

NBTA NEWS

NEW BRUNSWICK TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION



Professional Learning Chairs 2018

PL Grant Recipients

Combined Council Day 2019 Speakers



Your NBTA, Your Magazine

Have you ever thought about writing something for the *NBTA News*? If so, we would love to hear from you! We are always looking for interesting articles, stories or information about the amazing activities taking place in your schools. This magazine belongs to you, the members of the NBTA. Your submissions are essential in making this the best publication possible.

For more information about the *NBTA News* or to submit an article, contact Blake Robichaud, editor of the *NBTA News* by email at blake.robichaud@nbta.ca or nbtanews@nbta.ca.

We look forward to hearing from you!

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Twitter and YouTube!**



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Welcome to 2019.

As I enter my last six months as President, there is no question that my term has passed at warp speed. I am writing this today, the day after my three interviews with CBC on the topic of “hours of instruction.” To put it mildly, I have been absolutely overwhelmed with the positive feedback from the membership I have received during the last 24 hours. I want to thank you all for the support you’ve given me through e-mails,

texts, and phone calls. Jim Dysart, a former NBTA President and Deputy Executive Director, has been a wonderful support for me during my Presidency, offering me a great deal of advice. The most important was, “No matter what task you are doing as President, remember first and foremost you are always a teacher.” In all my interviews and interactions in this role, I have kept that in my mind. Knowing full well the everyday challenges and successes of our teachers and administrators, my primary goal is to represent and support you. Although my efforts may be more public, I honestly believe, and my own experiences reinforce this, that my job is clearly no more challenging than that of our members. So, thanks again for your support and an even bigger “thank you” for what you do every day for the children of New Brunswick.

One reoccurring theme present in the recent messages was the sense that our successes are never fully recognized, and that it was nice to have someone truly stand up and defend our teachers and our system, focusing on the real issues we face. I want all the membership to know that since assuming this role, I have made it very clear to everyone I speak with, that the conversation around education in New Brunswick must be changed. We, as educators, have always held the success of our students as a priority, and we are fully prepared to examine what is not working in hopes of moving the system forward. That being said, I am no longer willing to allow our members and this system to be unfairly and incorrectly chastised. I have taken this message to elected leaders and those who control media publications. I have passed this message on politely, yet forcefully.

In New Brunswick, we have a great deal of things to be proud of! Yes, there are challenges, but there are many, many successes. I am proud to be a New Brunswick teacher, and proud to be your President! Each of you should be proud of what you do, as our educators are second to none!

Respectfully,

Priorities update:

Policy 322/ Inclusive Education

Our Association continues to maintain this as a key priority. With the recent change in governments, it has been a focus to ensure they are briefed and encouraged to continue with the promised review of the policy.

ISD

While still in support, we have continued to express our members’ concerns around resourcing, staffing and functioning of the model. We are aware of several high level interdepartmental meetings, both prior to and post the New Brunswick election, focusing on improving the model. I would encourage the membership to continue to provide feedback to me.

Structure and Services Review

The NBTA Board of Directors will begin to deal with the recommendations of the final report during the February Board. The report has been available to members since October 2018 and it contains some very significant recommendations for the organization. I encourage members to continue to provide feedback to your Directors as they move forward with decisions or recommendations to the general membership.



New Year Brings Many Changes for the NBTA

By Blake Robichaud, Staff Officer & Editor NBTA News

Although changes occur every year, 2019 is expected to hold more than its share for the New Brunswick Teachers' Association. In some ways, it will be the end, or at least the beginning of the end, of an era.

The NBTA conducts reviews of its major structures and services every few years, but the latest process has been the most comprehensive one in decades. The study, facilitated by former NBTA Staff members Bob Fitzpatrick and Nancy Roach, spanned two years and resulted in fifty-three (53) recommendations from the teachers who comprised the committee. The suggested changes range from extending the term of the NBTA President from two years to three, realigning branches, moving the dates of NBTA elections, and tying the salaries of NBTA Presidents and Administrative Staff to their Teacher Certificate levels. The Board of Directors will begin consideration of these recommendations during the February 2019 Board meeting. Some of these recommendations may be referred to the Annual Meeting for a decision, while the Board may choose to accept, amend, or reject others. Of those that are endorsed, some may take months, or possibly years to implement. What is notable, however, is that at least a few major practices that have been in place since the NBTA, AEFNB, and NBTF evolved into their current structure in 1970 may change. To many rank and file teachers, this may not seem significant, but it is. The Association has a professional responsibility to develop, just as teachers do. We don't believe teachers should laminate their first year's lesson plans and do the exact same thing until retirement. The NBTA as an organization cannot remain in professional stasis either.

