

**NSTU Provincial Equity Committee
Year-End Committee Report 2007-2008**

Committee Members:

Carole Hipwell, Chair
Kathy-Lee Brickenden
Angela Deagle
Denise d'Entrement
Donnie Holland
Mark MacPhee
Deborah Mitchell (Provincial Executive Member)
Gerard Cormier (Staff Liaison)

Committee Mandate:

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

Meeting Dates:

Friday November 2, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., NSTU Building
Friday February 29, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., NSTU Building
Friday April 11, 4:30 – 6 p.m.
Equity Conference Friday April 11, 7 p.m. to 10 p.m.
and Saturday April 12, 9 a.m. – 12 noon

Budget:

The budget for the 2007-2008 year was \$7,245.00 and the amount spent was \$5,381.52.

Committee Activities and Recommendations

1. Equity Liaison Handbook

The committee reviewed, amended and distributed a handbook to the Equity Liaisons in each NSTU Local outlining the role of the Equity Liaison and providing recommended resources. The resource bibliography has been enlarged to include sections on Women's Issues.

2. Zone Responsibilities: Liaisons from Provincial to Local level

Committee members were assigned to act as an equity liaison to specific Locals and were asked to contact the Local Equity member. This allowed the Locals to be informed of the role of the Equity Committee Liaisons, the resource Equity Liaison Handbook and the focus of the spring Equity Conference and provided the Local Liaison with a contact person at the provincial committee level.

3. The Teacher Publications

In each edition of the "Teacher", staff officer Gerard Cormier provides an article related to issues in equity that are relevant to the broad membership of the union. A random draw is held for those who e-mail central office to win a book concerning equity.

4. Resource List & Equity 'Materials'

The previously compiled equity resource list was reviewed, expanded, revised and then included in the updated 'Equity Handbook'. In addition, a display representative of some of the resources was set up at the spring Equity conference for delegates to peruse.

Each delegate at the spring conference received a copy of the CTF Equity Calendar. Following some investigation by staff, a new NSTU Equity poster will be available for distribution in the fall of 2008.

Following the committee's recommendation, staff investigated the possibility of an 'Equity' portal on the member's side of the NSTU website. This will occur when the system is expanded and has room for an additional portal.

5. The Third Equity Conference: "The Hands of Equity"

The Equity Committee organized a Provincial Conference for Local Equity Liaisons that was held at the Delta Halifax on April 11-12, 2008. The conference was well received by the delegates and completes the 3-part series previously begun at the spring 2006 and 2007 Equity Conferences: "The Language of Equity" and "The Faces of Equity". This year's conference, "The Hands of Equity" focused on ongoing and potentially future hands-on equity projects. The conference began on Friday evening with dinner and a keynote by Nancy de la Chevotiere & students from Halifax West High School. On Saturday morning, a panel of speakers (in recognition of specific equity dates - International Women's Day, International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, International Day Against Homophobia, and International Human Rights Day) made a short presentation followed by concurrent workshop presentations. The Local Equity Liaisons were offered a supportive environment in which to further enhance their understanding of the work of equity and the responsibilities of the equity liaison. The Equity Committee supported the recommendation of the GBLTT Ad hoc Committee and NSTU Executive to expand the spring 2009 Equity Conference to accommodate an increased GBLTT presence.

6. Ad hoc GBLTT Committee Recommendation

The Equity Committee received a motion from the Provincial Executive to put forth a proposal for a larger NSTU Equity Conference in the spring of 2009 with the primary focus being GBLTT issues. This supports the Ad hoc GBLTT Committee recommendation referred to in Section 5 above. The proposal outlined a two-day conference open to the general membership including workshops, sponsored booths, music and a multicultural banquet with the primary focus being GBLTT issues.

7. Future Equity Conferences

In light of 2010 being the anniversary of International Women's Day, it has been recommended that the primary focus of the 2010 spring conference be women's issues. Subsequent conferences could continue to focus on a specific strand from the diverse issues of equity.

It has been a pleasure to chair the Equity Committee. Thank you to the Provincial Executive and fellow committee members for your support and for giving me the opportunity to serve as Chair. It is an honour for me and my fellow committee members to support and put forth the name of Kathy Lee Brickenden to be considered as Equity Committee Chair for 2008-2009. I wish the committee continued success and recognition for their efforts to enhance and promote greater understanding of issues of equity and to respond to the needs of the NSTU membership.

Sincerely,

Carole Hipwell