 1989.*



# coming events

**October is...** Autism Awareness Month ([www.autismcentre.ns.ca](http://www.autismcentre.ns.ca)), Breast Cancer Awareness Month ([www.cancer.ca](http://www.cancer.ca)), and Flu Awareness Month.

## SEPT. TO DEC. 2008

### Dalhousie University Department of Music Series

Dalhousie's Department of Music is celebrating its 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary season of performances by students, faculty and guests. Events this fall include an Opera Video Series, Voice and Piano Master classes, Noon Hour Recitals and concerts. They welcome junior and senior high school groups. Visit their website at <http://music.dal.ca> or contact the department at 902-494-2418 or [music@dal.ca](mailto:music@dal.ca) for more information.

## OCTOBER

### Canada's Healthy Workplace Month

Canada's Healthy Workplace Month (CHWM) is designed to introduce workplace health to Canadian organizations and to support those who are already on the journey. CHWM is managed by the National Quality Institute (NQI) in collaboration with the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS), and is presented by The Great-West Life Assurance Company. This year's theme focuses on the Healthy Workplace Challenge. Week 1 is Fit @ Work, Week 2: Support @ Work, Week 3: Green @ Work and Week 4: Champions @ Work. For more information visit [www.healthy-workplaceweek.ca](http://www.healthy-workplaceweek.ca).

## OCTOBER 24 AND 25

### 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Gaspereau PressWayzgoose

The 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Wayzgoose is an event designed to increase community awareness about the book arts by putting artists, writers and readers face to face with the people and the tools involved in book production. This year's activities take place in Kentville at the Gaspereau Press Printing Works, Kentville Rec Centre, and Paddy's Pub. They include evening readings, book art workshops, fiction for breakfast, and evening book arts presentations. For more information please visit [www.gaspereau.com](http://www.gaspereau.com) or contact Gaspereau Press at [info@gaspereau.com](mailto:info@gaspereau.com) or 902-678-6002.

## OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER

### Dalhousie University School of Social Work courses

The Continuing Education Program of the School of Social Work, Dalhousie University, is now offering its courses for the fall term. These include: *Anxiety Disorders in Children and Adolescents: Recognizing and Treating the Emerging Epidemic* (October 16 & 17), *Mindful Therapy: The Art of True Presence and Deep Listening* (October 23 & 24), *What to Do When Hope is a Dirty Word* (October 27 & 28), *Exploring Energy Psychology: Evolving Thought Field Therapy*

*Intensive Training* (November 6 & 7), *Level 1 Focusing: Moving Clients from Insight to Change* (November 13 & 14), *Working With What's Important to Clients: Solution-Focused Therapy Interventions with Individuals, Couples & Families* (November 17 & 18), and *The Couples' Toolbox: Key Skills and Ideas to Prevent Conflict and Strengthen Relationships* (November 20 & 21). All courses will be held in Halifax. Register on-line at <http://continuingeducation.socialwork.dal.ca>

For more information please contact Louise Ghiz, MSW, RSW 902-494-1353 or Monika Kramer 902-494-2249.

## OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER

### The Story of Stuff SENSE workshops

The Nova Scotia Environmental Network's SENSE: Sustainability Education in Nova Scotia for Everyone working group in our province is hosting a series of workshops this fall. *The Story of Stuff: Towards Sustainable Consumption and Production* will be held in partnership with the Halifax Regional Libraries. The workshop is 1.5 hours and will include a short film and discussion on ways we can become more sustainable. Participants will also learn about the new Nova Scotia Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act and other sustainability initiatives happening in the province. Participants will receive resources to help them take action in their homes and communities. There will also be draw prizes for the new book "Go Green: How to Build an Earth-Friendly Community." The October and November *The Story of Stuff* workshops will be held at the Keshen Goodman Public Library October 8 at 7 p.m.; Tantallon Public Library on October 21 at 7 p.m. and Halifax North branch on November 27 at 7 p.m.