What is perhaps most striking is that the NBTA's "founders" got so much right. Growth is healthy and necessary, but what was included in our original Act of Incorporation, by-laws, policies and practices has served us well for almost five decades. In many cases, there is a reason why we did it the old way and this may still be best. Renewal means re-examining why "We've always done it this way" using the new measure of "How best should we do this?". I have had many opportunities to observe how other teacher organizations in Canada operate and, in my opinion, there are some operational traditions that we do better, or at least as well, as anyone else. At the top of this list is getting your small Administrative Staff of six face-to-face with as many teachers as possible.

We travel a lot to monthly branch meetings across the province, participate in numerous committees with teacher representation, and have countless individual meetings with teachers on issues ranging from pensions to professional responsibilities and legal rights. As I am writing this, a teacher has arrived unannounced at the office, and within five minutes has met with our Executive Director. This happens fairly frequently here, but would be unheard of in many other jurisdictions.

The NBTA is specifically structured to inform the Staff about what is happening in schools. We have a thirty-member Board of Directors made up of frontline teachers and administrators in schools. They elect a smaller Executive Committee that meets nearly monthly. The result is that we know the issues and this allows your Staff and the NBTA President to better do our jobs for you. The added benefit of so many presentations, workshops, and meetings with our members means that people are more likely to call us when they need advice or information. When so many teachers know at least one of our Staff, this overcomes a lot of reticence about contacting us.

As my own retirement approaches (there is nothing official yet), my thoughts are inevitably drawn to the term "corporate memory." My colleague, NBTA Deputy Executive Director Melinda Cook, will begin transitioning to retirement at the end of March 2019. Melinda and I began our provincial service with the NBTA in the late 1990's as members of the Board of Directors. NBTA Executive Director, Larry Jamieson, has experience that predates ours by almost a decade. Larry's retirement date has not been officially determined, but we are safe in saying it will not be many years down the road. When the three of us are gone, suddenly the "corporate memory" on the Association's Administrative Staff will be reduced by about twenty-five (25) years. As with any change, the challenges will be matched by the opportunities. There will be a new NBTA Executive Director, a new vision, and potentially, a new direction for the organization.

Personally, I believe the NBTA has held true to the notion that education issues are paramount. What happens in schools and classrooms with teachers is what matters most, and those teachers are the ones best situated to know what is really going on and how to move forward. We have never played party politics in provincial elections. Members are free to vote for whichever party or candidate they choose, and the NBTA is committed to work with all NB political parties and governments. Across the country, some teacher organizations do endorse and even contribute to certain parties. This has not always worked out well for them.

Finally, there is no teacher organization in Canada that depends as much upon the contributions of its volunteer members. We have four hundred volunteers, six Administrative Staff and one President. I hope a new generation of teachers steps forward to participate on behalf of their colleagues. I believe this even more strongly for those asking the tough questions and who see potential improvements for the Association. It is those volunteers and staff who will be responsible for determining where this organization goes, how it stays relevant, and how the Association continues to promote the needs of teachers.



So, You Have Decided to Retire?

Below is a checklist of things you should do when you have decided to stop teaching and receive your pension.

Retirement Process

- Verify that you are Eligible to retire by contacting NBTA or Vestcor Pension Services.
- Notify your Superintendent, in writing, of your intention to retire:
Specify the date of retirement (always at end of the month - e.g., June 30, 2019)
- Make arrangements with a financial institution to have your Retirement Allowance placed in a RRSP account or any other registered investment mechanism.
- If you are age 60 or over, do not forget to apply for the Canada Pension (CPP).

Note: In the case of a disability pension, these steps will only occur once the teacher has received approval for his/her disability pension from the Vestcor Pension Administration Services (Pensions Branch).

Pension cheques are received on the 24th of each month, except December. For any additional information on the above process, please contact:

Michael Ketchum
NBTA, P.O. Box 752,
Fredericton, NB E3B 5R6
Tel. 452-1722

District Office will contact you to complete various forms and will require the following documents:

- Birth Certificate for you and, if applicable, your spouse/partner
- Blank/void cheque for direct deposit
- Name of financial organization to send your Retirement Allowance
- Your latest Income Tax Assessment (to verify RRSP space)

Vestcor Pensions Preliminary Retirement Statement will be forwarded to your home address. Choose the surviving spouse/partner percentage option on this document (if applicable).

