

# Minister Responds to Attendance Report

Nova Scotia Education Minister Marilyn More has outlined steps to get students to spend more time in class and become more active participants in the learning process.

On November 2 in Halifax, More accepted 10 of 13 recommendations made by the Working Committee on Absenteeism and Classroom Climate. The committee examined ways to improve student attendance and better motivate students in their learning. Chaired by former deputy minister Howard Windsor, it had representation from the NSTU, teachers, students, parents and principals.

"In order to effectively address this complex issue, we must work together to improve attendance and break the cycle of low student engagement," says More.

Low attendance has become an issue of great concern for the NSTU and its members.

"The problem of absenteeism appears to be increasing at all grade levels with teachers

reporting larger absenteeism rates," says NSTU president Alexis Allen.

Over the past year, the minister and members of the Working Committee held a series of meetings with parents, principals, students and other education partners to get feedback on why students are missing class. The discussions determined that engaging students more in the learning process, in addition to strengthening policies and regulations, would have a positive effect on attendance.

"We maintain that school attendance and learning engagement are inseparable," says Allen. "There's more to learning than passing the test. The socialization and enrichment of the student in the classroom is important for future success. We're failing students by not requiring them to show up."

More listened to the advice of the working group and the thousands of Nova Scotians who participated in the consultation process.

"I am confident that the accepted recommendations will work to get more students



Halifax West principal Gary Walker is shown with The Honourable Marilyn More, Minister of Education at the news conference.

back in class and interested in what they are learning."

Key actions in the minister's response include:

- strengthening lines of communication with parents and students
- establishing structures to monitor attendance at the school board level
- speeding up the development of the student information system
- developing clear policies for staged interventions on attendance issues
- strengthening in-school suspension and learning support opportunities
- developing guidelines for students to recover credits for missed courses
- expanding alternative programming at all boards
- requiring attendance as a pre-requisite for receiving credit for a course.

The recommendations are welcome news to Gary Walker, principal of Halifax West High School.

"The minister has taken the time to listen, question and understand the issues involved in our schools in regard to absenteeism and school climate," says Walker.

More made her announcement about the Working Committee on Absenteeism and Classroom Climate at Halifax West in a news

conference. A class of IB students attended the news conference. The students were able to provide feedback to the Minister after she made her announcement.

A two-year pilot in some schools will begin in September during which students who miss more than 20 per cent of class time will not be eligible to receive credit for that course.

While Allen applauds the recommendations and the process through which they were created, the idea of a trial period does not sit well with her.

"We would rather see changes immediately," she says. "We're losing students now and can't wait two years for a clear consequence for non-attendance. We also know it will be up to individual Boards whether they participate in the pilot or not."

Allen says she also worries that no money appears to have been allocated to support the recommendations; to help school boards develop policies for interventions, support in-school suspensions, and/or provide funding for alternative programming for students at risk.

The minister's response to the report by the Working Committee on Absenteeism and Classroom Climate can be viewed at [www.ednet.ns.ca](http://www.ednet.ns.ca).



NSTU president chats with Kevin Deveaux, principal of Sydney Academy at the news conference. Deveaux served on the Working Committee on Absenteeism and Classroom Climate. The NSTU also had representation on the Committee. NSTU executive staff officer Janine Kerr sat on the committee which was struck in May 2009.

## IMPORTANT NOTICE

### THE TEACHER—CHANGE IN FREQUENCY

Starting in the fall of 2010, The Teacher will be published eight (8) times a year from September to June. The November/December and January/February issues will be combined. This change will help streamline The Teacher publication and reduce costs and paper.

The 2010-2011 publication schedule is posted on the NSTU website.

For further information email [theteacher@nstu.ca](mailto:theteacher@nstu.ca). We apologize if this change causes any inconvenience.

## Holiday Hours

NSTU - closes on December 24 and reopens on January 4, 2011

Johnson Inc. - closed at noon on December 24

closed December 27 and 28

open December 29, 30 and closes at 3:30 on December 31

reopens January 4, 2011

# people

## Kings Local's 25-year celebration



On October 27, the Kings Local hosted a social evening at the Old Orchard Inn to honour its members who had completed 25 years of service at their annual "Celebration" event. This year, six NSTU members had reached this significant achievement. Several special guests were in attendance to mark the occasion, including the Annapolis Valley Regional School Board (AVRSB) superintendent of schools, Margo Tait; NSTU executive director Bill Redden; AVRSB chair Lavinia Parrish-Zwicker; Annapolis Valley RRC chair Kim Frank; and MLA Jim Morton of Kings North. Seated are NSTU president Alexis Allen with Kings Local president Cathy Reimer. Standing are Stephen McNeill (Hantsport School), Taunya Sheffield (Wolfville School), secretary-treasurer and Annapolis-Hants West-Kings provincial executive member Dave Jones (Central Kings Rural High School), Leta Totten (Central Kings Rural High School) and Renda Vandertoorn (Hantsport School). Missing from the photo are two honourees from West Kings District High School Patty Hughes and Morgan Snow.

## Single Tier Bargaining Committee

The Provincial Single Tier Bargaining Committee has begun its work for the 2010-11 school year. Its first meeting took place September 16 and 17. Meetings also took place on November 4 and one is scheduled for November 26. Single tier bargaining has been in place since changes to the Teachers' Collective Bargaining Act were enacted in the spring of 2001. Through discussions with the Department of Education, designated articles in the regional agreements between the NSTU and the eight school boards in the province can move to the Teachers' Provincial Agreement (TPA).

Once an item or article moves from a school board agreement to the TPA it stays there. If an item is in one regional agreement, other regional bargaining units may negotiate it. New articles may only be negotiated at the provincial level and there is to be no limit on the type of article that may be negotiated at the provincial level.

The provincial executive will approve any recommendations of this committee and any articles that have been approved by the executive will be included in a future tentative agreement and voted on by the membership.



Members of the committee are shown above. Seated are executive director Bill Redden, first vice-president Eric Boutilier and Chignecto-Central RRC chair John Spurdakes. Standing are assistant executive director Bruce Kelloway, Halifax County Local president Tim MacLeod and executive staff officer Allan MacLean.

## NSTU members supporting Terry Fox Run



This year's 30th Terry Fox Run was held at a special location. The Confederation Bridge was temporarily closed for the morning of September 19. Participants could walk or run the 13-kilometre traverse. Shown here are NSTU members Alex Oickle, Michael Stewart, Dawn Uhlman and David Kokocki from Lunenburg County and Queens Locals.

## Eric Smith honoured with 2010 Darlene Young Community Hero Award

At the Annual Nova Scotia Rainbow Action Project (NSRAP) Gala, former NSTU member Eric Smith was bestowed with the Darlene Young Community Hero Award. The theme for this year's event was *Trailblazers*. Smith was a teacher at Cape Sable Island Elementary School in 1987

when his HIV positive status became known in the community. The local school board tried to remove him from his teaching position. His case was one of the first to shed light on the discrimination faced by those living with HIV and AIDS, and gained national and international focus.



He became active in advocating for the rights of LGBT Nova Scotians and Nova Scotians affected by HIV/AIDS. More than 20 years later he continues to speak out and continues to fight for equality rights.

The Darlene Young Community Hero Award was created by NSRAP in 2008 as a means of recognizing those who have made significant contributions to the Rainbow Community in Nova Scotia. It is named for the late Reverend Darlene Young, a former NSRAP board member and pastor of the Safe Harbour Metropolitan Community Church. Her commitment to equality and sense of service has had a lasting impact on the community.

Founded in 1995, the Nova Scotia Rainbow Action Project has been working across Nova Scotia advocating for sexual minority rights and equality, including participating in numerous same-sex human rights cases.

Smith is shown with provincial executive member (Queens-Shelburne) John MacKay, who attended the event on behalf of the NSTU.

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## A critical time to think critically

Former NSTU president Mary-Lou Donnelly was back in Halifax recently in her current role as president of the Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF). The federation

a wide range of media issues relating to body image, sexualization and gender roles. With research showing a clear correlation between media use and body dissatisfaction,



Donnelly says the time is **now** to make children and young people intelligent consumers of media who can think critically about the images they see and stereotypes they encounter on a daily basis.

"As teachers, we see firsthand how the media and information technology influence the manner in which our students interact with each other and how they view the world

around them," says Donnelly. "As a national teacher organization, we believe we have a social responsibility but we cannot achieve this in isolation."

Donnelly encourages educators and parents to join the movement for change through education and media literacy at home, in society and at school.

She asks: "Can we, as teachers, parents and citizens create a cultural shift in how

gender is portrayed in the media we use, enjoy, absorb and create? I believe we can. In three words: digital and media literacy."

Donnelly says more and more teachers are integrating media and digital literacy into their classrooms to equip their students with the necessary critical thinking skills for positive and enriching media experiences.

"I am constantly impressed by reports of teachers already using cell phones, iPods and Web 2 tools as ways to engage their students in group discussions, media productions, digital art projects and community group projects" she says.

The Media Awareness Network website is one of several Donnelly advises educators and parents visit for ideas ([www.media-awareness.ca](http://www.media-awareness.ca)). She also cites a resource developed by the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO), *Reflections of Me: Body Image and Self Esteem*. It's a preventative educational program that teaches critical thinking and helps students

in elementary school and junior high engage in healthy and productive choices in their lives. The curriculum teaches students to accept diverse bodies, promote resistance to harassment associated with body image and question social adherence to body norms. The resources are free and downloadable at ETFO's website [www.etfo.org](http://www.etfo.org).

*Imagineaction* is a new CTF resource Donnelly encourages teachers to use to channel creativity, ignite social engagement and instill critical thinking in their students. CTF offers subsidies of \$700 to help teachers launch education projects related to the environment, democracy, health and citizenship education.

"Why not create a youth video on gender and media from the students' perspectives that can be posted on YouTube?" she asks. "Why not tap into social media to stimulate discussion around gender and media among youth? The possibilities are endless."

*Imagineaction* can be found at [www.imagine-action.ca](http://www.imagine-action.ca).

co-hosted Media Literacy Week (November 1-5) and Donnelly addressed delegates at *Breaking the Mold, Breaking the Silence*, a national body image conference at Mount Saint Vincent University, organized by the Nancy's Chair in Women Studies.

Donnelly explained that this year's theme for Media Literacy Week—*Gender and Media*—is an excellent opportunity for teachers and their students to examine

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Alexis

## from the nstu president

### Breaking the Mold, Breaking the Silence

As many of you are aware, the first week in November marked the fifth annual Media Literacy Week in Canada, hosted by the Media Awareness Network (MNet) and the Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF) with associate sponsorship this year from the NSTU. The purpose of the week is to highlight the importance of promoting media literacy and digital literacy in homes, schools and communities. Media literacy is the ability to access, analyze, evaluate and produce media; the process of becoming active rather than passive media consumers.

The theme for this year's Media Literacy Week was *Gender and the Media* - a theme which covers a wide array of media-related issues including gender portrayal, stereotyping, sexualization, healthy relationships and body image. In keeping with the theme, Mount Saint Vincent University hosted a two-day national conference on body image. I attended *Breaking the Mold, Breaking the Silence*, not only to represent the NSTU, but also as a concerned educator eager for information, answers and ideas of how we can continue to incorporate media literacy into our classrooms and help our children and youth develop the necessary critical thinking skills and tools to understand and actively engage with media.

It's clear that media play a critical role in body image—how children and youth see themselves and others. Rigid and uniform standards of beauty are embedded on television, in billboards, in magazines and online. Young people are bombarded with images of extremely thin and exceptionally "beautiful" people that make unrealistic and often unhealthy physical features seem real, normal and attainable.

In body image research conducted by MNet last year, a positive correlation was revealed between media use and body dissatisfaction and eating disorders among youth. Girls as young as nine are reported to be experiencing body dissatisfaction. And according to a study conducted here in Nova Scotia, one in four girls (and one in ten boys) has been on a diet by the time they reach Grade 6. Equally alarming: more than 40 per cent of children who diet say they do so because peers and parents tell them they are fat.