## NOVEMBER 3

### SENSE AGM

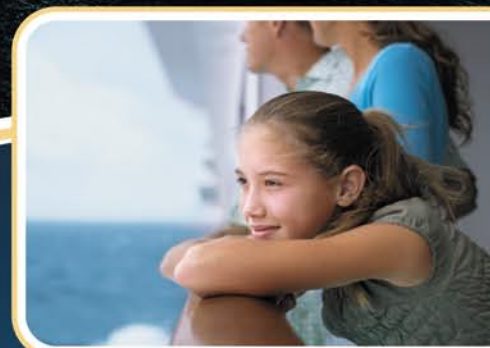
The next SENSE (Sustainability Education in Nova Scotia for Everyone) general meeting will be held on Monday, November 3 from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. in room 201 - 206 of the Nova Scotia Teachers Union, 3106 Joseph Howe Drive in Halifax. NSTU president Alexis Allen will bring greetings, Nova Scotia Community College president Dr. Joan McArthur-Blair has been invited to be the keynote, the Nova Scotia Department of Education will share their sustainability education work, and action plans will be developed for sustainability education in Nova Scotia. They will also be screening the first SENSE film! A catered lunch is included. The meeting is open to anyone interested in sustainability education, please RSVP to ensure enough seats and lunch to: [nsen@cen-rce.org](mailto:nsen@cen-rce.org). SENSE welcomes new participants.

To find out more about SENSE and its activities, please contact the Nova Scotia Environmental Network by email at: [nsen@cen-rce.org](mailto:nsen@cen-rce.org), by phone: 902-454-6846 and by visiting the web site: [www.nsen.ca](http://www.nsen.ca).

(continued on page 15)



'A' is for...



# Atlantic Vision.

With a new superferry joining the Marine Atlantic fleet in late 2008, we posed a challenge to students in K-12 across Newfoundland and Labrador and Cape Breton, Nova Scotia – name our vessel! Thanks to the motivation and encouragement of committed teachers like you, we had over 780 entries for the 'What's Her Name' contest.

And we have a winner... the MV *Atlantic Vision*! Congratulations to Danielle Locke from H.L. Strong Academy in Little Bay Islands, Newfoundland and Labrador. Symbolic of the prosperous future our two provinces hold, we're proud to have this vessel join our fleet. For her inspired entry, Danielle wins a trip on the premiere voyage of the MV *Atlantic Vision* and a \$1,000 cash prize, plus her school also receives \$1,000, 25 adult roundtrip fares and Marine Atlantic gift certificates!

The MV *Atlantic Vision* is our largest and most modern vessel yet. With greater passenger, vehicle and goods capacity, plus many exciting amenities, watch it make a splash later this year!

[www.marine-atlantic.ca](http://www.marine-atlantic.ca)  
1-800-341-7981



Marine Atlantic  
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Canada





update

# The NSTU Group Insurance Program – An Overview

Both the NSTU and the NSTU Group Insurance Trustees receive many enquiries with respect to the NSTU Group Insurance Program. The NSTU, through the NSTU Group Insurance Trustees, offers excellent coverages to both active and retired members of the Nova Scotia Teachers Union. Hopefully, this article will provide some useful information regarding available coverages.

## COVERAGE FOR EVERY MEMBER

### Provincial Master Life Insurance

A \$50,000 term life policy is available to all Active Public School Members, APSEA Members, and Community College Members. The premium for this benefit is 100% paid by each employer; therefore, there is no charge to the member for this coverage. It is very important to review your beneficiary designation.

As part of the Provincial Master Life Insurance coverage, a matching \$50,000 of insurance is included for Accidental Death & Dismemberment, as well as a Dependent Life benefit of \$3,000 for your spouse and \$1,500 for each dependent child.

### Funeral Expense Plan

The Funeral Expense Plan provided to NSTU members and eligible dependents under the age of 65 provides up to \$3,000 per funeral. This benefit is provided 100% through the NSTU Group Insurance Trust Fund.

## EMPLOYER COST-SHARED BENEFITS YOU NEED TO ENROLL IN

### Total Care Medical

The Total Care Medical Program is a comprehensive supplementary Health Care Program available to all Active Public School Members, APSEA Members, and Community College Members and is paid 100% by the employer. This program provides prescription drug coverage, semi-private hospital room, vision care, paramedical services (including physiotherapy and massage therapy) and many other benefits as outlined in your Group Insurance Profile. This benefit is not automatic. You may apply for this benefit at any time.