Note: It is important that the Vestcor Pension Administration Services (Pensions Branch) receive the necessary forms properly filled out (notice of termination and TD1) at least **90 days** prior to the month you expect to receive your pension. The School District will look after sending these forms where appropriate.

Attention 2019 Retirees!

Teachers retiring in 2019 will be able to choose the option of having a donation made in their honour to the Children's Wish Foundation, rather than receiving the framed, inscribed print, featuring the NBTA stained-glass window. Those retirees wishing to choose the option of a donation must contact Tammy Boon at the NBTA by April 22, 2019 (tammy.boon@nbta.ca).



*These donations are not individually tax-deductible as it is the organization making the payment.



2018-2019 NBTA Pension Seminars

Registration Form

Date and Location of Seminar:

Deadline for Registration:

February 23 - Sussex - Sussex Regional High School

February 14

Name of Teacher: _____ Birth Date _____

Email Address: _____ Dist. _____

Is partner attending? Yes No **(If partner is a teacher, please fill out a separate form)**

No. of pension years you have accumulated as of June 2018 _____ Certificate Level: _____

Do you receive a Responsibility Allowance (Principal/Vice-Principal/SPR)? Yes No

Are you paid by pay bands? Yes No

If "Yes" to either, please contact the HR Officer at your District to have your last 5 years' salary history emailed to tammy.boon@nbta.ca.

Form can be emailed or faxed to Tammy Boon

tammy.boon@nbta.ca

Phone: (506) 452-1722 Fax: (506) 453-9795

Seminar Guidelines

The following guidelines should be noted for participation in these seminars:

1. All participants must pre-register.
2. Travel and accommodation costs are the responsibility of the participant.
3. A nutrition break will be provided.
4. Questions relating to these seminars should be directed to:
Michael Ketchum
NBTA Staff Officer
New Brunswick Teachers' Association
P.O. Box 752
Fredericton, N.B. E3B 5R6 (Tel. 452-1722)
5. All teachers are welcome to attend.
6. All seminars begin with registration at 8:30 am and sessions at 9:00 am until 1:00 pm.

Program

Teachers' Pension Act

- contribution rates
- retirement options
- pension calculations
- survivor options
- purchase and transfer of Pension Service

Retirement Allowance

- pre-retirement vacation

Canada Pension

Old Age Security

Financial Planning for Retirement

- RRSPs
- RRIFs
- Annuities

PLEASE NOTE: YOU WILL RECEIVE CONFIRMATION ONE WEEK PRIOR TO SEMINAR.

Interest-Free Loans up to \$1500 for 2019-2020 School Year

Up to **\$1,500.00** in any one school year shall be made available to statutory NBTA members who are **on leave** and **improving their professional qualifications** through educational programs.

Application forms are available on the NBTA website (www.nbta.ca) under Resources > Forms.

Further information may be obtained by contacting Melinda Cook at: melinda.cook@nbta.ca or (506) 452-1839.

Deadline: March 29, 2019

YOGA
in schools

Mindfulness and Self-regulation
Weekend Training

February 23th-24th, 2019

with mindfulness experts
Jenny Kierstead and Blair Abbass.

Location: Delta Beausejour, Moncton
Fee: \$275.00 + hst

This Yoga in Schools all levels weekend training will provide you with leading-edge cross-curricular yoga and mindfulness tools that directly address students' mental and physical health.

This training is part of the NB optional 200hr YTT certification, which enables graduates to teach: Yoga Grade 11, Yoga for Special Needs, Yoga for Autism and Mindfulness. Graduates of the full 200hr training will receive Yoga in Schools manuals.

Visit www.yogainschools.ca
for details.

(902) 444-YOGA (9642)
info@BreathingSpaceYogaStudio.ca

Paid Advertisement

Another NBTA Christmas for Tracey

Tracey Campbell (shown below) has been visiting the NBTA on a weekly basis for over three decades. She helps prepare folders, pads and envelopes for the Association. For many years, the NBTA has held a small Christmas party with Santa for Tracey. Staff members from the NBTF building (NBTA, AEFNB, NBTF) help provide the gifts.