The research is widespread and disturbing. A study released last year by the Girl Scouts of America found that nine in ten American teenage girls say the fashion industry is at least partially responsible for their obsession with being skinny. Nearly one in three girls said they have starved themselves or refused to eat in an effort to lose weight.

Similarly, the Canadian Women's Health Network estimates that almost 90 per cent of Canadian women and girls are unhappy with the way they look. This often leads to serious health problems such as: unhealthy dieting, taking drugs or smoking to lose weight, depression and other mental illnesses, disordered eating and unnecessary surgery such as breast implants, collagen injections and liposuction.

Body dissatisfaction is increasingly becoming a boy's issue too. Studies are finding that young men, like young women, experience increased body image concerns when they compare themselves to culturally idealized male bodies. Exercise addiction and the use of anabolic steroids are growing, and a new term—manorexia—has been coined to describe increasing awareness of eating disorders amongst young men.

So how do we equip children and youth with the tools to feel good about themselves in a media-saturated culture?

The answer lies in enhancing their self-esteem. Self-esteem development is considered one of the most powerful strategies to help kids make healthier lifestyle choices and see themselves as important, valuable human beings.

Media literacy can play a critical role in this by helping kids analyze and evaluate media messages for what they really are—images that are unrealistic and often manipulated to create perfection. Once they understand this, they are better able to reject artificial media images and feel better about themselves.

One of the most encouraging presentations at *Breaking the Mold, Breaking the Silence* was a documentary written, filmed and edited by two Grade 8 students from Newfoundland and Labrador. Emily Null and Emma Ward presented *Be Yourself, Be Beautiful: A film for girls by girls*. In the film, the girls interview each other and their group of friends about what it's like to be a girl of 13 in 2010. They candidly discuss the differences between being "beautiful" and being "pretty" and talk about the most important people and things in their lives...and the activities that make them happiest. It was exciting to see young people taking media into their own hands and examining the issues of body image, self-esteem, popularity, relationships and role models.

In closing, I encourage all of you to explore the free educational resources available on the Media Awareness Network website at [www.media-awareness.ca](http://www.media-awareness.ca). The site features curriculum outcome charts from every province and territory—including Nova Scotia. Media-related outcomes and expectations are linked to supporting classroom resources.

### Briser le moule, Briser le silence

Comme beaucoup d'entre vous le savent, la première semaine de novembre a marqué, pour la 5<sup>e</sup> année consécutive, la Semaine éducation-médias au Canada, organisée par le Réseau éducation-médias et la Fédération canadienne des enseignants (FCE) et parrainée, cette année, par le NSTU. L'objectif de la semaine est de souligner l'importance de la promotion de la culture médiatique et de la culture numérique dans les foyers, les écoles et les communautés. La culture médiatique est la capacité d'accéder aux médias et d'analyser, d'évaluer et de produire des médias; le processus permettant de devenir des consommateurs de médias actifs plutôt que passifs.

Le thème de la Semaine éducation-médias de cette année était : *Genre et médias*, thème qui couvre un vaste éventail de questions liées aux médias, comme la représentation des genres, les stéréotypes, la sexualisation, les relations saines et l'image corporelle. En liaison avec ce thème, l'université Mount Saint Vincent a organisé une conférence nationale de deux jours sur l'image corporelle. J'ai assisté à la conférence *Breaking the Mold, Breaking the Silence* (Briser le moule, Briser le silence), non seulement à titre de représentante du NSTU mais à titre d'éducatrice inquiète et désireuse d'obtenir des informations, des réponses et des idées sur la manière dont nous pouvons continuer à incorporer l'éducation aux médias dans nos classes et aider les enfants et les adolescents à acquérir les compétences et les outils de réflexion critique nécessaires pour comprendre les médias et s'engager activement dans ce domaine.

Il est clair que les médias jouent un rôle crucial en matière d'image corporelle – la manière dont les enfants et les adolescents se voient eux-mêmes et voient les autres. Des normes rigides et uniformes de beauté sont véhiculées par la télévision, les panneaux publicitaires, les magazines et l'Internet. Les jeunes sont bombardés d'images de gens extrêmement minces et exceptionnellement beaux, ce qui finit par donner l'impression que des caractéristiques physiques irréalistes et souvent malsaines sont réelles, normales et accessibles.

Les recherches sur l'image corporelle menées par le Réseau éducation-médias l'an dernier ont révélé une corrélation positive entre l'usage des médias et l'insatisfaction à l'égard du corps et les troubles de l'alimentation parmi les adolescents. Des filles de neuf ans ont indiqué qu'elles étaient insatisfaites de leur corps. Et selon une étude menée ici en Nouvelle-Écosse, une fille sur quatre (et un garçon sur dix) a déjà fait un régime avant la 6<sup>e</sup> année. Et fait tout aussi alarmant : plus de 40 % des enfants qui se mettent au régime indiquent qu'ils le font parce que leurs camarades et leurs parents leur disent qu'ils sont trop gros.

Les résultats de ces recherches sont inquiétants. Une étude publiée l'an dernier par les Girl Scouts of America (éclaireuses d'Amérique) a révélé que neuf sur dix des adolescentes américaines déclarent que l'industrie de la mode est au moins partiellement responsable de leur obsession de la minceur. Près d'une fille sur trois dit s'être privée de nourriture ou avoir refusé de manger pour tenter de perdre du poids.

De même, le Réseau canadien pour la santé des femmes estime que près de 90 % des filles et des femmes canadiennes ne sont pas satisfaites de leur apparence. Cela entraîne souvent de graves problèmes de santé comme : régime malsain, consommation de drogue ou de cigarettes pour perdre du poids, dépression et autres maladies mentales, troubles de l'alimentation et chirurgie inutile comme implants mammaires, injections de collagène et liposuction.

L'insatisfaction à l'égard du corps devient également un problème croissant chez les garçons. Des études révèlent que les jeunes gens, tout comme les jeunes filles, éprouvent des inquiétudes accrues au sujet de leur image corporelle lorsqu'ils se comparent à des corps masculins culturellement idéalisés. L'accoutumance à l'exercice et l'usage de stéroïdes anaboliques sont en augmentation et cette prise de conscience a suscité la création d'un nouveau terme – la manorexia – pour décrire les troubles de l'alimentation chez les jeunes gens.

Alors, comment pouvons-nous équiper les enfants et les adolescents avec les outils dont ils ont besoin pour se sentir bien dans leur peau dans une culture saturée par les médias.

La réponse se trouve dans l'amélioration de leur estime de soi. Le développement de l'estime de soi est considéré comme



NSTU president Alexis Allen is shown with documentary film makers Emily Null, and Emma Ward; Sophie Kirk, student conference delegate, Halifax West High School; Rita Deverell, Conference Chair and MSVU's Nancy's Chair in Women's Studies; and Mary-Lou Donnelly, President, Canadian Teachers' Federation.

[continued on page 5]

[continued from page 4]

l'une des stratégies les plus puissantes pour aider les enfants à faire des choix de vie plus sains et à se percevoir comme des êtres humains importants et précieux.

L'éducation aux médias joue un rôle crucial dans ce domaine en aidant les enfants à analyser et à évaluer les messages des médias pour comprendre ce qu'ils sont vraiment – des images irréalistes et souvent manipulées pour créer la perfection. Une fois qu'ils comprennent cela, ils sont plus susceptibles de rejeter les images médiatiques artificielles et de se sentir bien dans leur peau.

L'une des présentations les plus encourageantes lors de la conférence *Breaking the Mold, Breaking the Silence* (Briser le moule, Briser le silence) était un documentaire, écrit, tourné et réalisé par deux élèves de 8<sup>e</sup> année de Terre-Neuve-et-Labrador. Emily Null et Emma Ward ont présenté *Be Yourself, Be Beautiful: A film for girls by girls* (Soyez vous-même, Soyez belles : Un film pour des filles par des filles). Dans ce film, elles s'interrogent mutuellement et interrogent leur groupe d'amies au sujet de ce que cela signifie d'être une fille de 13 ans en 2010. Elles discutent en toute franchise des différences entre être « belle » et être « jolie » et parlent des personnes et des choses les plus importantes dans leur vie... et des activités qui les rendent les plus heureuses. C'était fantastique de voir des adolescents prendre en main des médias pour examiner les questions d'image corporelle, d'estime de soi, de popularité, de relations et de modèles de comportement.

En conclusion, je vous encourage à explorer les ressources pédagogiques disponibles gratuitement sur le Réseau éducation-médias : <http://www.media-awareness.ca>. Le site contient des tableaux de résultats d'apprentissage pour toutes les provinces et tous les territoires – y compris la Nouvelle-Écosse. Les résultats et les attentes en liaison avec les médias y sont mis en liaison avec des ressources pédagogiques.

# Curriculum Corner



This year's Curriculum Committee chair is Grant Dunn. Through his involvement in the committee, he's developed a better understanding of the role of the Department and of the Boards' responsibilities in delivering the educational programming for students in the province. He encourages members to consider joining one of the NSTU's standing committees and venture into this other side of education.

The agenda of the September 17 meeting, the inaugural meeting of the 2010-11 school year, consisted of a review of NSTU curriculum policy, concerns regarding courses being taught with no curriculum guides, and the difficulty downloading curriculum guides from the Department of Education website. Other items included the lack of Science 10 resources, and supports and resources for four-year-olds in Grade Primary and beyond.

Ann Blackwood, Director of English Programs for the Department of Education (DOE); John Fahie, consultant of IT, responsible for the implementation of the new Student Information System (SIS); and Donna Karsten, math consultant with the DOE were invited guests to the September 17 meeting. Fahie shared some of the background on the selection process and how iNSchool came to be selected. He explained that the SIS was not one program but a number of programs interacting and sharing data. He described some of the different additional programs they were exploring. At present there are 78 schools involved with Phase 1 implementation of Power School, which manages core demographic data regarding students and schools. Other programs are on a timeline for implementation but this has been adjusted to maintain a focus on Power School. The committee brought up issues regarding the implementation of Power School at the board level. Fahie said he would look into it and suggested that if anyone had any other issues they contact their Board's project manager.

Ann Blackwood discussed the issue of resources and supports for four-year-olds in Primary and in future grades. She shared that funding had been put into place at the time of the change and additional funding had been approved for this year. Blackwood explained that the DOE recognized this was not a one-year event and that resources and supports would have to be ongoing. She listed the workshops and opportunities for professional development offered by the Department to teachers and administrators. As students progress through the grade levels they anticipate more supports being put in place.

The final presenter, Donna Karsten, shared the new focus on math and the supports that would be available. One of the key points of her presentation was that math would now have listed outcomes in which students would need to be proficient at for each level. Other outcomes would be described as developmental in order to support and enhance student development. Along with these changes will be the identification of performance indicators to identify what needs to be completed independently by the student and what can be done with prompts. Interestingly, Karsten was very positive about revisions to the math curriculum as it is being developed in Nova Scotia with expert input.

Ann Blackwood closed the meeting with two last comments. The first was that the DOE was looking at reviewing the Internet access policy and there would be more on this at a later date. Secondly, she will be joining the world of blogging and has invited us to share this with you; keep an eye out for her new blog site where educators will have a forum to discuss issues, concerns and share news with her.

Curriculum committee chair Grant Dunn encourages members to contact him if you have any issues or positive notes you would like shared with the NSTU. His email is [gmdunn@nstu.ca](mailto:gmdunn@nstu.ca).