### Total Care Dental

Similarly, the Total Care Dental Program provides comprehensive Dental Care coverage to NSTU members. Total Care Dental includes Basic Preventative Services, Major Restorative Services, and Prosthodontic and Orthodontic Services. The employer cost shares 65% of the Basic and Major Restorative premiums of the Total Care Dental while the member pays 35% for Basic Preventative and Major Restorative premiums, plus 100% for Prosthodontic and Orthodontic premiums. You can enroll in the NSTU Total Care Dental Program once per year on Sept. 1<sup>st</sup>. Also, new teachers have 31 days from the receipt of their new teacher package to enroll.

### Long Term Disability

Long Term Disability benefits are available to active members of the NSTU. If not currently enrolled, you must be under 59 ½ years of age to apply for coverage. This coverage provides a benefit based on 70% of your gross monthly salary at the time your claim commences. This is a taxable benefit as the employer contributes to the cost of the premium.

The Long Term Disability benefit is integrated with CPP and Teachers' Disability Pension. The qualifying period before benefit payments would commence is the greater of 90 calendar days or your accumulated sick leave.

Effective August 1, 2008, coverage will be effective the date you commence employment as a term, probationary or permanent contract teacher in the Province of Nova Scotia. You will be automatically enrolled in the NSTU Long Term Disability Program with the provision to opt out and premiums will be deducted automatically unless:

1. You were previously automatically enrolled as a "New Teacher" and opted out of the Program; and/or
2. You previously applied for enrollment in the Long Term Disability Program and were denied coverage; and/or
3. You failed to enroll through past open enrollments.

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Home and Auto Insurance policies are primarily underwritten by Unifund Assurance Company. Unifund and Johnson Inc. share common ownership. Certain conditions may apply. AIR MILES® reward miles awarded on regular home and auto insurance policies underwritten by Unifund Assurance Company. One AIR MILES reward mile is awarded for each \$20 in premium paid. Contest runs from March 1 to December 1, 2008. No purchase necessary. Skill-testing question required. Chance of winning depends on number of entrants. (See [www.johnson.ca/nstu](http://www.johnson.ca/nstu) for details.) \*™Trademarks of AIR MILES International Trading B.V. Used under license by LoyaltyOne, Inc. and Johnson Inc. (for Unifund Assurance Company). MVM,MAC,July08

Coverage will commence on the first of the month following the date the insurance company approves any evidence.

### Hospital Cash

A Hospital Cash Benefit is provided to all NSTU members who are enrolled in the NSTU Long Term Disability Program. This coverage is a daily benefit of \$20.00 to an insured member when the member is in a hospital and under the care of a physician. This benefit will be paid from the first day of hospitalization, if hospitalized for at least four days. As with the Funeral Expense Benefit, this coverage is paid 100% by the NSTU Group Insurance Trust Fund.

### Optional Coverages Paid By Members

There are a number of optional coverages available to NSTU members that provide the opportunity to purchase additional insurance coverages through payroll deduction, such as, Optional Group Life Insurance, Voluntary Accidental Death & Dismemberment, MEDOC® Travel Plan and Home / Auto Insurance. These coverages are 100% paid by the member and are offered at very competitive premium rates. Details on these programs are contained within your Group Insurance Profile.

### Breaking News !!

**Watch for the details of a new Trip Cancellation / Trip Interruption Plan coming in October as an add-on option to the MEDOC® Group Insurance Travel Plan.**

This is a brief overview of the benefits detailed through the NSTU Group Insurance Program. Full details of your NSTU Group Insurance Program are contained within the Group Insurance Profile, which has been provided to you in the past.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Johnson Inc. at 453-9543 (local) or 1-800-453-9543 (toll-free).



NOVEMBER 21

Benefit concert for the Nova Scotia  
Gambia Association

The Society of Dalhousie Music Students (SFMS), students, and faculty present this concert as they combine their talent in support of the Nova Scotia Gambia Association. It will take place on November 17 at 8 p.m. at the First Baptist Church on Oxford Street in Halifax. Tickets are \$10 (\$6 for students) available at the door.

DECEMBER 1

World AIDS Day 2008, One Hour on  
AIDS initiative

Participate in the “One Hour on AIDS” initiative. For World AIDS Day on December 1, 2008, Education International (EI) invites teachers to participate in the *One Hour on AIDS* initiative. Building on the success of last year, EI hopes the lesson proposed in the *One Hour on AIDS* activity kit can be taught in thousands of schools and union offices around the world. The idea is simple, the message is clear: teachers have a central role in raising awareness about HIV and AIDS. World AIDS Day is an opportunity

to get involved. Start by taking one hour to talk about HIV and AIDS on December 1.