Teacher Designed Professional Learning Grant 2019 Grant Recipients

By Tina Estabrooks, NBTA Staff Officer

The New Brunswick Teachers' Association recognizes that teacher professional learning occurs within a broad spectrum of experiences and processes that lead to deepened understanding and improvement of practice. Effective professional learning strongly links teacher and student learning and is guided by evidence. Further, research highlights that effective professional learning must be personalized and responsive to the complex and unique needs and context of the learner.

Allowing teachers multiple chances over several weeks to experiment with the new strategies in a low-risk environment, such as their own regular teaching settings, is important.

(Nelsen & Cudeiro, 2009)

As adult learners, teacher motivation for professional learning is linked to relevance, meaning, and choice. Developing competence and a sense of self-efficacy by directing one's efforts to meet student needs is key to teachers undertaking professional learning. An integrated design that focuses on student and teacher learning activities within a job-embedded context and supported by both time and resources is the ideal professional learning context.

In support of teacher designed professional learning, the NBTA is pleased to sponsor five grants valued at \$1,500.00 each. The grants are intended to support teacher professional learning within the context of improving student learning, fostering teacher leadership, and facilitating the sharing of exemplary best practices. Each team has autonomy to spend the grant as they see fit. Provision for release time for team collaboration, purchase of equipment, or production of materials for sharing represent some of the most common uses of grant funding in previous years.

Grant applications were received from several teams representing all four districts and two levels (elementary and high). Grants for 2019 were awarded to five teams – four elementary and one high school. Successful team applications were designed within the context of best practices and required grant criteria. The successful applications were clearly linked to teacher professional learning and projects of importance to the local school circumstances. The teams also gave thoughtful consideration to how to make the work sustainable once the grant funding was depleted. Finally, the project proposals awarded grants clearly explained the potential impact on student development as well as describing a practical and realistic approach to measuring team goals.

Recognition must be given to all teams who submitted an application. It is hoped that all who submitted an application benefited from this collaborative experience of developing a professional learning project to improve both teaching and learning.

The grant recipients will receive their cheques, as well as the TDPL manual containing information to support record keeping requirements and current research pertaining to professional learning. Teams may extend their work until December 2019.

The grant criteria require that each project include a sharing component. We look forward to learning more about the successes and challenges teams experience as they go through a personalized learning process designed to deepen teacher understanding and, ultimately, enhance student learning.

GRANT RECIPIENTS 2019

Lou MacNarin School

Project: *Building Capacity in Kindergarten Teachers*

Team Leader: Kelly White

Saint Rose School

Project: *Turning Apathy into Motivation*

Team Leader: Michelle Horrobin

James M. Hill Memorial High School

Project: *Most Likely to Succeed*

Team Leader: Mark Noel

North & South Esk Elementary School

Project: *Upper Guided Reading Library*

Team Leader: Allison Sullivan

Summerhill Street Elementary School

Project: *Everyone at their best*

Team Leader: Rebecca Keirstead

Works Cited

Nelsen, J. & Cudeiro, A. (2009, December). Lasting Impression. *Journal of Staff Development*, 30(5), 32-35.



NBTA 4 WELLNESS CHALLENGE

Winter may be the season when teachers face the greatest challenges to their health and wellness. For many, winter wellness doesn't happen on its own. It may require effort, encouragement and sometimes, rewards. To encourage staff wellness over the upcoming months, we will be conducting "NBTA 4 Wellness 2018-19." Schools will be encouraged to organize events or programs that promote wellness.

CATEGORIES

Wellness has many facets, so in order to encourage the broadest application and appeal we will have four categories for our contest:

- Creative/Fun
- Most Participation
- Nutrition
- Physical Activity

PRIZES

The winning school in each category will receive a "**Wellness Break**" for staff, including healthy food, with our NBTA Teacher Counsellors. The **Grand Prize** will be **\$200** for staff wellness, and this will go to the school that has created the most inclusive, longterm overall program to promote wellness in their school.

TO ENTER IS EASY

WE KNOW YOU ARE BUSY SO... send a photo or two along with three or four lines describing your event or program to blake.robichaud@nbta.ca. We will share these on our Facebook page, hopefully giving other teachers some great ideas for wellness.

DURATION

December 21, 2018 - March 20, 2019.

ENJOY YOURSELF AND BE WELL.

4 Wellness Event



4Wellness 2018-19 event from Harvey High School:

We had a Gingerbread House Competition on December 21st, 2018. The rules were simple: create a completely edible gingerbread house that the students would vote on as the BEST house.