Grant Dunn  
Chair, Curriculum Committee

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|--|--|
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| November 30 & Dec. 1 (Tuesday & Wednesday)   | TCSRB (Rodd Grand, Yarmouth)   |
| December 6 & 7 (Monday & Tuesday)<br>13 & 14 (Monday & Tuesday)                            | AVRSB (Old Orchard Inn, Greenwich)<br>HRSB (NSTU Building, Halifax)                  |
| January 13 & 14 (Thursday & Friday)<br>25 & 26 (Tuesday & Wednesday)                       | CCRSB (Holiday Inn Express, Stellarton/New Glasgow)<br>HRSB (NSTU Building, Halifax) |
| February 1 & 2 (Tuesday & Wednesday)<br><b>CANCELLED 7 &amp; 8 (Monday &amp; Tuesday)</b>  | SSRSB (Best Western, Bridgewater)<br><b>HRSB (NSTU Building, Halifax)</b>            |
| <b>**New March 24 &amp; 25 (Thursday &amp; Friday)</b><br>March 28 & 29 (Monday & Tuesday) | <b>CCRSB (Holiday Inn, Truro)</b><br>HRSB (NSTU Building, Halifax)                   |
| <b>**New April 20 &amp; 21 (Wednesday &amp; Thursday)</b>                                  | <b>CBVRSB (Delta Sydney)</b>   |

**27 September, 2010** Dates/locations subject to change



Shown above are members of the Curriculum Committee with Ann Blackwood from the Department of Education. Seated: Ann Blackwood, NSTU staff liaison Ron Brunton, Brenda Zwicker (Lunenburg County), and committee chair Grant Dunn (Annapolis). Standing: Dayna Enguehard (Cape Breton District), Ernestine Oakley (Halifax County), Debbie Davis-Maybee (Colchester-East Hants), executive member liaison Brenda Butler, Stephane Richard (CSANE) and Nathan Orman (Shelburne).

## Why should we care about work-life balance and job stress?

Approximately 60 per cent of Canadians experience conflict between their work and family lives, with 25 per cent of them reporting high levels of conflict. In Nova Scotia, 50 per cent of workers report work-life conflict, more than 60 per cent report having high workload, and about 15 per cent report high levels of stress.

We have known for years that conflict and stress are bad—not only for employees, but also for their families, workplaces and communities. For example, we know there are substantial people costs of conflict and stress, ranging from minor health problems (e.g.: having difficulty sleeping) to more major health issues (e.g.: coronary heart disease). In fact, job stress has been identified as one of the leading causes of workplace death. Stress and conflict at work can affect one's family by reducing life satisfaction. Finally, the financial impact is staggering: work-life conflict and job stress are estimated to cost organizations in Canada between six and \$12 billion each year.

We also have a fairly good understanding about what creates this conflict and stress. For example, we know that having too much to do at work and at home, having unsupportive or abusive supervisors, and not having control over your work are all associated with increased conflict and stress.

What we don't really know, however, is what to do about it because few formal studies have developed and demonstrated the effectiveness of programs in this area. Therefore, we developed and tested a program to help employees balance their work and life responsibilities and manage job stress: the ABLE (Achieving Balance in Life and Employment) program.

## What is the ABLE Program?

The ABLE program is a 12-week phone-based coaching program based on a solid research foundation. Employees talk to a personal coach on a weekly basis to discuss their own set of work and life demands, set personal goals, identify and increase individual resources and identify barriers to achieving their goals. The coaches guide employees through various topics pertaining to balance and stress reduction. The individualized coaching method of the ABLE program allows the focus to remain on the individual demands of the employee and on unique, personalized solutions.

ABLE coaches touch on topics that reduce stress in three different ways: (1) Identifying and utilizing resources (e.g.: goal

setting, time management, social support); (2) Changing perceptions (e.g.: positive thinking); and (3) Utilizing positive coping strategies.

The specific strategies vary. However, all participants address similar questions while learning what works best for them. For example:

⇒ “What aspects of my life do I find stressful and what are my **priorities**?”

⇒ “How **am** I spending my time?” versus “How **should** I be spending my time?”

⇒ “How do I **currently** cope with stress?” versus “How can I **best cope** with this stressor?”

⇒ “What **resources** (e.g.: support from family, friends and work) are available to me, both at work and at home, and how can I use them to my advantage?”

⇒ “What **goals** do I want to accomplish as a result of the ABLE program, and what skills do I need to reach them?”

These questions, among others, guide a participant and their coach through the ABLE program. The program is novel and effective for several reasons:

- it tailors to the needs of the individual (one-on-one coaching);
- it is convenient and accessible (employees participate at a time and location that is convenient for them; all they need is access to a phone);
- it is cost-effective.

## The ABLE Study

We tested the ABLE program on 119 employees from 15 organizations in Nova Scotia. We compared employees enrolled in the program with those who weren't. The ABLE program had a positive impact: 95 per cent of participants found it beneficial and indicated that they would encourage others to take it. 88.65 per cent of participants reported making positive changes in their life in general, with 78 per cent of participants reporting having achieved their program goals. Interestingly, half of participants even had someone else comment on the positive changes they witnessed in the participant.

Participants tended to experience several positive outcomes. Some had increases in engagement, job satisfaction, and decreased strain. Others experienced decreases in burnout (in terms of cynicism and exhaustion), strain, and work-life conflict. The program also had a positive impact on absenteeism.

We also examined what people did after work to help them “recover” from their work day. The program helped participants positively detach from work, relax, spend more time in social activities, and feel more hopeful. The



program also helped the employees maintain their level of physical activity (the level of physical activity *decreased* in the comparison group). In turn, these activities helped reduce physical and psychological stress.

## What can you do?

Based on the positive experiences of the ABLE program, there are several suggestions to increase work-life balance and reduce stress in your life. You can think about making a **Plan**:

**A: Assess:** How are you doing? What do you want to achieve? (for example, increasing general health, positive relationships, or relaxation or reducing unnecessary commitments, overtime hours, or negative coping).

**P: Prioritize:** Be realistic about how much you can do. We often over commit ourselves in all areas of our life, which can drain us. Identify your priorities.

**L: Learn coping techniques:** We all have our “go to” remedies for coping (drinking, eating comfort food, shopping), but are these actually helping? Sometimes, using these remedies often leads to other negative issues (decreased health, increased debt). Identifying positive coping strategies that deal directly with the situation can make you feel better in a healthy way (e.g.: talking with a friend).

**A: Advocate (self):** Remember to schedule in quality “me time” because we often forget about ourselves. Read a book, go for a walk, or treat yourself to something special.

**N: Innovate & be flexible:** Identify your resources. There are things in your life that are already in place to help you achieve change, whether it be at home (supportive family), at work (Employee Assistance Programs; family-focused programs), or in other areas of your life (supportive friends and neighbours).

## What can your organization do?

Although we may see stress and conflict as an individual's problem, organizations can have

a huge impact on the frequency and severity of stress and conflict, as well as on positive employee outcomes. Healthy workplace programs are effective in reducing stress and improving employee well-being and health. The struggle so far has been incorporating both organizational and individual components into a suitable employee-based program. The introduction and implementation of programs like ABLE may be the key to creating healthy employees.

Although we face many demands in our personal and work lives, the negative consequences of stress and conflict are not inevitable. The ABLE program results are very promising. By incorporating focuses on both the individual and the workplace, the ABLE program can be a model for organizations to help employees improve work-life balance and effectively manage stress.

The final part of the first initiative is being completed this winter, and ABLE program researchers are looking to start the second initiative in the spring. A list of interested employees (on an individual level) is being compiled and researchers are working with organizations to provide the program to them on a larger scale. If you'd like to find out more about this, please contact ABLE Program Manager and Coach Amy Morgan via email at [amymorgan03@gmail.com](mailto:amymorgan03@gmail.com) or phone 902-491-6380.

*Dr. Arla Day is a Canada Research Chair and professor at Saint Mary's University, and she is the lead researcher on the ABLE project. If you are interested in receiving more information about this or other related projects, or if you would like references for the statistics used in this article, please contact Dr. Day at the ABLE program office, 902-491-6380; [able@smu.ca](mailto:able@smu.ca). The web address is [www.smu.calable](http://www.smu.calable).*

## Congratulations to our October winners of the FRESH & EQUITY books!

Keith Partridge from École acadienne du Truro  
**FRESH:** The New Teacher Toolbox:  
Proven Tips and Strategies for a Great First Year

Chantal Richard from École Stella-Maris  
**EQUITY:** How the Cougar Came to be Called the Ghost Cat

## did you KNOW?

The Early Intervention Program (EIP) invites NSTU members to sign up for our Wellness email list at [Be\\_Well@nstu.ca](mailto: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](mailto:Be_Well@nstu.ca) list will provide information about the EIP and other wellness topics.



## South Shore students focus on social justice

The second annual Social Justice, End Poverty Day enabled students from the South Shore Regional School Board to learn about poverty in their communities and beyond and share with fellow students.



Logan McGillivray addresses students at the Social Justice End Poverty Day

“When you have the opportunity to lead and energize your peers, change will be made through you,” says Jeff DeWolfe, Coordinator of Student Services P to 12, who facilitated the day’s events.

The day took place at the Michelin Social Club in Bridgewater on October 14, just days before the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty on October 17.

The day is an initiative of the Board’s Poverty Intervention Committee, a group comprised of board members, community and school volunteers, teachers and Board staff.

DeWolfe relayed his own story of poverty and reminded students about their important role. “The benefit will be the work you do as student leaders.”

The students saw a video which provided them with facts about poverty in Canada. For example, one in nine children in Canada live in poverty and one in four First Nations children live in poverty. The video also highlighted what poverty means to children—“Pretending you forgot your lunch.”—Grade 4 student.

One activity for the day involved students using apples on plates as props to demonstrate the distribution of wealth in Canada. Students could see how the group with the empty plate, representing the poorest part of the population, share -0.2 per cent of wealth in the country, where the plate with seven apples representing the richest in the country have 70.4 per cent of the wealth. Bayview Community School students performed a skit created by their Social Justice club that contrasted a rich and poor family and how people react to those less fortunate.

Thirteen-year-old Bedford Junior High student and filmmaker/philanthropist Logan McGillivray was the featured guest speaker for the day. McGillivray spearheaded sending a 40-foot shipping container to Sierra Leone filled with educational, building and recreational materials to refurbish seven schools three years ago, after seeing pictures of the hardships children face there. He also created awareness of Sierra Leone by making a documentary/music video (with the help of Terry Kelly) and accompanying CD, with all proceeds from the sale of the Listen To The Children CD ([www.listentothechildren.net](http://www.listentothechildren.net)) being used to further the cause and help construct a community resource centre in Maayabaa. The resource centre will assist in the training of local teachers and the coordination of getting school supplies to local schools.

McGillivray inspired many students to think outside the box and not let their age stop them. One student asked him what made him want to help. “I just thought I could send a container over, and didn’t really think more about it; I was only 10-years-old,” he comments.

McGillivray says that he’d rather just raise money now to build another school than pay for a flight to visit. An avid animation creator, he’s working on a second documentary which he hopes will garner him some award money he can send to continue building the community resource centre. He told the students that he needs another \$7,000 to finish the Centre and since he was 10 he has raised about \$38,000 in cash for his project. “But counting the in-kind contributions it’s about \$90,000,” he adds.

“When you’re a kid it’s harder for businesses to turn you down,” he comments.

Lunch was also a learning opportunity. Students were given vouchers for their food items. Some students were given vouchers for everything—a wrap, piece of fruit, granola bar and water. Some received vouchers for just the fruit and water, others only water.

After the students picked up their items and returned to their tables they could then see how food is not available to everyone. After some discussion kids who had not received coupons for the entire lunch were invited to come and get more food.

DeWolfe asked the students what they thought of the voucher system. “You see yourself not having anything to eat and you see your friends eating and you have nothing,” says one student.

“Did you ask to share?” asks DeWolfe. “No, I was too ashamed, embarrassed to ask,” comments another student.

“You can now see that not everybody gets a full meal and it’s important we do share, and we need to think of ways to make everybody equal.”

The student delegates are already involved in their own school organizations that focus on social justice issues, and will go back to their schools with ideas on how they can help people in their communities and around the world and help promote public awareness about poverty in Nova Scotia.



West Northfield Elementary French teacher Kathy McNally chats with some of her students who participated in the Social Justice Day. They are members of the of the Caring Kids club.