Despite recent progress in combating the spread of the virus, HIV and AIDS remain significant threats to public health in many countries, affecting teachers and students worldwide. In 2001, governments pledged at the UN General Assembly that over 90 per cent of young men and women would have the knowledge needed to reduce their vulnerability to HIV infection by 2010. However, the results of national surveys in 2007 show worryingly low numbers—around 40 per cent—of young women and men have accurate knowledge regarding HIV and AIDS.

Education for prevention is a must, not only in countries with high HIV prevalence, but equally in countries with low prevalence where the trivialization of the virus is leading to a rise in irresponsible sexual behaviour among young people, resulting in a greater risk of HIV infection.

As part of this initiative, a *One Hour on AIDS* activity kit, which contains the *One Hour on AIDS* lesson plan and the *Take the lead on AIDS* poster which can be used to accompany the lesson and displayed in your classrooms and as an ongoing reference point for HIV and AIDS education throughout the year. All material can be downloaded at: [www.ei-ie.org/ef aids](http://www.ei-ie.org/ef aids).

resources

English Language Arts Resources from Learning  
Resources and Technology Services

Learning Resources and Technology Services ships multimedia curriculum resources to schools anywhere in the province. Dubbing programs become a part of your school’s collection; we charge only for the price of the blank media used. Read the Public Schools Branch newsletter *Branching Out* available online at <http://lrt.ednet.ns.ca/branching.shtml>.

Order pre-made titles from our lists online: visit [http://lrt.ednet.ns.ca/media\\_library/express/Video\\_Express.shtml](http://lrt.ednet.ns.ca/media_library/express/Video_Express.shtml).

**EBSCO Periodical database** (<http://search.epnet.com>) EBSCO provides a series of online bibliographic and full text databases so that you and your students can find information, pictures and citations on curriculum related topics.

EBSCO offers access to a wide variety of professional databases like ERIC and to a highly specialized collection of over 450 full text journals, designed for professional educators. EBSCO is available to all students and teachers in Nova Scotia through computers connected to Ednet, or at home with passwords that can be obtained from your school.

**ImagesProject** (<http://imagesproject.ednet.ns.ca>) Need a photo to use in a school project? Visit the ImagesProject, a web-based collection of images for Nova Scotia public school program use. Nova Scotia students and teachers who are on Ednet may freely download, use and modify images from the ImagesProject website for curriculum purposes.

These programs are available in VHS and DVD format. Unless otherwise specified, DVD format will be sent.

Animal Alphabet (20 min.) English Language Arts P-2

Introduce students to the alphabet’s 26 letters by engaging their natural curiosity about the animal kingdom. From “ant” to “zebra”, the video features animals familiar and exotic. Fun, easy-to-read graphics are reinforced with simple alliterative phrases.

Chicka Chicka 1-2-3 (6 min.) English Language Arts P-2; Music P-2; Math - Grade Primary

Based on the book by Bill Martin Jr., Michael Sampson and Lois Ehlert, this animated film will have children singing and counting along with the dancing numbers.

Diary of a Spider (10 min.) English Language Arts P-3; Science P-3; Active Young Readers

Based on the book by Doreen Cronin, this animated film shows students that the life of a spider isn’t very much different from their own. This portrait of an upside-down web world will have kids wishing they could be spiders too.

Diary of a Worm (8 min.) English Language Arts P-3; Science P-3; Active Young Readers

Based on the book by Doreen Cronin, this animated film chronicles the ups and downs of being a worm and teaches children facts about worms.

The Ezra Jack Keats Library (52 min.) English Language Arts P-3; Active Young Readers

This video is a collection of well known stories by Ezra Jack Keats. Titles in this collection: The Snowy Day, Whistle for Willie, Peter’s Chair, Letter to Amy, Apt. 3, Pet Show!, and The Trip. This video also includes the 6-minute, Getting to Know Ezra Jack Keats which was filmed in 1970 and features Keats discussing what influenced his work as a children’s book author and illustrator.

Open Wide : Tooth School Inside (18 min.) English Language Arts P-3; Health P-3; Active Young Readers

Based on the book by Laurie Keller, this animated film makes learning about teeth entertaining and interesting. Presenting fascinating facts and tasty tidbits about teeth and dental hygiene, this lively cast of characters will have viewers happily reaching for their toothbrushes.

