

Counselling Services

NSTU Counselling Services works to strengthen and support the quality of personal and professional life of NSTU members, their partners and dependents. This confidential service provides short-term assistance with referrals available to longer-term community-based professionals following an initial assessment.

Highly qualified, registered therapists provide individual, couple and family counselling, interventions for school conflict and crises as requested by administrators, staff workshops on wellness and balancing home and career, and referral services to other counselling agencies dealing with alcohol, drug or financial concerns.

Some specific areas that sexual minority members have used this service for include: challenges with the “coming out” process for themselves and/or for their children, couple relationship issues, parenting concerns and discrimination experiences.

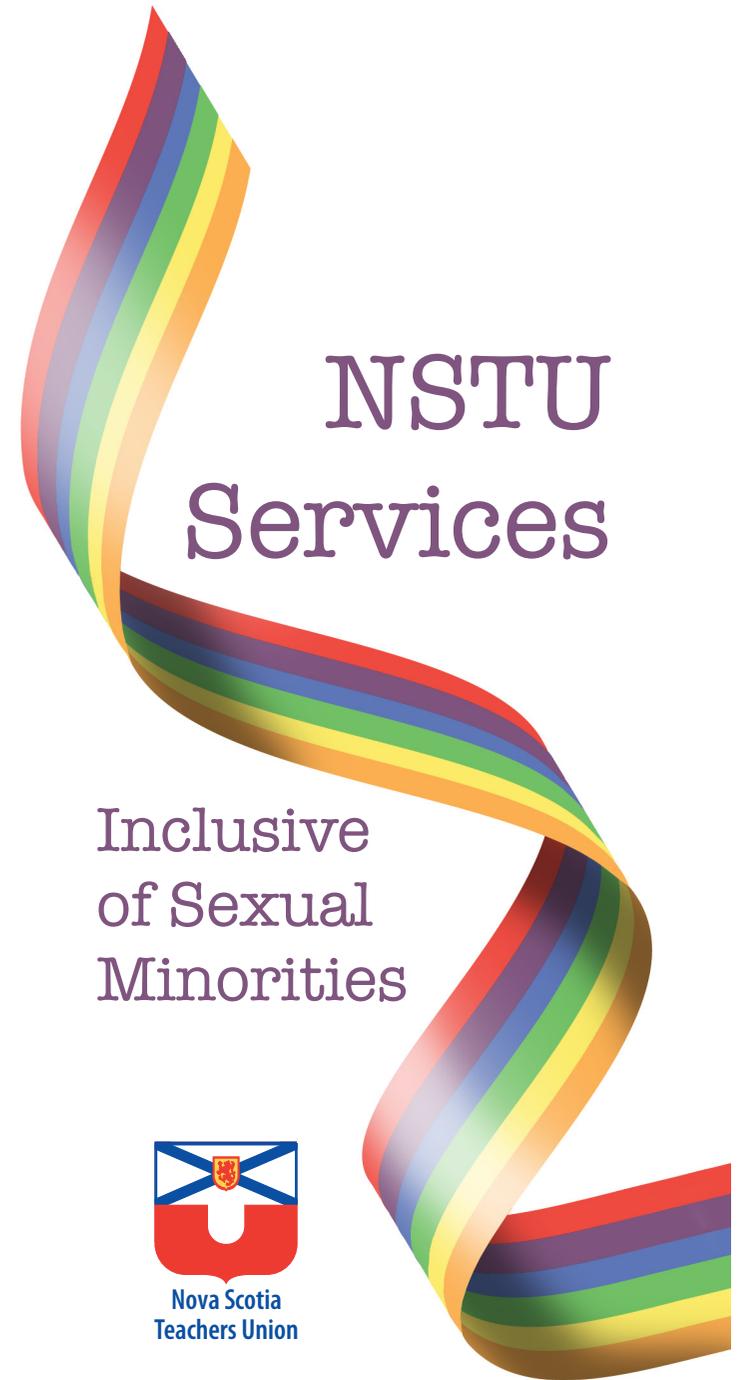
The NSTU is you... and you are the NSTU

The benefits, programs and services of the Nova Scotia Teachers Union are the results of decades of hard work by your colleagues, past and present. The NSTU is you, and you are the NSTU. As a democratic union, the NSTU encourages every member to participate and share in its development—as an NSTU Representative at the school, campus or worksite level, as a committee member or officer in one of our 22 Locals, as an active participant at Local general meetings, as a member of one of our seven Regional Representative Councils, as a volunteer with one of our 25 standing, council, task force, coordination or ad hoc committees, as a delegate to Annual Council or as a provincial executive member.