“

... these wellness activities - I've laughed more over cookies and gingerbread houses than I have in a long time. ”



Christmas Spirit at Grand Manan Community School

By Karey Ingalls

It is November here on Grand Manan, we are in the first few weeks of the annual lobster season and it's just a few short weeks until Christmas. What a better way to celebrate these two annual events than by building a trap Christmas tree.



“A total of seven and a half hours was spent building this tree, with over four hundred traps used.”

Carla Ward is a middle school teacher and Student Council Advisor to the Student Council, or SRT, at Grand Manan Community School.

Miss Ward said that this project was a decision and effort between herself and the hard-working student council, and is part of the annual “Deck the Halls” day. The idea was to create a fundraiser that helped to raise money for the many student events over the school year.

These students are amazing and dedicated, staying after school and returning the next day to build the trap tree resplendent with lights and boughs. A total of seven and a half hours was spent building this tree, with over four hundred traps used.

A local island business, M.G. Fisheries, agreed to supply the lobster traps, buoys, and other materials for the school to use to make the tree come together. The school community was then asked to design and create their own buoy. Some buoys are highly personal in nature, often being dedicated to the memory of a family member, a fishing boat, or to simply representing the different sports teams here on the island. Miss Ward also said that “this fundraiser has been very successful in so many ways”.

The trap Christmas tree represents enormous school spirit here at GMCS, encouraging all of us to create, share, and unite as a proud school community. The official tree lighting ceremony took place on Friday November 30, 2018, at 7:00 pm.



Congratulations, GMCS!

STEAM Club

By Graeme Sauerteig, Princess Elizabeth School

STEAM stands for Science Technology Engineering Arts and Mathematics. Students at Princess Elizabeth School learn these concepts once a week in class... but for some students, this isn't enough!

STEAM club provides an extra hour after school on Wednesdays for eager students to further their understanding of concepts covered in class... or try something new and different. Some of the concepts covered are: cooking, coding, circuit boards, photo editing, Robotics (Lego WeDo, Mindstorms and mBot), small engine repair, and most recently, coding and building with Minecraft.

The kids are encouraged to find something they love and to pursue it!



Schools Connecting with Communities

The Nackawic High School Leadership 120 class spent the morning shovelling driveways around the community for those who were still snowed in.



They wanted to say “Thank You” to the people who have showed so much support for their school and activities.

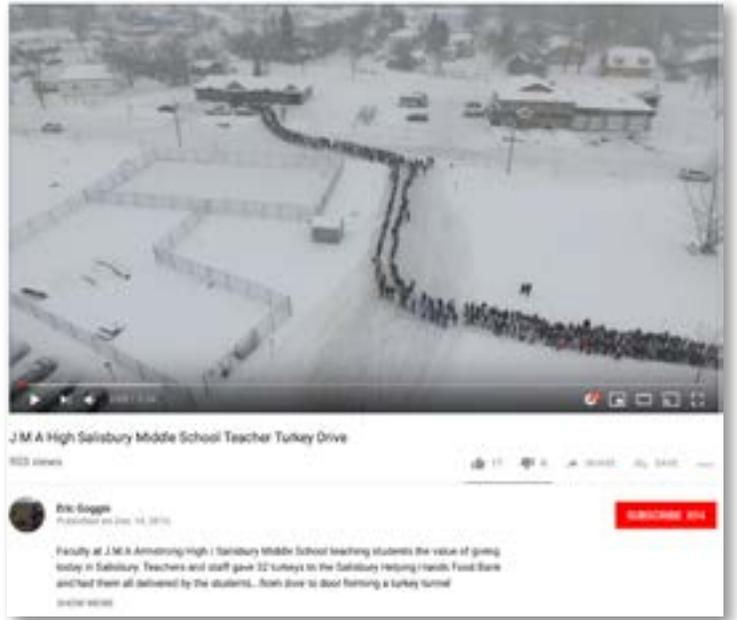
Turkey Tunnel

Salisbury Middle School/J.M.A. Armstrong Complex

For the third year in a row, Salisbury Middle School/J.M.A. Armstrong Complex in Salisbury has collected food goods for the local food bank, Helping Hands.

This year, a goal of 60 turkeys was made for the staff. We surpassed our goal, donating 67 items to Helping Hands. All items were hand-passed from the school to the food bank across Douglas Street by students and staff. See Eric Goggin's drone video of our first "Turkey Tunnel", set to music. It's beautiful.