Seasons and Changes (29 min.) English Language Arts P-3; Active Young Readers

This enchanting video adaptation of award-winning, outstanding children’s literature will help to make books come alive for every child, no matter their learning style. This classroom collection includes these 3 titles: *The Mysterious Tadpole*, by Steven Kellogg; *The Caterpillar and the Polliwog*, by Jack Kent; and, *Time of Wonder*, by Robert McCloskey as well as a comprehensive activity guide with exciting ways to enhance early language and literacy skills.

Talespinners. Collection 2 (ca. 10 min. each) English Language Arts P-4; Health P-4

Talespinners 2 for ages 5-9 features stories of children who deal successfully with personal challenges. They are resourceful, responsible and resilient, and even though they’re animated characters, they portray very human emotions. They turn negatives into positives. They deal with anger and disappointment constructively. They overcome obstacles and demonstrate personal growth. They succeed in small, but authentic, ways. Titles include: *Asthma Tech*; *The Girl Who Hated Books*; *Jaime Lo, Small and Shy*; *Maq & the Spirit of the Woods*; *Mind Me Good Now*; *Oma’s Quilt*; and, *Tzaritza*.

The Wheels on the Bus (6 min.) English Language Arts P-1; Music P-1; Active Young Readers

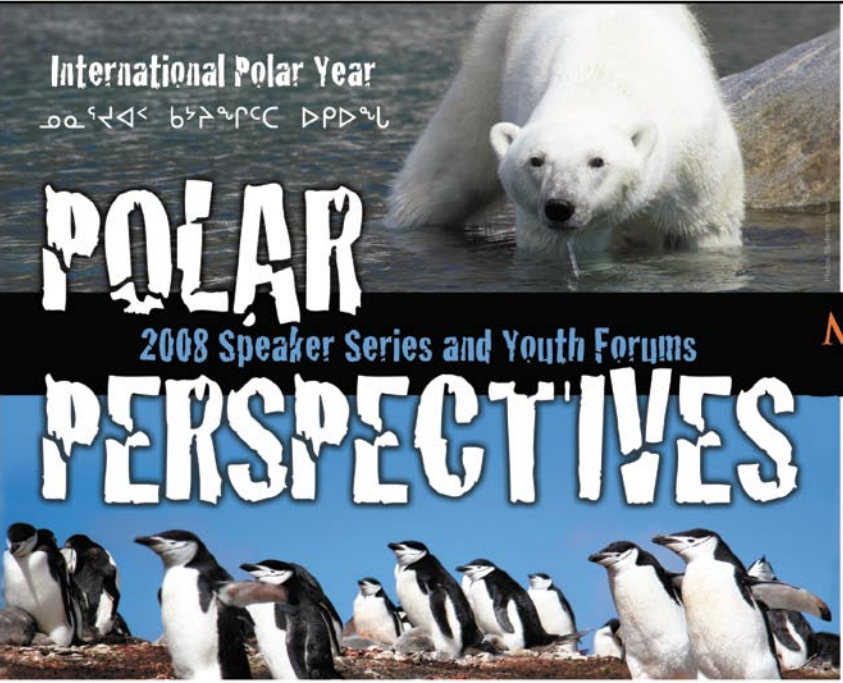
Based on the book by Paul O. Zelinsky, this animated film brings to life one of the most well-known and classic children’s songs. Appropriate for use with grades P-1.

Education Media Library, Brunswick Place, 2nd floor, 2021 Brunswick Street, Halifax, NS B3K 2V5; 902-424-2440; 902-428-5828 (fax); email us at [mediacir@ednet.ns.ca](mailto:mediacir@ednet.ns.ca). Visit our website at <http://lrt.ednet.ns.ca>.

TENTATIVE 2008-2009  
PRE-RETIREMENT SEMINARS SCHEDULE

October	14 & 15 (Tuesday & Wednesday)	New Glasgow
	20 & 21 (Monday & Tuesday)	Port Hawkesbury
	27 & 28 (Monday & Tuesday)	Annapolis
	30 & 31 (Thursday & Friday)	Cape Breton
November	3 & 4 (Monday & Tuesday)	Amherst
	5 & 6 (Wednesday & Thursday)	Halifax
	12 & 13 (Wednesday & Thursday)	Annapolis
	24 & 25 (Monday & Tuesday)	Truro
	26 & 27 (Wednesday & Thursday)	Bridgewater
December	3 & 4 (Wednesday & Thursday)	Halifax
	9 & 10 (Tuesday & Wednesday)	Halifax
January	19 & 20 (Monday & Tuesday)	Halifax
	29 & 30 (Thursday & Friday)	Halifax

Dates and venues for these seminars are still  
being confirmed, please check the  
NSTU website at [www.nstu.ca](http://www.nstu.ca)  
regularly for updates.