Facilitator Jeff DeWolfe engages students in an activity focusing on the distribution of wealth in Canada.

## WETLAND ESSAY AND VIDEO CONTEST



Grade 11 and 12 students can win up to a \$1000 cash prize if they submit an **Essay, Video or Animation** explaining why a local wetland is important to your community.

**Showcase a wetland in your community:**

**what kind of wetland is it?**

**why is it so special?**

**what would happen if it was gone?**

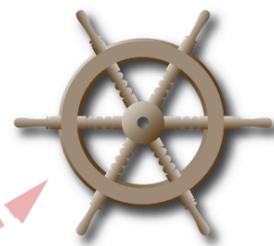
Deadline January 7, 2011. Winners will be awarded a cash prize on World Wetlands Day on February 2, 2011.

For more contest details: [www.gov.ns.ca/nse/wetland-contest/](http://www.gov.ns.ca/nse/wetland-contest/) or contact Krista Hilchey at [hilchekg@gov.ns.ca](mailto:hilchekg@gov.ns.ca)

**NOVA SCOTIA**  
Environment



# Charting Your Course FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



## Building a better society: PEACE by PEACE

by Gérard Cormier

EXECUTIVE STAFF OFFICER, OUTREACH PROGRAMS & EQUITY SERVICES

Peace. Quiet. Tranquility. Serenity. Freedom from or the cessation of war. Societies strive for it. People want it. Remembrance Day commemorates it. But where does it begin? Peace Treaties? Peace Summits? Legislation? It all starts with the individual, learning to harmoniously coexist with others who are somehow different. They often meet in those little societies that exist in various forms throughout the world school.

Schools used to bring together people based on similar characteristics: Catholic schools, gendered schools, segregated schools based on one's race. We went through school with people who were more or less like ourselves. We learned with them; we played with them; we sometimes eventually fell in love with them. However,

everyone gets along, that peace reign in their classrooms and in their schools. And how does this come about? Are students to see it? Experience it? Live it? The answer is yes. All of these. If students are to appreciate the need for global peace, they first must appreciate the need for peace in our schools.

To that end, the NSTU will be offering an historical professional development event to be held April 7 to 9, 2011. A conference entitled *Peace...ing it Together* is being organized by the NSTU's equity and professional development committees in conjunction with the Sheonoroil Foundation. Its goal is to bring together 250 educators and have them see and experience Peace through the lived realities of fellow NSTU members, following which they will be able to return to their respective schools with practical hands-on strategies that will bring peace to their classrooms.

The conference will begin with a keynote address by Dr. Samantha Nutt, the founder and executive director of War Child Canada. A medical physician, Dr. Nutt has more than 13 years of experience working in war zones. She is committed to peace, human rights and social justice, always with the goal

of helping war-affected women and children. Through War Child Canada, the United Nations and various non-governmental organizations, Dr. Nutt has worked in many of the world's most violent places, including Iraq, Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Burundi, northern Uganda, Ethiopia and the Thai-Burmese border. She has written for Maclean's Magazine, is a published author and frequently appears on Canadian television and radio as an expert commentator on

these homogeneous societies are a thing of the past. Today's schools bring together those who are different from one another, and these differences are numerous. Race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, learning ability are just a few examples.

In recent years, we have seen much more emphasis placed on eradicating the negative effects of bullying. The second Thursday of September is *Stand Up Against Bullying Day*. Educators are asked to see to it that



*The NSTU Equity and Professional Development Committees are meeting jointly this year to plan the April joint conference Peacing...it Together on April 7 to 9 in Halifax, which will focus on peace education and be the main fundraiser for the Sheonoroil Foundation. Shown above seated: NSTU PD committee and Sheonoroil liaison Betty-Jean Aucoin, and PD committee members Jaylene Chase (Lunenburg County Local) and Leon Swinkels (Halifax County). Standing: Krista Moore (Digby Local, PD committee), Mary McLeod (Cape Breton District, Equity committee), Angela Deagle (Inverness Local, PD Committee), Jill Burton (Richmond Local, PD committee), Chris Weeks (Cumberland Local, Equity committee), John MacKay (provincial executive Equity committee liaison), Bev Roy (Kings Local, Equity committee) Dan Stephenson (Colchester-East Hants Local, PD committee chair), Tanya DeViller (Yarmouth Local, Equity committee chair), NSTU Equity committee liaison Gérard Cormier, Daniel Blinn (Dartmouth Local, Equity committee) and Sue Hannem (provincial executive rep Equity committee). Missing: Jenn Laudadio (Antigonish Local, Equity committee).*

war and human rights issues. She has been awarded honorary degrees and is the recipient of a long list of titles and designations—including Canada's Top 40 under 40 Award (The Globe and Mail). She is also a highly sought after keynote speaker on the impact of war, human rights, social justice and on public engagement in global issues, inspiring others to make a difference.

Numerous conference workshops, many of which will be facilitated by NSTU members, will deal with the various areas where peace must exist: peace within yourself, peace with your identity, peace within your family, peace through restrictive

justice, peace on-line, peace through art and music and much more. Peaceful Schools International, a Canadian, non-profit, charitable organization which provides supports to schools around the world, will also be offering workshops. There will also be a number of organizations that will be setting up kiosks to highlight to NSTU members the resources that exist to help educators in this very important work.

Information regarding this important event will arrive in schools and campuses in early December. Mark your calendars. Join us at the Delta Hotels as NSTU members continue the journey of *Peace...ing it together*.

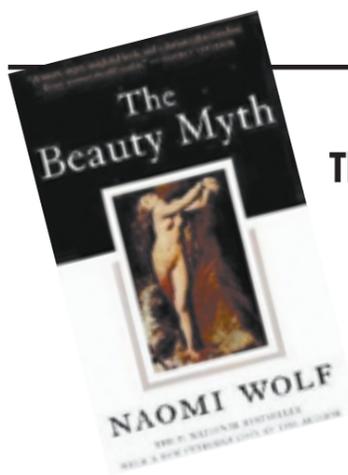
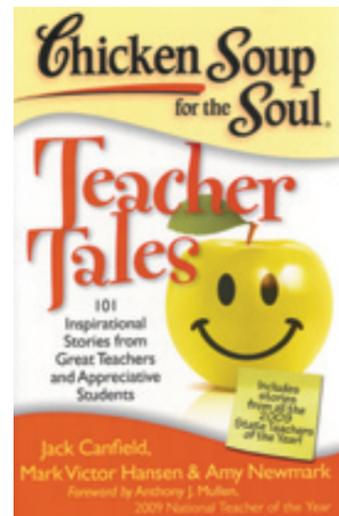


# Charting Your Course FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



*Email your name, home address, and school or campus with PD-CHICKEN SOUP in the subject line to [theteacher@nstu.ca](mailto:theteacher@nstu.ca) by January 10 to be eligible for the draw.*

The winner will receive *Chicken Soup for the Soul Teacher Tales: 101 Inspirational Stories from Great Teachers and Appreciative Students*, by Jack Canfield, Mark Victor Hansen and Amy Newmark. The book is about the heart and soul of teaching. It is filled with stories about new and experienced teachers, tough students, sweet students, funny and embarrassing moments, amazing connections and relationships and all the ups and downs of being a teacher today.



**The October winner of the PD book  
*The Beauty Myth* is  
**LISA BAKER**  
of Middleton**

## PDAF Committee

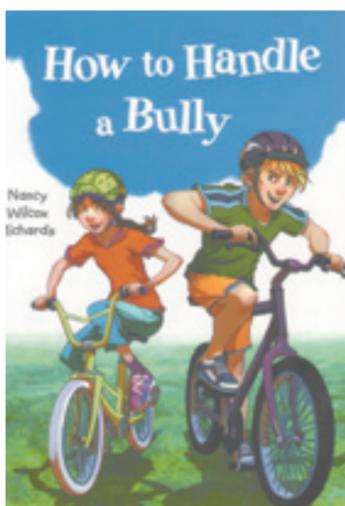


The Program Development Assistant Fund (PDAF) committee has met twice this school year, on September 10 and October 8, to review applications for innovative program development, and grant money to worthy projects. This committee consists of representation from the NSTU and the Department of Education and provides financial support for projects directly related to the Public School program. Read about one of the many innovative projects it has funded on page 10. Seated: Alex Bruce and Roy Bourgeois (DOE reps). Standing: NSTU staff liaison Betty-Jean Aucoin, Dianne Raoul (Guysborough County Local) and Colleen Scott (Shelburne Local).

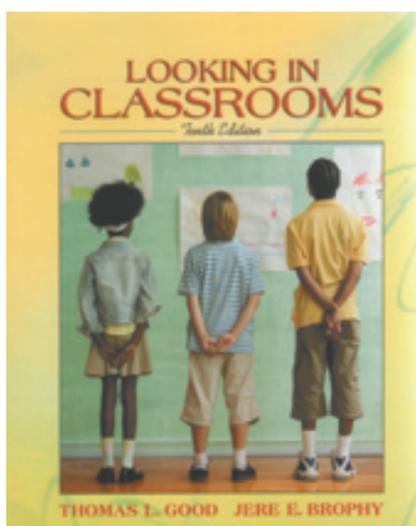


Email your name, home address, and school or campus with PD-BULLY in the subject line to [theteacher@nstu.ca](mailto:theteacher@nstu.ca) by January 10 to be eligible for the draw.

The PD Department is doing a second book giveaway in this double November/December edition of *The Teacher*. In keeping with national Bullying Awareness Week, which took place November 16 to 20, the NSTU's PD department is giving away a copy of *How to Handle a Bully* by Nancy Wilcox Richards. Wilcox Richards teaches Grade 2 at Bayview Community School in Mahone Bay. Last year *The Teacher* gave away copies of her first two books in this series, *How to Tame a Bully*, and *How to Outplay a Bully*. Wilcox Richards will be leading a workshop at the *Peace...ing it Together* conference, hosted by the NSTU in April. The book tells the story of students in Ms. MacArthur's class, who are excited about a fitness challenge at the park. The winner will get a brand new bike! But when Rilla and a couple of her classmates go to the park to practice, a threatening bully and his sidekicks stop them. Will they ever get to use the playground—or hope to win any of the fitness challenge events? Though bullying is a serious topic faced by many children, the author's tone is funny, light and positive, and in the end, the Bayfield kids succeed in pulling together to curb the bully's bad behaviour.



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 January 10 to be eligible for the draw.

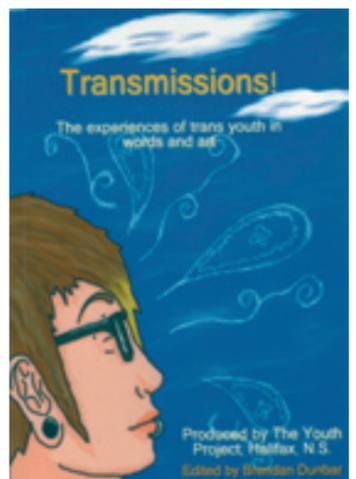
This month's FRESH giveaway is *Looking In Classrooms (Tenth Edition)*, by Thomas L. Good and Jere E. Brophy. A Pearson Education Inc. publication, this book is a comprehensive and authoritative source on effective teaching. *Looking in Classrooms* addresses student motivation, classroom teaching, teacher expectations and adapting instruction for individual learners. It presents the information in an accessible manner, promoting easy transfer to the classroom.

## EQUITY BOOK REVIEW COMMITTEE

Email your name, home address, and school or campus with EQUITY in the subject line to [theteacher@nstu.ca](mailto:theteacher@nstu.ca) by January 10 to be eligible for the draw.

This month's equity book giveaway is *Transmissions! The experiences of trans youth in words and art*, edited by Brendan Dunbar and produced by The Youth Project in Halifax.

In *Transmissions*, transgendered youth from around the Maritimes, Canada and the world share their experiences. It's an anthology of prose, poetry and art. From Jesse Ford's moving "Dear Dad" to Peter C. Kingdom's whimsical experience in a theatre washroom, readers will come to understand both the joys and difficulties of being a trans youth.