NSTU Services

Inclusive of Sexual Minorities

For information on your rights as a sexual minority member, see the NSTU brochure *Helping NSTU members deal with sexual orientation issues.*

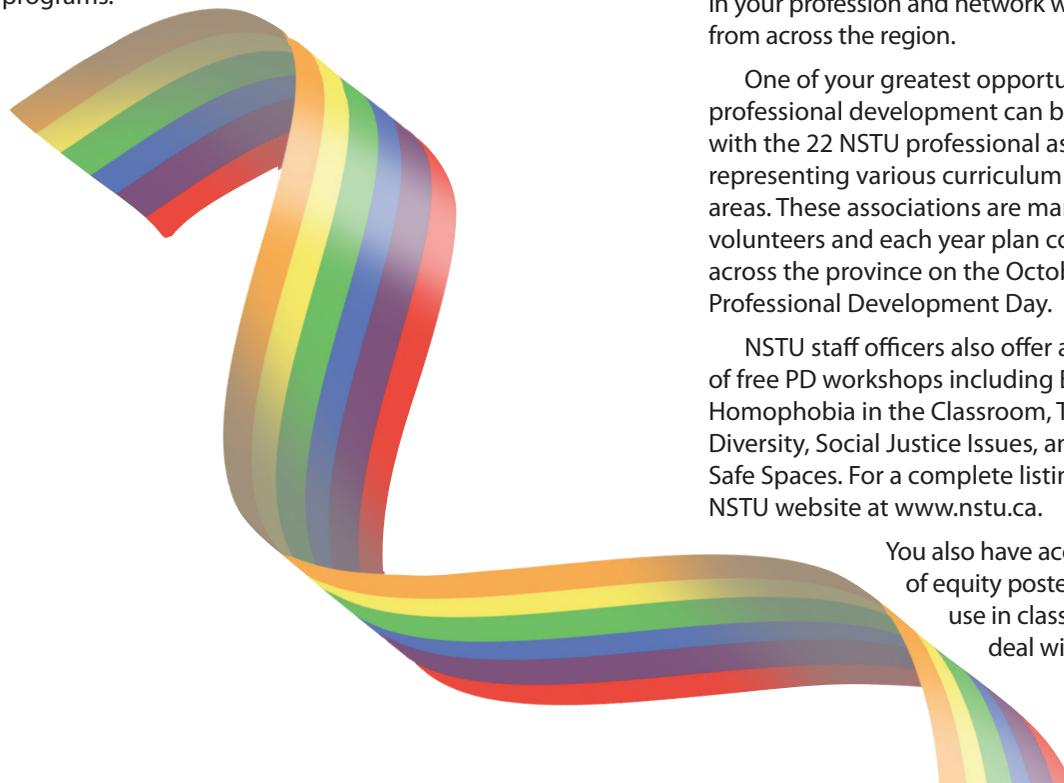


Meeting the Diverse Needs of Members

The Nova Scotia Teachers Union advocates for an educational system that is safe, welcoming, inclusive and affirming for people of all sexual orientations and gender identities.

By policy, the NSTU has declared itself to be an anti-homophobia and anti-heterosexism organization that promotes equity and inclusiveness for all individuals in the workplace. Your union recognizes student and teacher diversity and the goals of anti-homophobia and anti-heterosexism in the selection of its priorities and programs and actively promotes anti-homophobia and anti-heterosexism education.

As a member of the NSTU, you have access to a wide range of professional development opportunities, labour and legal representation, pension and family benefits such as group insurance and wellness programs.



Professional Development Opportunities

The Nova Scotia Teachers Union plays a significant role in the professional development of its members. Under the current Teachers' Provincial Agreement, the Program Development Assistance Fund, an annual fund of \$200,000, is available to support innovative curriculum projects up to a sum of \$5,000 a piece. The NSTU also recognizes the educational research efforts of its members through its Education Research Awards, Full-time Study Grants, Out-of-Province Conference Grants and Travel Fellowships. Under Article 60 of the Teachers' Provincial Agreement, school boards and the NSTU jointly administer professional development funds including funding for credit courses. As an NSTU member you can apply to be part of the Canadian Teachers' Federation program Project Overseas, and each summer the Atlantic Provinces teacher organizations jointly sponsor CONTACT, an opportunity for members to remain current in your profession and network with colleagues from across the region.

One of your greatest opportunities for professional development can be found with the 22 NSTU professional associations, representing various curriculum and related areas. These associations are managed by volunteers and each year plan conferences across the province on the October Provincial Professional Development Day.

NSTU staff officers also offer a wide range of free PD workshops including Battling Homophobia in the Classroom, Teaching to Diversity, Social Justice Issues, and Creating Safe Spaces. For a complete listing, visit the NSTU website at www.nstu.ca.

You also have access to a series of equity posters created for use in classrooms. These deal with issues such

as same-sex parents, homophobic language, sexual orientation as part of diversity, and the dangers of suicide attempt.

Member Services

The Nova Scotia Teachers Union bargains a comprehensive package of benefits and protection for its members. Our members submit suggestions for contract provisions and benefits at the beginning of each round of negotiations and vote on acceptance of any tentative agreement once it is reached.

A provincial salary grid sets out salaries based on both your qualifications and experience. Tenure provisions ensure that members who have completed probationary service are granted permanent contracts.

Your contract also defines the length of the academic year and contains provisions covering the school day. It also contains leave provisions, including sick leave, leave for serious family illness and death, and a long-term disability plan.

A comprehensive insurance benefits package provides a provincial master life plan, Total Care Medical and Dental plans, optional life and partner/spousal life insurance plans, voluntary accidental death and dismemberment and travel plan benefits.*

The NSTU provides legal representation to members in matters of grievances under provincial, community college, APSEA and regional agreements; in cases of suspensions, terminations and discharges; and in cases of criminal charges arising from the member's employment. Decisions to provide legal representation are made on a case-by-case basis based on established equitable criteria. For more information on legal representation, consult the NSTU Member Diary.

* For certain benefits, proof of cohabitation may be required.