Link: <https://youtu.be/UZE34SjG14E>



Thinking about Retiring?

By Margaret Urquhart, NBSRT Wellness Committee

Thinking about retirement? Is it time to discuss a “new normal”?

Thoughts from Members of the New Brunswick Society of Retired Teachers (NBSRT).

As retired teachers, we have already made the decision, not always an easy one, to retire. Each decision is as unique as the individual making it. Moving from work to retirement is a transition, a huge one, and like all transitions can come with a mix and range of emotions, from exhilaration and excitement to anxiety and sadness. As retirees we thought it might be helpful to share some of our considerations as we made our decisions.

Can I afford to retire?

What financial wellness decisions and changes might you consider in advance, like eliminating one of two cars, or dispensing with house cleaning services? How will I adjust to one paycheck a month? How can I make my money work for me in retirement, such as travel, or membership in clubs and groups?

Financial wellness is obviously important, and planning ahead can be helpful. Don't forget that many business offer senior discounts when you ask. While you may initially find you are spending more because you are out and about, you will adapt. Do remember that you may need to have a bit set aside for unexpected expenses. However, you should no longer need to “save for retirement”.

What will my days look like?

What will I do with the “gift” of 40 or more hours a week being retired gives me? What interests and hobbies do I have now? How much time do I spend on them? Will this be enough to keep me engaged? What are some of the things I have always thought about doing or being involved in, but never had the time?

Be cautious about letting others decide you have “nothing to do” and planning your time and activities for you. Our advice is to take time to realize you are retired, which might take weeks, before making long-term commitments. When you consider volunteer or work opportunities, think about the weekly or monthly time required and how that might impact other facets of your life and the things you want to do with your newfound time and freedom.

Teaching structures your days and most of your waking hours. “Taking it as it comes” may work for a little while, but your retirement may last for as many years as or

more than you taught. Consider creating and adjusting a routine that will provide purpose and some structure to your days; for example, monthly lunches with friends, regular exercise, or reading the paper. Include activities you enjoy, along with those things you have to do, like the laundry, or shopping for groceries, on a regular basis. Make sure to keep both mind and body healthy.

Who will I be?

When you retire, you leave behind what you know best: a career that has, in many ways, helped define who you are. Being a teacher will always be a part of your “identity”. However, retirement provides new opportunities for self-expression and development, for a “new me”. What opportunities are available in your community where you can explore and contribute your interests and talents? Perhaps there are interests you never had time to explore, or skills (perhaps as a writer) that you never had time to develop. Have you always thought about researching your family history, or spending more time with family that lives away? Consider setting some small goals, such as sorting through and organizing hundreds of digital photographs, or learning to play a musical instrument. They could be short term, such as the first five months, or longer. Having goals and working towards and achieving them can give you both a purpose and a sense of accomplishment.

How will retirement affect my family and friends?

Will there be expectations of role, relationship, and responsibility changes? Will my partner be retiring at the same time? And, if so, how might that affect our daily life and activities? What ideas do my partner, other family members, and friends have about how my life will “look” like and what I will be involved with, in retirement?

Family and friends may see your retirement as an opportunity for you to spend more time with them and/or do things for and with them. They may also have well-intentioned ideas about how you can spend your time and energies. While this may be an effort to support your adjustment to retirement, it can also become an inconvenience. Having this conversation before you retire can avoid disappointments and misunderstandings.

What social and support networks do I have, or will need to cultivate?

When people retire, many lose the built-in social and support network of colleagues. Without the social interactions work brings to your life, you can feel lonely and isolated if you do not have networks outside of work or depend on those of your partner. Social interactions can make a significant contribution to a happy and healthy retirement. These interactions can be with your children and grandchildren, neighbours, members of a social club or church, or even the “regular” at the coffee shop. Retire with the intention to maintain, and if need be, build your most important relationships... or, if necessary, work on developing new ones. Volunteering is one way to expand your network as you become involved in the community. Are there community boards or advisory committees on which you could serve? Working is another method to expand your network.

Will I work at another job?