### NSTU REP PINS

The Nova Scotia Teachers Union has the NSTU Rep pin available for purchase by NSTU Locals, for their NSTU Reps. At only \$2.50 each these brushed pewter pins are sure to be recognized at your school or campus.

To order, contact:

**NSTU Public Relations Department**

[Phone] 477-5621 or [Toll-Free] 1-800-565-6788

or [Email] [pr@nstu.ca](mailto:pr@nstu.ca)



### The Teacher Distribution 2010-11 School Year

Beginning with the October issue of *The Teacher* your school or campus will receive the number of copies requested by your NSTU rep or half the number of NSTU members at your site.

Please share your copy with a colleague. *The Teacher* is available online at [www.nstu.ca](http://www.nstu.ca).



### 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 Sheonoroil Project Application today from your NSTU Representative!



**Project Application Mailing Address**  
Sheonoroil Foundation Project Review Committee  
3106 Joseph Howe Drive, Halifax, NS B3L 4L7

#### Our mandate

is simple. The Sheonoroil 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—APRIL 8, 2011**

Autism...there's an App for that. In fact, students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) at the South Shore Regional School Board (SSRSB) have been using iPod Touches with targeted Apps to assist them in their learning and with their particular special needs thanks in part to a grant from the Program Development Assistance Fund (PDAF).

SSRSB's Autism Consultant, Catherine Rahey and Assistive Technology Specialist, Barbara Welsford, spearheaded the *iPod Touch use with Students with ASD* project. Six schools and 18 students diagnosed with ASD are benefiting through the purchase of iPod Touches.

"Barb and I sit on the school-based program planning team for students with ASD," says Rahey. "We are always looking at creating solutions to meet communication needs, social, behavioural and anxiety challenges and how we can support the specific needs, so we came up with the idea of a PDAF project."

The iPod Touch is enabling the students with ASD to successfully communicate, self-regulate, schedule, access and enhance

In her role as Assistive Technology Specialist with the Board, Welsford keeps current on the kinds of Apps that will benefit students with ASD and other special needs students.

"A number of non-verbal students have benefited greatly from the use of the iPod touch," says Welsford. One in particular, Ryan, wouldn't use any other device. Welsford says the beauty of the iPod is that it is a socially appropriate and portable tool. "For children it doesn't look out of the obvious. It helps them to blend in with their peers." Both Welsford and Rahey are excited to report that Ryan is starting to speak now, using the iPod touch.

"Through the use of the Touch, Ryan can communicate with other students, and adults and communicate his feelings and needs. He can say far more than just hi or hello," adds Rahey. "He has his recess folder, a friend talk folder, and he knows exactly where all 200 images are.

"When he's happy, he locates his song byte on his iPod and does his happy dance," says Welsford. "For academics he uses a voice input App—Dragon. The voice



*Barbara Welsford and Catherine Rahey are shown above.*

natural sounding text-to-speech voices, high-resolution up-to-date symbols, and includes a default vocabulary of over 7,000 items.

It's recommended by speech language pathologists (SLPs), teachers and parents for children and adults with autism, cerebral palsy, Down syndrome, developmental disabilities, apraxia, ALS, stroke or traumatic brain injury.

Rahey points out that the teachers on the program planning teams program the Proloquo2Go for their students. "When there's a new team, or changes to the student's PSP and schedule, the device is easily updated."

Rahey is quick to emphasize that the use of the iPod Touches is not just for non-verbal ASD students. "The tool is used for many students on the spectrum, and these devices are not just for communication, but for organization and self-regulation."

One student who has Aspergers uses the iPod Touch's Calendar App to reduce anxiety, the To Do Lists for organization, and e-books for reading comprehension. Another with autism and global delay uses a variety of Apps to enhance literacy and uses Visules App as a visual schedule. Program specialist teachers (PSTs) are recording video of appropriate behaviour routines for specific social situations, editing them in iMovie and then loading them on the iPod Touch for student reference. Chester Area Middle School PST Cindy Kowalyk manages six of the iPod Touches for students at the school. She talks about

the overall importance of the device. "This tool allows many of our students to be independent—not having to rely on EPAs and other adults. It raises their self-esteem, and it's portable and flexible."

Some of the other Apps used are, IRewards chart for motivation, NMB Films for productivity, Fireworks for relaxation, Relax for relaxation and self-regulation, Speak it! for writing productivity, and Visual Timer for scheduling. Scheduling Apps like the Calendar also help to reduce text anxiety.

"It's an all-in-one device that the student can take home and use 24-7," says Welsford. "And as students' needs change and curriculum changes—so do the Apps," adds Rahey.

Rahey, a member of the Autism Council of Nova Scotia, coordinated a presentation of the project in conjunction with the Provincial Autism Centre. It was given by Barb Welsford, Lindsay Welsford, Learning Centre Teacher and Paul Peters, the parent of a child with autism currently using the device. The public forum took place at the end of April at the Victoria General Hospital. "There were about 100 participants in the audience and they were really excited to hear about our project and how to use the iPod Touch at school and at home," says Rahey. The project was also showcased at the Bridges to Learning International AT conference in May.

Rahey reiterates the power and potential of the iPod Touch. "It allows students to relax, gives them voice, and motivates them to learn and be independent. We are looking forward to seeing the future impact the use and application of this device will have with students with ASD and are very appreciative of the Board, the NSTU and PDAF."

The PDAF program encourages innovative program development in Nova Scotia's public schools. Co-sponsored by the NSTU and the Department of Education, with an annual sum of \$200,000, it provides financial support for projects directly related to the Public School Program. For more information visit the members-only side of the NSTU website at [www.nstu.ca](http://www.nstu.ca) or contact NSTU executive staff officer Betty-Jean Aucoin at 1-800-565-6788 or 477-5621 or [bjaucoin@nstu.ca](mailto:bjaucoin@nstu.ca). **The deadline for the next round of project proposals is December 1, 2010.**



*Ryan is happy with his iPod Touch.*

academics as well as providing support for sensory, organization and social needs.

Rahey points out that there was a lot of work to be done before they handed the iPods to students. "It was important for the school planning teams working with students with autism to have an understanding of autism specific to their individual students and be provided with ongoing PD. The teams were given training and professional development in research-based strategies for supporting their students with autism." All teams continue to participate in on training, PD and skill renewal. "We then identified appropriate students who would benefit from the use of the iPod Touch."

Teams were brought in to train at the Assistive Technology Centre on the use and application of the tool and the purchasing of appropriate Apps. The program support teachers (PSTs) came together after the project had been implemented to share stories and discuss the successes and challenges of the project and plans for the future. "The Board covered the PD training for the piece of the project," adds Welsford. "The PDAF funding provided the iPods."

output with the new model of i-Touches is a pretty powerful tool for education."

Proloquo2Go is an essential App for non-verbal students with ASD. For those of you not familiar with Proloquo2Go, it's a full-featured augmentative and alternative communication application for those who have difficulty speaking. It provides



*Students use an iPod Touch to communicate with one another.*

## Cycling vice-principal one and only in Atlantic Canada for Kids Cancer Ride 2010

Suzanne Delaney is the only Atlantic Canadian to have cycled across Canada in the Sears National Kids Cancer Ride 2010. The teaching vice-principal at St. Andrew's Consolidated School in Antigonish was one of 43 national cyclists who hit the road on September 9 for a 15-day ride to Halifax.

When asked what possessed her to participate initially she says, "I just really wanted to cycle across the country. But the journey is about much more than just cycling. We took part in more than 14 fundraising events across the country, speaking with families and children who are currently receiving cancer treatments as well as those who have beaten this terrible disease. It is important that all Nova Scotians know of the Ride and develop an awareness of just how many children become victims of this disease each year."

She was unsure whether she would be accepted at first; the main criteria are fitness and fundraising ability. Each rider has to commit to raising \$25,000 for the cause, and provide \$6,000 out of their own pocket. A phys ed teacher, personal trainer and avid cyclist for the past five years, Delaney was definitely fit, but she also surpassed the \$25,000 goal almost threefold.

To date, the Delaney Camp has raised \$72,100 for the cause. "My old high school raised \$3,000 alone," says the Cheticamp native. She trained for seven months, and began raising money last November in her community. Delaney was the third top fundraiser of the group of cyclists, with the most being raised at just over \$75,000.

"Students and staff within the Strait Regional School Board raised over \$10,000. My school raised over \$6,000 as part of a challenge that I would let three of my students shave my hair off and would donate my hair to Wigs for Cancer."

The St. Andrew's community was very involved in raising funds on behalf of Delaney. In addition to the \$6,000 raised through the school, an additional \$11,000 was raised through community organizers who put on a Valentine's supper and auction. Her spinning jersey alone raised \$19,500 through sponsorship from local businesses. Delaney knows it was the strong community support that enabled her to raise the amount of money she did, including publicity of her involvement. "The interviews and awareness around my participation was incredible," she says. The teams would stop en route and work at fundraisers scheduled along the way. There were 192 stops between the three teams over the 15-day ride. She admits her fellow riders were sometimes late to the daily ride because of her media interviews.



*Delaney recites a poem at the welcome celebration at St. Andrew's Consolidated School on September 23. It was written by fellow rider, 16-year-old cancer survivor Josh Nelson.*

"The money I raised will go to the IWK's pediatric oncology department, providing families with support and counselling." She would like more Nova Scotians to get involved in the ride, and of course donate to the cause. She says the Sears National Kids Cancer Ride gives back 100 per cent of the funds to the cause.

"At the end of this journey, my physical pain went away," says Delaney. "Not all kids with cancer are that fortunate. The pain and scars of cancer stay with patients forever." Delaney hopes her participation in this ride will encourage others to get involved.

The Sears National Kids Cancer Ride funds programs that improve the lives of children living with cancer as well as those recovering from the disease. Money raised is used for national and provincial pediatric hematology and oncology research programs. The last two rides raised \$2.6 million with over \$1.5 million being given to the Canadian Council of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology Directors, the national organization representing the 17 pediatric hematology/oncology programs across Canada. The balance of over \$1 million was distributed to pediatric oncology centres across Canada, including the IWK Health Centre, to support initiatives at the local level.

For more information, to register as a rider or a volunteer, or to make a donation, visit [www.SearsNationalKidsCancerRide.com](http://www.SearsNationalKidsCancerRide.com) or call 1-866-381-4446.



*Riders of Team 2 en route to Antigonish*



*Delaney stands in the hallway outside the gym at her school, which displays her route and a welcome banner.*

One of the most memorable stops was at her school in Antigonish. This welcome home event was very meaningful. "Our arrival was unbelievably incredible, even for team members who had no connection to the school. The riders were so happy to spend time with the kids and so impressed with the staff." She is still amazed at the enthusiastic reception, and continued support of her community.

Delaney, one of 15 riders on Team 2, traveled more than 7,000 km across the country in a relay-style ride, and was joined along the way by thousands of other community cyclists who rode shorter distances, all with the goal of improving the quality of life for children and their families living with and beyond cancer. The riders dipped their wheels in the Pacific at White Rock, B.C. on September 6 and arrived in Halifax on September 23 where they ceremonially dipped their wheels in the Atlantic to signal the end of the ride.

She says two cancer survivors participated on her team, including Josh Nelson, who spent five days on a tandem bike through their ride through Ontario, but was unable to be with the team the day they visited the school, so Delaney read a poem he had written to the welcoming crowd.

# GRADUATE STUDIES IN EDUCATION

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For more information about benefits and opportunities, please see the Continuing and Distance Education website at: [www.stfx.ca/continuinged/Graduate.html](http://www.stfx.ca/continuinged/Graduate.html). To receive an information package, call 1-877-867-3906 or (902) 867-3906 or email: [med@stfx.ca](mailto:med@stfx.ca). Application deadline: March 1.