Youth Forum  
Wednesday, November 26

An unique opportunity for 50 Nova Scotia high school students to videoconference with youth from the Canadian Arctic. Learn about the Arctic ecosystem, northern issues, culture and climate change.

Location: Museum of Natural History  
1747 Summer St, Halifax, Nova Scotia

Time: 8:30am to 3:00pm  
Registration: [nature.museum.gov.ns.ca](http://nature.museum.gov.ns.ca)  
Info: 902-424-7353

MUSEUM of NATURAL HISTORY  
A PART of THE NOVA SCOTIA MUSEUM

Public Lecture, November 26

Arctic Paleobiology Adventures  
Dr. Natalia Rybczynski, Paleobiologist,  
Canadian Museum of Nature

Carving the Islands of the Canadian  
Arctic Archipelago  
Dr. John Gosse, Canada Research Chair in  
Earth Systems Evolution, Earth Sciences,  
Dalhousie University

Display: 6:30pm - 7:30pm  
Presentations: 7:30pm - 9:00pm  
Free: Food donations, limited seating



# It's a Girl Thing



What is the perfect recipe for respect, friendship, wellness, and confidence? All that is needed are three teachers, Monday lunch hours, and a generous PDAF grant.

Girls at Central Spryfield Elementary School experienced *It's a Girl Thing*, a philosophical approach to having girls experience key universal values that will enhance their self-image, self-esteem, social relationships and personal growth. It is designed to empower pre-adolescent girls so that they may confidently and critically face and process a world saturated with unfavourable role-models and unrealistic images of women. *It's a Girl Thing* was created to provide pre-teen girls with an alternative perspective. It gets them to explore the hard questions: What do healthy relationships look and feel like? How does respect feel? What is that feeling that comes naturally from making positive choices? What does beauty really look like? It lets girls experience the value of being an individual, the glory of listening to one's voice, and the power in honouring it.

The girls meet every Monday during the lunch hour. Each session focuses on one of the five values (or 'star' they are working on): Respect, Friendship, Wellness, Beauty, and Confidence. The girls are challenged regularly to consider the depth of their own qualities while working with others to help see their own. They are learning to value themselves; to see their own thoughts, ideas, choices, and opinions as meaningful. Sessions are constructed to incorporate discussion, exploration, collaboration, and reflection through art, movement, and guided visualization. Upon completion of each value, members are awarded a star badge that they place on their personalized *It's a Girl Thing* banners.

Some of the tools used to compliment the 'star' units are Relax Kids CDs, Relax Kids Reflection Cards, Living Values Textbook 8-14, yoga mats, guest speakers (yoga instructor, life coach, naturopath) and *American Girl* book series (*Real Fitness*, *Real Beauty*, *Real Spirituality*, *Feelings Journal*).

We are intensely proud of our Girls. We are equally excited by the opportunity to equip them with power, insight, and knowledge to think critically and act responsibly with compassion and respect for themselves and others.

*Teacher Liza Simpson, teacher and Living Values Trainer Lisa MacDonald and Guidance Counsellor Sara Janes developed 'It's a Girl Thing' for their school.*

project overseas

CANADIAN TEACHERS' FEDERATION AND ITS MEMBERS

Volunteer Overseas with CTF—Summer 2009

Would you like to assist teachers in a developing country? Are you interested in learning more about global education issues? Can you see yourself volunteering in Africa, Asia, or the Caribbean?

If yes, Project Overseas might be for you!

Each year approximately 50 Canadian teachers are chosen to volunteer with CTF's Project Overseas (PO). Through PO, Canadian teachers give their time and talent to offer professional development programs in partnership with teacher organizations in developing countries. Based on requests from CTF partners overseas, teams of Canadian teachers are formed in January and projects implemented in July and August.

CTF needs English and French-speaking Canadian teachers at the primary, elementary, and secondary levels interested in volunteering to provide professional development to teachers in developing countries (Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean).