**ST. FRANCIS XAVIER**  
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## Local Presidents & RRC Chairs 2010-2011



**Standing (left to right):** Arnold Burke (Cape Breton District), Bonnie Mahaney (Shelburne), Hope Lemoine (Cumberland), Gary Schmidt (Hants West), Wally Fiander (Tri-County RRC), Peter Murphy (Northside-Victoria and Cape Breton-Victoria RRC), Cynthia MacKinnon (Pictou), Bernard LeBlanc (Richmond), Terrence Doucette (Queens), Amanda Marchand (Antigonish), Robert George (Colchester-East Hants), John Spurdakes (Chignecto RRC), Kyle Marryatt (Dartmouth), Carole Hipwell (Lunenburg County and South Shore RRC), Tim MacLeod (Halifax County), Ian LeBlanc (CSANE rep for Linda Samson), Louis Robitaille (Community College).

**Seated (left to right):** Krista Oswald (Digby), Lori MacKinnon (Yarmouth), Kim Frank (Annapolis Valley RRC), Alexis Allen (NSTU President), Sheila Hawley (Inverness and Strait RRC), Leah Fowler (Annapolis), Dianne Raoul (Guysborough County).

*Missing from photo:* Liette Doucet (Halifax City and Halifax RRC), Cathy Reimer (Kings).

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# coming events

## November is...

*Osteoporosis Month (www.osteoporosis.ca); Diabetes Awareness Month (www.diabetes.ca); Crohn's and Colitis Awareness Month (www.cfc.ca); CPR Awareness Month (www.heartandstroke.ca).*

### NOVEMBER 24 TO 30

#### AIDS Awareness Week 2010 Activities

The following are workshops and information sessions to discuss HIV/AIDS issues, as they relate to the needs of families, youth, men and women within a sexual health context.

#### Wednesday, November 24, 11:45 a.m.

**Event:** African drumming, red ribbon flag raising and reading of the proclamation by the Honourable Percy Paris and the Chair of the Nova Scotia Advisory Commission on AIDS. **Location:** Courtesy Flag Pole, Province House

#### Thursday, November 25, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

**Event:** *Black Families* - An information session on HIV and AIDS **Location:** Halifax North Memorial Library, 2285 Gottingen Street, Halifax

#### Friday, November 26, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

**Event:** *Home Safe* - a focus on the impact of HIV/AIDS on people of African descent who are immigrants, newcomers, migrants, refugees and international students. **Location:** St. Andrews Community Centre, 6955 Bayers Road, Halifax

#### Saturday, November 27, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

**Event:** *African Canadian Youth and HIV* - A day of music, spoken word, and drama **Location:** Halifax North Memorial Library, 2285 Gottingen Street, Halifax

#### Sunday, November 28, 2:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

**Event:** *Gone Viral* - international/global perspective; the film *Three Needles*. **Location:** Room 1020, Kenneth Rowe Building, 6100 University Avenue, Dalhousie University

#### Monday, November 29, 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m.

**Event:** *JUST (in) Time* - panel discussion on HIV and AIDS and hu-

man rights and social justice. **Location:** Room A, Weldon Law Building, 6061 University Avenue, Dalhousie University

#### Tuesday, November 30, 7:30 p.m. to 9 p.m.

**Event:** *Black OUT - LGBTI* - Catherine Meade will moderate a panel discussion on LGBTI and HIV and AIDS.

**Location:** Room 303, Student Union Building, 6136 University Avenue, Dalhousie University

### NOVEMBER 25

#### 8th Annual Discovery Awards

The 8th Annual Discovery Awards for Science and Technology will be held on November 25 at the Westin Nova Scotian in Halifax. The awards recognize talented individuals and outstanding companies in Nova Scotia for their national and international work in the science and technology fields. Award winners will be named in the categories of Professional of Distinction, Emerging Professional, Innovation and Science Champion. In addition, there will be recognition of the Hall of Fame Inductees for 2010: Enid MacLeod, (post-humously) and Arthur McDonald of Queens University. As well, the 2010 Youth Award will be presented to Chantal Surette of École Secondaire de Clare. For tickets and more information, visit <http://www.discoverycentre.ns.ca>.

### NOV. 28 & DEC. 5

#### Discovery Centre Weekend Programs

The Discovery Centre in Halifax is offering new weekend science shows and special programs. On **November 28** at 2 p.m, catch *The Physics of Yo-Yoing*. This demonstration will examine the science behind yo-yos. Antonio Marzetti will perform some amazing tricks with various yo-yos inside the Discovery Centre theatre. There will be a brief narrated introduction regarding the physics of yo-yoing and then the tricks will begin!

On **December 5** at 2 p.m. and again at 4 p.m., the Discovery Centre will host a fun and interactive talk about the size, distance and sheer beauty of the solar system and universe. *High Is The Sky?* is appropriate for both children and adults, Quinn Smith, a local amateur astronomer and active member of the Royal Astronomical Society will be the special guest speaker.

### DECEMBER 1

#### World AIDS Day

World AIDS Day is an opportunity to bring people together to raise awareness for HIV. All over the world, institutions and organizations are hosting events and activities. The day is meant to raise money and increase awareness and encourage AIDS and HIV members of the community to live fully and dispel myths and prejudices associated with HIV and AIDS. In Halifax, a cabaret style event will be held from 4 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. at the Italian Cultural Centre on Agricola Street. The event will open with African drumming, followed by speakers including Dr. Clemon George and a performance by Constantly Misjudged, El Jones, IzReal and others. For more information visit the website for the Nova Scotia Advisory Commission on AIDS at [www.gov.ns.ca/aids](http://www.gov.ns.ca/aids).

### DECEMBER 6

#### National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women

December 6 is the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women in Canada. Established in 1991 by the Parliament of Canada, this day coincides with the grim anniversary of the death of 14 young women who were tragically killed because of their gender on December 6, 1989 at l'École Polytechnique de Montréal.

In addition to commemorating the 14 young women whose lives ended in an act of gender-based violence that shocked the nation, December 6 represents an opportunity for Canadians to reflect on the phenomenon of violence against women in our society. It is also an opportunity to consider the women and girls for whom violence is a daily reality, and

to remember those who have died as a result of gender-based violence. Finally, it is a day on which communities can consider concrete actions to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls. For more information, go to the Status of Women Canada website at [www.swc-cfc.gc.ca](http://www.swc-cfc.gc.ca).

Every year, YWCA Canada launches the December 6 Rose Button Campaign across the country. The Campaign takes its name from the original Rose Button, created almost 20 years ago to commemorate the École Polytechnique murder victims. Money raised through the sale of the buttons supports anti-violence programs and services. More information is available at [www.ywcanada.ca](http://www.ywcanada.ca).

### JANUARY 27

#### Family Literacy Day

This year's Family Literacy Day® 2011 theme is *Play for Literacy*. It encourages Canadians from coast-to-coast to participate together in games and play dates with family, neighbours and friends on Family Literacy Day®, January 27, 2011.

*Play for Literacy* can include all types of play that encourages literacy and numeracy development as well as comprehension skills, such as board games, card games and imaginative self-created activities and games. Games, and the carefree act of playing, provide a fun outlet in which individuals of all ages can engage in activities that inherently provide new learning or opportunities to improve one's reading, writing, math and comprehension skills.

Teachers and early childhood educators use exploration, investigation, creative thinking, observation and learning techniques formed around game playing to help children with their comprehension, math and reading skills.

Established in 1999, Family Literacy Day®, held annually on January 27, is an initiative developed to celebrate parents and children reading and learning together, and encourages Canadians to spend at least 15 minutes enjoying a learning activity every day.

Register your event online at [FamilyLiteracyDay.ca](http://FamilyLiteracyDay.ca) and make it a true community initiative. To register, pledge funds, or find a local Family Literacy Day event, please visit [FamilyLiteracyDay.ca](http://FamilyLiteracyDay.ca). To learn more about literacy and lifelong learning please visit [www.abclifelifteracy.ca](http://www.abclifelifteracy.ca).

## EDUCATION WEEK April 10-16, 2011 Innovative Teaching in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century



# Thank You!

CEED would like to thank the educators who participated in our *Entrepreneurship in Education* workshop at the Social Studies Teacher's Association Conference.

**Meghan Cadue**  
Entrepreneurship Education Advisor  
Centre for Entrepreneurship Education & Development  
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"The Entrepreneurship in Action Resource is the perfect supplement to the ENT12 course. It's well-organized, comprehensive, and designed for instant implementation. This resource is what every teacher wishes for."  
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Thanks to Mountain Equipment Co-op, the Nova Scotia Department of Justice, St. Francis Xavier University, and Skate Pass® for their support of the Making Tracks program.



# NOTICES

## Research Study

Natasha Buchanan, graduate student in the Department of Education at Mount Saint Vincent University is conducting research to help school psychologists improve communication of assessment results to teachers. She requires elementary-level teachers to complete the study online. All participants will be entered into a draw to win one of two \$50 gift cards from Staples. If you would like to receive a password and a direct link to the online study, please send an email to [natasha.buchanan@msvu.ca](mailto:natasha.buchanan@msvu.ca), and write "Teacher Study" in the subject heading. **The participation deadline is January 31, 2011.**

## Call for Narratives: Ethics & Experience in Teaching Professions

Dr. Sean Wiebe and Mr. Craig MacDonald are editing a book to represent Canadian teachers' storied worklives. Challenges include ethics in public policy, teachers as agents in complex relationships, and personal satisfaction relative to workload. Declare your interest and clarify the aims of this narrative inquiry, bearing in mind that an abstract of your planned contribution will be due on Friday, December 17. Please write: [ethics.experience@gmail.com](mailto:ethics.experience@gmail.com).

## Education Visits and Exchanges

For over 70 years, the Society for Educational Visits and Exchanges in Canada (SEVEC) has been creating opportunities for Canadian youth to travel to another province on a subsidized exchange. Research consistently shows that participating in a homestay exchange is a rewarding opportunity for all young people, providing them with the opportunity to connect with a peer, see the many unique and beautiful aspects of our country and learn more about the strength that comes from our diversity.

Youth across Canada between the ages of 12-17 are eligible to travel on exchange through SEVEC's programs. The value is clear; 98 per cent of exchange organizers felt that the experience increased participants' sense of belonging to Canada.

SEVEC exchanges benefit the entire community. Preparing for the exchange and hosting students from out of province engages the parents in the learning experience, as some of them may not have had the same opportunity to be directly exposed to other cultures and traditions.

To apply or find out more, visit us at [www.sevec.ca](http://www.sevec.ca) or call 1-800-387-3832.

## executive highlights

### September 24, 2010

- Filed table officers report;
- Selected six candidates to the John Huntley Memorial Internship Program, along with one alternate;
- Received the nominating committee report:
  - Selected a member to serve on the Comité de programmation acadienne;
  - Selected a retired member to serve on the Sheonorol Board of Directors;
  - Selected a member to serve on the professional development committee;

- Received the audited financial statements of the NSTU Group Insurance Trust Fund;

- Approved guidelines for Netbooks;

- Approved Operational Procedures 15 (m) – Communication Policy be deleted and replaced with new text;

- Approved a recommendation to the finance and property committee to review the financial reporting procedures of professional associations with branches;

- Filed the annual reports from NSTU standing committees; to be posted to the members-only website;

- Approved Pictou Lodge to be the site of the July 2011 executive planning conference;
- Ratified amendments to the Community College Local Constitution;
- Approved a recommendation that Bill Murphy remain as acting REWC Chair of the Strait RRC for the remainder of the 2010-2011 school year;
- Approved a recommendation that Sheila Hawley act as RRC Chair of the Strait RRC for the remainder of the 2010-2011 school year;

### October 28, 2010

- Filed table officers report;
- Appointed the substitute teacher committee for 2010-2011;
- Approved recommendations from the council nominating committee including changes to standing orders;
- Granted six out-of-province conference grants of \$475 each, with two alternates;
- Approval granted to the Tri-County Regional School Board to hire substitutes with a permit to teach for the 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 school years when no licensed teachers are available for that day.

## NEXT YEAR YOUR STUDENTS' ART COULD BE FLYING HIGH IN CANADA'S CAPITAL AT MAJOR'S HILL PARK.

Congratulations to the winners of the 2010 "Raise Your Voices" Banner Contest and the hundreds of students who participated!

The National Capital Commission (NCC), in partnership with Classroom Connections, is kicking off Year 2 of this exciting **CROSS-CANADA CONTEST AND PUBLIC ART PROJECT.**

Help your students have their voices heard by creating an original banner design that brings youth issues to the capital.

Go to [www.canadascapital.gc.ca/bannercontest](http://www.canadascapital.gc.ca/bannercontest) to get full details, view last year's winners and download an easy-to-use lesson plan for introducing the contest in your class.

The contest is open to Grades 5–8 classes in schools across Canada. The deadline for entries is February 18, 2011.

This initiative is an extension of *The Gathering Place*, a teaching resource for Grades 5–8 Social Science and History. Email us at [info@classroomconnections.ca](mailto:info@classroomconnections.ca) for your free copy.

**THE GATHERING PLACE**  
AN EXPLORATION OF CANADA'S CAPITAL

## SRSB hosts School Bus Safety Awareness Annual Campaign Launch

The Strait Regional School Board (SRSB) and Mulgrave Memorial Education Centre played host to the annual launch of School Bus Safety Awareness Week on October 18. The week ran from October 18-22 and is organized by Safety Services Nova Scotia.

The event included a welcome from Arminta Kennedy, Community Safety Manager with Safety Services Nova Scotia and welcoming remarks from SRSB vice chair George Kehoe. "It takes the responsibility of everybody to make sure children are transported safely," he says.

The Town of Mulgrave Chief Administrative Officer Hugh Landry, and Nova Scotia Pupil Transportation Advisory Committee Executive Member Francis Bowman also provided remarks. John Penney, Senior Inspector with the Utility and Review Board provided a presentation on bus design standards related to seat belts.

A demonstration of the Global Positioning System (GPS) technology recently implemented by the Strait Regional School Board buses and maintenance vehicles was also part of the formal launch of the campaign.

School bussing is a major part of the Strait Regional School Board, since it geographically represents 25 per cent of the landmass of Nova Scotia, while only representing six per cent of the province's students. The Board has 128 school buses and 28 maintenance vehicles on the road at any given time. One of the main reasons behind installing the GPS technology was enhanced student and staff safety. With this technology, the time and place of bus accidents, bus stopping and idling can be monitored among other things. "A lot of accidents occur when buses are backing up," says Tara Gaskell, SRSB's Manager of Occupational Health and Safety Programs. She says with the GPS technology they have "black box" information available on the incident. The GPS units were installed in the Board's buses prior to the start of the school year.

Buster the Bus, an automated, interactive miniature talking school bus shared safety messages with Grades Primary to 4 students in the school's gymnasium as part of the Bus Safety Awareness Week launch. Buster is part of the Board's Transportation Services staff's student bus safety program presented to all Grade Primary to 6 students on an annual basis. The program teaches students many aspects of bus safety including how to behave while on the bus, walking to and from the bus stop and how to get off and move safely away from the bus. A school bus safety brochure, which contains valuable safety information and tips for getting to the bus stop, waiting for the bus, crossing the street, boarding the bus, the bus trip, getting off the bus and evacuation procedures, was also highlighted at the launch. Copies of this brochure can be accessed in the Document Depot section of the School Board's website at [www.srsb.ca](http://www.srsb.ca).

Grades 5 and 6 students participated in a mock bus evacuation as part of the event. The event was followed by a police checkpoint during which bus safety information cards were distributed to motorists.

Nova Scotia's Road Safety Advisory Committee, the Nova Scotia Pupil Transportation Advisory Committee and The Co-operators Group sponsored the 2010 launch. For more information, please visit these valuable online resources [www.safetyservicesns.ca](http://www.safetyservicesns.ca) and [www.schoolbussafety.ca](http://www.schoolbussafety.ca).



Mulgrave Memorial Education Centre Grades 5 and 6 students participate in a mock bus evacuation.



From left to right: Marlene Boyd, provincial executive member Inverness-Richmond who attended the event on behalf of the NSTU is shown with Arminta Kennedy, Community Safety Manager with Safety Services Nova Scotia, SRSB's vice-chair George Kehoe and SRSB's director of operations Terry Doyle.



Grades Primary to Four Mulgrave Memorial Education Centre students take part in the School Board's bus safety program during the provincial launch of School Bus Safety Awareness. Buster the Bus shares safety messages with students with the help of Denise MacEachern, SRSB Pupil Transportation Services.

## What every NSTU member should know:

### CRIMINAL ALLEGATIONS

The worst nightmare for any NSTU member is when a criminal complaint, especially a criminal complaint of assault and/or sexual misconduct, has been made against him or her.

The **first step** a member should take is to contact an executive staff officer in the member services department of the Nova Scotia Teachers Union for advice. The staff officer assigned to your case will direct the procedures that will be followed to minimize the damage that such allegations can and do create. The staff officer will advise a member of the processes to be followed and will provide access to legal counsel. Do NOT DO anything until you have talked to legal counsel. Exercise your constitutional right to remain silent.

**There are a number of things that an accused member should NOT do:**

1. **Do not** discuss or supply a written report on the matter with anyone other than legal counsel. This would include staff members and/or Board/Employer officials.
2. **Do not** discuss the matter or give a written statement to police or child protection investigators until you have had the opportunity to discuss and receive advice from legal counsel.
3. **Do not** attempt to resolve the matter personally.
4. **Do not** make any contact with the accuser or his/her family.
5. **Do not** talk to the media.

There are very good reasons for each of these instructions. If a criminal charge results from the allegation, the member's right of due process could well have been compromised because of an inadvertent comment made to someone. Anyone, except legal counsel retained on behalf of an accused person, can be called to testify in a trial in regard to anything said by an accused person. **The right to consult with legal counsel before making a statement to the police or child-care workers is an absolute right in law.**

**Members who have suffered such allegations have often been contacted by police authorities beyond school hours and in some cases in very unorthodox ways. Members are advised that there are a number of things you need NOT do by law.**

1. You **need not** go with the police upon request, unless you are arrested and if you are informed of the reasons for being arrested.
2. You **need not** give a written or verbal statement, even if arrested.
3. You **need not** give a written or verbal statement at any time unless advised by legal counsel.
4. You **need not** talk to police at any time under any circumstances, other than give your name and address
5. You **need not** sign a document of any kind unless it is appearance notice stating the date you are to be in court.
6. You **need not** report to the police station to answer any questions unless accompanied by legal counsel.
7. You **need not** allow police to enter your residence without a search warrant.
8. You **need not** submit to a polygraph.

A serious allegation can have impact on employment status. The Employer may feel that it is necessary to remove a member from the work environment during the investigation process. In those situations, the NSTU will work with the Employer to protect the employment rights and the financial **well being** of members. Often, a member will be placed on a paid leave during the period of investigation.

We must also recognize and address the normal emotions and reactions of anyone who faces the trauma of being accused of a serious offence. Most members who have been accused want to immediately resolve the situation. The key is to avoid saying anything to anybody until contact with the NSTU has been established and legal counsel has been retained on your behalf.

Usually, the resolution of the problem is a time-consuming process. Great care is taken to protect the rights of the member involved. These cases are always taken very seriously by the NSTU staff, and members should be assured that advice and support will be forthcoming. Once a resolution has been reached, whatever it might be, you should be aware of the long-term emotional effects of such an experience not only for you, but also for your family members, friends and co-workers. Counselling is available through NSTU's Counselling Services.

*(This is a variation of an article originally published in *The Teacher*, in April, 1994. It was re-printed in the December 2008 edition of *The Teacher*)*

## Fall Huntley Internship

On October 20 and 21, the first round of John Huntley Memorial Internship Program participants for the 2010-11 school year got a better sense of all the programs and services the NSTU offers members. They met with the NSTU president and executive director, and spent time with staff from the member services, professional development, communications and counselling departments.



*They are shown above with NSTU's Coordinator of Technology and Communications, Simon Wilkin. Seated: Thérèse Forsythe (Kings Local), a consultant with the Annapolis Valley Regional School Board; executive staff officer Simon Wilkin; Irene Grezel (Cape Breton District Local), a math and English teacher at Breton Education Centre; Robert Lelievre (Inverness Local), who teaches French (Grades 4, 11 and 12), PDR (Grade 9), social studies (Grades 8 and 9), phys ed (Grade 12), Oceans 11 and Global Geography 12 at Inverness Education Centre-Academy; and Crystal Isert (Halifax County) who teaches Grades 4 and 5 French Immersion at Gertrude Parker School in Sackville. Standing: NSTU staff liaison Gérard Cormier; CSANE provincial executive member Ian Comeau, who teaches accounting, economics, entrepreneurship, global geography, physics, political science and tech ed at École secondaire de Clare; Janice Graham-Migel (Halifax County Local) who is the guidance counsellor at Ridgecliff Middle School in Beechville and Roland Hannem (Yarmouth Local) who teaches Grade 7 at South Centennial School. **The deadline for the next program is February 15, 2011.***

## The John Huntley Memorial Internship Program

*The remaining deadlines for applications for the John Huntley Memorial Internship Program for the 2010-2011 school year are February 15 and April 15.*

*Applications for active NSTU members are available through your NSTU rep, on the NSTU website at [www.nstu.ca](http://www.nstu.ca) or at Central Office 477-5621 or 1-800-565-6788. The internship provides members with an opportunity to learn more about the NSTU.*

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## NSTU MEDOC® Group Travel Plan & Trip Cancellation/ Trip Interruption Plan

For many years now, the NSTU Group Insurance Trustees have made available to both active and retired members, a competitively priced Out-Of-Country/Province Travel Insurance Program. The MEDOC® Travel Insurance Plan offers NSTU members complete coverage for your travel insurance needs.

The Provincial Health Insurance Plan provides limited basic coverage while members travel outside of the Province. However, this coverage is not enough. If you have a medical emergency while travelling out of Province or out of Canada, costs can easily escalate and it can cost thousands of dollars.

Covered expenses under the NSTU MEDOC® Group Travel Plan include prescription drugs, x-rays, nursing services, air emergency transportation or evacuation, emergency dental services, bedside transportation, repatriation, return of vehicle, and board and lodging.

The MEDOC® Group Travel Plan provides year-round coverage. With a 35-day annual Base Plan, you are covered for an unlimited number of trips up to 35 consecutive days per trip during the policy year. For longer periods of travel, you can purchase a Supplemental Plan for additional protection to cover the period of time that you will be away. The Supplemental Plan provides coverage for one single trip longer than 35 days and includes the annual Base Plan coverage. Premium payments are made through monthly payroll deduction to the policy renewal, which is September 1.

### NSTU Trip Cancellation/Trip Interruption Plan

For over two years now, a Trip Cancellation/Trip Interruption Plan has been available to active and retired NSTU members. This plan helps protect travellers against unforeseen circumstances that may prevent or discontinue a trip. Coverage highlights of this plan are:

#### Annual Plan

**Trip Cancellation** - up to a maximum of \$5,000 per insured person per annual coverage period.

**Trip Interruption** - up to a maximum of \$5,000 per insured person for each covered trip.

Up to a maximum of \$3,500 for lodging, meals, car rental, telephone calls and taxi costs (\$350 per day).

Up to a maximum of \$1,000 for loss of, or damage to, baggage and personal effects during a covered trip.

**Personal effects** - actual cash value or \$500, whichever is less.

**Document replacement** - up to a maximum of \$200.

**Baggage Delay** - up to \$400.

You must be enrolled in the MEDOC® Group Travel Plan in order to apply for Trip Cancellation/Trip Interruption coverage. For members purchasing Trip Cancellation/Trip Interruption coverage for the first time, premiums will be pro-rated from the date your coverage is effective until the policy renewal date (September 1). Like the MEDOC® Group Travel Plan, coverage will renew automatically on September 1 of each year. The monthly premium is very competitive with the convenience of year-round coverage.