Application criteria include:

- membership in a provincial or territorial teacher organization that sponsors PO and is a member of CTF;
- an appropriate teacher's certificate;
- at least five years teaching experience in Canada;
- Canadian citizenship; and,
- excellent health.

PO is a volunteer experience. Administrative, travel, and living expenses are borne by CTF, provincial and territorial teachers' organizations, CIDA, and the Wild Rose Foundation. No salaries or honoraria are paid to participants in PO.

Further information and application forms are available from Lillian Pottie, Nova Scotia Teachers Union, 3106 Joseph Howe Drive, Halifax, NS B3L 4L7; 902-477-5621, 1-800-565-6788 (toll-free) or on the web @ [www.ctf-fce.ca/en/](http://www.ctf-fce.ca/en/).

APPLICATION DEADLINE: NOVEMBER 14, 2008

classifieds

Classified rates are \$2.00 for the first 15 words; 25¢ per additional word upon presentation of a professional number. Non-teachers 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](mailto:theteacher@nstu.ca).

AVAILABLE - Genny Locke Magical Entertainer presents "THE NO BULLY ZONE PRESENTATION" ideal for school assemblies. Telephone: 902-567-0825.

FOR RENT - Five-bedroom house for rent or lease to own. Unfurnished \$1400/month. Upgraded energy efficient. Dunbrack area. Close to all amenities. For photos and details phone 902-827-4847.

FOR RENT - Minutes from Sir John A. Macdonald High School, \$600/month, includes all utilities & high speed internet. Visit this link for details <http://halifax.kijiji.ca/c-housing-room-rental-roommates-Oct-1-Share-My-Home-in-Upper-Tantal-lon-W0QQAdIdZ70405001>.

HISTORIC HALIFAX ACCOMMODATIONS - HINS Halifax Heritage House. Experience downtown Halifax; shopping, waterfront trail, and live theatre. Private, family, or dormitory rooms. Kitchen use available. Please phone 902-422-3863 to book today.

WENTWORTH COUNTRY HOSTEL - Experience nature, bird watching, hiking trails, star gazing, and open space. Private, family, or dormitory rooms. Kitchen use available. Please phone 902-548-2379 or email [wentworthhostel@ns.sympatico.ca](mailto:wentworthhostel@ns.sympatico.ca) to book today.

JOB EXCHANGE - Halifax Regional School Board teacher looking for a job exchange with an elementary or junior high teacher from the Annapolis Valley Regional School Board for the 2009-2010 school year. If interested, please email [scalnen@staff.ednet.ns.ca](mailto:scalnen@staff.ednet.ns.ca) or call 902-403-9402.

We are currently updating the Deals & Discounts to NSTU Members. Please check our NSTU website for details at [www.nstu.ca](http://www.nstu.ca) or contact [theteacher@nstu.ca](mailto:theteacher@nstu.ca).

## Negotiations Update

### Public School

Negotiation sessions for the public school contract resumed in September with meetings on September 18 and 19. Future sessions are scheduled for October 9, 10, 29, 31, and November 5 and 6, 2008.

### Community College

The Community College negotiation team held their first session of the school year on September 24. Future dates are scheduled for October 15, 22 and November 27, 2008.

FOUNDATION

GOT A GOOD IDEA FOR RESPONDING TO VIOLENCE IN SCHOOL?

We can help you turn your idea into a useful, practical program!

If you, your class, or your colleagues have ideas to share with other teachers, classrooms and campuses in Nova Scotia... get a Sheonorail Project Application today from your NSTU Representative!

Project Application Mailing Address

Sheonorail Foundation Project Review Committee

3106 Joseph Howe Drive, Halifax, NS B3L 4L7

Our mandate

is simple... the Sheonorail Foundation will extend financial resources to any active or retired member of the Nova Scotia Teachers Union, to any group of active or retired NSTU members, or to any group of public school or Community College students working in cooperation with a teacher advisor(s) faculty member.

Our purpose

is to support research, inquiry, reflection, writing, distribution of information and interventions which focus on all forms of violence in the public (Primary to Grade 12) and Community College education system.

Our pledge

is to award funding grants for anti-violence programs that have a direct and immediate impact on public school and Community College classrooms, students, teachers, staff, administration and community.

DEADLINE—NOVEMBER 7, 2008