**It is easy to enroll!! Just contact Johnson Inc. at the numbers below for the application form(s).**

**If you have any questions, please call Johnson Inc. at 453-9543 (local) or 1-800-453-9543 (toll-free).**

update

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or [www.nstu.ca](http://www.nstu.ca) "What's New" section

**Three workshops:**  
December 3 – 5    January 14 – 16  
January 28 – 30

# resources

## Last Chance: Social Studies titles 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 limited numbers; once they're gone, they will no longer be available from our dubbing collection.

This documentary produced by CBC tells the story of the horror, the bravery, and the destruction of the Halifax Explosion of December 6, 1917. Using dramatic and moving narrative of the devastating event by intertwining memories from survivors with archival news footage, and still photography. Includes teacher's guide.

### **Talespinners Collection 1 (56 min.) Social Studies P-2**

*Talespinners Collection 1*, for ages 5-9, explores a range of multicultural themes - identity, diversity, belonging, traditions and ceremonies, learning to fit in, the value of principles and convictions. Adapted from books, each film is based on an acclaimed cross-cultural children's story that will engage young viewers with appealing characters and dynamic storylines, while sparking their imaginations with finely crafted animation. More information on each title is available online at <http://www.nfb.ca/webextension/talespinners-2/index.php> Closed captioned.

### **Glasses (23 min.) Social Studies P-3**

Milo is losing his lunchbox, and humiliating himself on the playground. He would like to be invincible like his comic book hero, Captain Cosmo, but this shy Grade one student lives in a lonely, blurry world. Milo gets his first pair of glasses which help Milo to excel in class and on the playground. Full of self-confidence, Milo loses sight of who are his true friends. This animated program explores how difficult it can be when you don't see things the same way everyone else does. Closed captioned.

### **Circles (58 min.) Mi'kmaq Studies 10; Canadian History 11; Law 12; Sociology 12**

This program is about justice and community healing, hope and transformation. *Circles* is an innovative program used in the Yukon, brings together a traditional form of aboriginal justice, circle sentencing, and the Canadian justice system. Sentencing circles bring together the perpetrator of a crime, victims, peers, and family in an effort to bring healing to the community. The program explains the foundations of circle sentencing as a restorative justice measure that is intended to unravel the dysfunctional relationships that have led to a life of crime. The program explores the healing elements found in sentencing circles. Closed captioned.

### **El Contrato (51 min.) Social Studies 7; Law 12; Sociology 12**

*El Contrato* follows Teodoro Bello Martinez, a poverty-stricken father of four living in Central Mexico makes an annual migration to Southern Ontario to pick tomatoes for conditions and wages that locals will not accept. Under government programs that allows growers to monitor themselves, the opportunity to exploit workers is as ripe as the produce they harvest. Abusive bosses, unhealthy conditions, and paying for benefits they don't receive are deflected by a long line of others back home who are willing to take their place. Despite their fear of repercussions, the workers voice their need for dignity and respect, as much as for better working conditions. The documentary ends as winter approaches and the Mexicans return home to their families, some pledge, that it's their final season in the north. Closed captioned.

### **Law & Disorder: Animated Justice (16 min.) Law 12; Sociology 12**

How does the law affect us in our daily lives? How do we balance the freedoms, rights and responsibilities of the individual against those of a group or society? With different styles and techniques, this compilation of five animated films uses humour to explore complex subjects, such as: citizen's freedoms, rights and responsibilities, as well as consumer protection, advertising standards, prejudice and racism. Animated titles include: *Point of Order*, *Yo*, *Understanding the law:*

The deadline for January/February's issue of *The Teacher* is December 17. Call 1-800-565-6788 or email [theteacher@nstu.ca](mailto:theteacher@nstu.ca)



### DO YOU KNOW A YOUTH VOLUNTEER WHO DESERVES RECOGNITION?

Recreation Nova Scotia is seeking nominations for the Provincial Volunteer Youth Award. The Volunteer Youth Award recognizes a youth aged 13-24 who has made a significant contribution as a volunteer in their school and community. (*One nominee per school.*)

All youth nominees will be invited to attend a luncheon with the Ministers of Volunteerism, Justice and Community Services.

The recipient will be one of among approximately 70 community volunteer and specialty volunteer award recipients to be honoured at the 37<sup>th</sup> Annual Provincial Volunteer Awards Ceremony and Luncheon taking place Monday, April 4<sup>th</sup> at the Westin Hotel, Halifax. More than 300 municipal and provincial government representatives, volunteers and their guests are expected to attend.

**Nomination Deadline is Monday, February 21, 2011.** For more information and to download a nomination form, visit the RNS website at [www.recreationns.ca/volunteerawards](http://www.recreationns.ca/volunteerawards) or phone (902) 425-1128.

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[www.deltabarrington.com](http://www.deltabarrington.com) [www.deltahalifax.com](http://www.deltahalifax.com)  
For reservations and information call 1-888-423-3582 (toll free)

## NSTU SECONDMENT RESOURCE FILE

Secondment application forms are available on the NSTU "Members-Only" website.

To obtain the secondment application form:

- Enter the NSTU members-only website
- Select "Union Affairs" from the menu
- Select "Secondments" from the drop-down menu

*the Coat*, *Understanding the Law: the Worm*, and *Giodano*. The program could be used to explore the following elements of law: contract law; religious freedoms and tolerance; negligence; or freedom of expression. Closed captioned.

### **Ame Noire / Black Soul (10 min.) Social Studies 2; Social Studies 7**

This short video will immerse students into the heart of Black culture via a voyage through defining moments of Black history. A series of transforming images traces of ancestry of a young boy to the mighty Pharaohs, valiant kings, slave market, and exile. Rhythms of the drum, gospel, and jazz perform as the boy makes his way from lush Caribbean to the snows of Northern America. This video with sound, but no words is useful for students at most grade levels. Closed captioned.

Education Media Library P.O. Box 578, Halifax, N.S. B3J 2S9, (902) 424-2440; (902) 428-3176 (fax), Email [mediacir@ednet.ns.ca](mailto:mediacir@ednet.ns.ca) or visit the website at <http://lrt.ednet.ns.ca>.

# NSTU Stress Survey

## It's That Time Again!



We had over 1000 NSTU members complete the first stress survey and would like to say **THANK YOU** to those members.



The NSTU is once again collaborating with researchers from Saint Mary's University to conduct a survey on the causes and consequences of NSTU members' workplace stress.

Please consider filling out the second NSTU Stress survey, regardless of whether you completed the first survey or not.

Participating in this survey will allow you to voice concerns you may have regarding stress in your profession.

## To complete the survey:

Teachers go to:

[www.smu.ca/nstu-teacher](http://www.smu.ca/nstu-teacher)

Teachers if 1/3 or more of your work assignment is administrative duties, please use the administrator web link below

Administrators go to:

[www.smu.ca/nstu-administrator](http://www.smu.ca/nstu-administrator)

The survey links will be available from December 5, 2010 to January 8, 2011

For more information on this study contact:

Natasha Scott @ 496-8759 or [workstress@smu.ca](mailto:workstress@smu.ca)



## Assessment Institute

August 17-19, 2011

Holiday Inn, Dartmouth, NS

As a follow-up to our extremely successful Assessment Summit in the summer of 2009, the **Nova Scotia Educational Leadership Consortium** is providing another exceptional professional learning opportunity.

Responding to the feedback from 2009 participants, we are offering an entire day with the keynote speakers, a limited audience and registration options:

- Speakers who will be presenting are:
  - Dylan William, August 17
  - Kaye Burke, August 18
  - Anne Davies, August 19
- Registration is limited to 250 people per speaker
- Registration Options:
  - Single Day Ticket or Three Day Package

Check the **NSELIC website** [www.nselic.ednet.ns.ca](http://www.nselic.ednet.ns.ca) or call 902-422-3270 for more information.

## 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).

**Interested in a volunteer opportunity** to help promote world peace while doing some travelling? CISV Halifax is the perfect match for you! We are looking for dynamic leaders to accompany a delegation of youth to international camps being held in summer 2011, expenses paid. Contact [halifax@ca.cisv.org](mailto:halifax@ca.cisv.org) for more information or view [www.cisv.ca](http://www.cisv.ca).

**AVAILABLE** - "The Bully And The Purple Pants" - A Dynamic School Assembly" Award-Winning songs are combined with motivational speaking to provide students with effective strategies for dealing with bullies. Hundreds of schools across Canada have experienced this fabulous presentation! For bookings call 519-655-2379 or visit [www.paulbehne.on.ca](http://www.paulbehne.on.ca) for complete details.

**AVAILABLE** - For Professional Development sessions on HUMOUR and/or ART go to [www.SusanCarterComic.com](http://www.SusanCarterComic.com) for more information.

**FOR SALE** - 2005 Harley Davidson 883 XL Custom Sportster - \$6400. Excellent condition - less than 2000 kms with many extra features - Tantallon area. Contact [bpottie@eastlink.ca](mailto:bpottie@eastlink.ca) for more information.

**BUYING A NEW CAR?** Save time, money and stress. Bunin's Auto Assist will work for you to ensure a positive, money-saving vehicle purchase. [www.buninsautoassist.com](http://www.buninsautoassist.com), [abunin@eastlink.ca](mailto:abunin@eastlink.ca), or 902-792-1777. \*NSTU members are offered a 10% discount on all services.

**FLORIDA VACATION HOME RENTALS** - Kissimmee. 2-6 bedroom vacation homes with private pool. Five miles to Disney. Family holidays or conferences. Two-bedroom SPECIAL rate until December 11, \$79US/nt. Please call 902-861-4814 or visit [www.herderholidayhomes.com](http://www.herderholidayhomes.com) or email [rherder@eastlink.ca](mailto:rherder@eastlink.ca).

**Great Christmas Gifts!** REGISTERED MASSAGE THERAPY gift certificates from **Allure**, 115 Portland St., Dartmouth, up the street

from Alderney Landing. Certificates available for all treatments as well as 1/2 hour massages. Teachers are also entitled to 20 massages per year per family member with Blue Cross, no referral required. Excellent for relieving stress, anxiety, muscle tension, fibromyalgia, improving sleep. **Chris Bagnell RMT**, 10 years experience. To contact Chris for an appointment, call 902-464-0606.

**JOB-SHARE** - Secondary School Teacher looking for a job share in the metro area. Experience includes Learning Center, Resource, Computer Technology and History. Please contact [pmaceachern@staff.ednet.ns.ca](mailto:pmaceachern@staff.ednet.ns.ca).

**JOB-SHARE** - Fifteen year sub looking for elementary share teaching position. Term experience in resource, learning centre and upper elementary. To see full resume and references, email me at [mistaple@ns.sympatico.ca](mailto:mistaple@ns.sympatico.ca)

**TEACHER EXCHANGE** CCRSB elementary teacher (near Halifax) seeking job exchange in AVRSB for 2011-2012. If interested please contact by phone 902 532-0646 or email [fayemp@gmail.com](mailto:fayemp@gmail.com)

**TEACHER EXCHANGE** - An elementary teacher with the HRSB is looking for a teacher exchange with the CBVRSB for the 2011-2012 school year. If interested, please email [dl@staff.ednet.ns.ca](mailto:dl@staff.ednet.ns.ca).

**TEACHER EXCHANGE** - Special Education teacher with the Cape Breton-Victoria Regional School Board looking for teacher exchange with the Chignecto-Central Regional School Board for the 2011-12 school year. If interested, please contact [teachermove@yahoo.ca](mailto:teachermove@yahoo.ca)

**TEACHER EXCHANGE** - A Learning Center Teacher with the HRSB is looking for a teacher exchange with the CCRSB for the 2011-12 school year. If interested, please email [burtonch@staff.ednet.ns.ca](mailto:burtonch@staff.ednet.ns.ca).



## imagineaction

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Canadian Teachers' Federation  
Fédération canadienne des enseignantes et des enseignants