An initial thought may be “no way”. However, as teachers, you have a lot to offer: management, planning, public relations, problem solving, and interpersonal skills, to name a few. An “encore” job, even if only a few hours a week or seasonally, broadens your social

network, provides new (and sometimes exciting) experiences, helps provide structure, gives a sense of purpose, and enables you to contribute in a new way. It also provides additional financial resources, perhaps for one month or more, to escape winter. Who might benefit from your skills? Retail employees, real estate agents, income tax preparers, driver, student intern supervisors, event planners, travel/tour guides, supply teachers, and receptionists are options for some. Or, could you turn an interest or skill into a second career and become an entrepreneur: caterer, picture framer, dog walker, tutor, or photographer? For some, part-time employment in the early years of retirement eases the adjustment and supports the transition to a full-time and fulfilling retirement.

So, if you’re close to retiring, take some time to consider how your days will look once your teaching life is behind you. While life in retirement will be very different, rest assured that the retirement journey offers a positive, rewarding, and joyful time to discover a “new you” in a “new normal”.

*Margaret Urquhart for
NBSRT Wellness Committee*

Share! Share! Share!

Great Stories from your School
November Winner: 85 shares
.....

Our newest Facebook share winner is Salem Elementary School for their therapy dog.

They will be receiving \$50 for staff wellness!

Keep those stories coming in!
Send them to blake.robichaud@nbta.ca.

“ Salem Elementary’s therapy dog, Tessa, works with students individually, small groups, and classwide. ”



Council News

***We're All Together
in Moncton on
May 3, 2019!***

***World Class Speakers,
Thousands of Colleagues, and
a Terrific Learning Opportunity***



**NBTA Combined
Council Day 2019**

Keynote Speakers for CCD 2019

Check out a couple of our Keynote Speakers for Combined Council Day 2019!



Michael Ungar (off-site)

Dr. Michael Ungar is among the best known writers and researchers on the topic of resilience in the world. His work has changed the way resilience is understood, shifting the focus from individual traits to the interactions between people and their families, schools, workplaces, and communities. As the Canada Research Chair in Child, Family and Community Resilience and Professor of Social Work at Dalhousie University, as well as a family therapist, he has helped to identify the most important factors that influence the resilience of children and adults during periods of transition and stress. He is the author of 14 books that have been translated into five languages, numerous manuals for parents, educators, and employers, as well as more than 135 scientific papers. Dr. Ungar's immense influence comes from his ability to adapt ideas from his research and clinical practice into best-selling works like **Too Safe For Their Own Good: How Risk and Responsibility Help Teens Thrive** and **I Still Love You: Nine Things Troubled Kids Need from Their Parents**. His blog, **Nurturing Resilience**, appears on **Psychology Today's** website.

Dr. Ungar is also the Founder and Director of the Resilience Research Centre, where he coordinates over five million dollars in research in more than a dozen countries. Dr. Ungar regularly provides consultation and training to organizations like the World Bank, UNESCO, and the Red Cross. He is the former Chair of the Nova Scotia Mental Health and Addictions Strategy, executive board member of the American Family Therapy Academy, and a family therapist who works with mental health services for individuals and families at risk. In 2012, Dr. Ungar was the recipient of the Canadian Association of Social Workers National Distinguished Service Award for his outstanding contribution to clinical work with families and communities.

Council News



Jane Bluestein

Jane Bluestein, Ph.D., is a keynote speaker and seminar leader who has worked with educators worldwide. An award-winning author, her books include **The Win-Win Classroom**, **Becoming a Win-Win Teacher**, **Creating Emotionally Safe Schools**, and **Mentors, Masters and Mrs. MacGregor: Stories of Teachers Making a Difference**. Dr. Bluestein's latest book is **The Perfection Deception: Why Trying to Be Perfect is Sabotaging Your Relationships, Making You Sick, and Holding Your Happiness Hostage**. Formerly a classroom teacher, crisis intervention counselor, and teacher training program coordinator, she is committed to changing schools one heart at a time. Bluestein currently heads **Instructional Support Services, Inc.**, a consulting and resource firm in Albuquerque, New Mexico.



Eddy Robinson

Born and raised in Toronto, the largest city in Canada, Eddy Robinson Anishinaabe/Muskegowuk Cree did not enjoy a childhood of privilege. This narrative is not unique and is shared in similar ways by many other Indigenous people throughout North America. It was not until his adult years that he really began to understand the legacy of his father's experience at the Chapleau Indian Residential School and Shingwauk Indian Residential School.

Mr. Robinson has worked and advocated for many Indigenous communities locally, provincially and nationally for the past 25 years. The Dewegun (Dee-Way-Gun which means Drum) first set Robinson on a good path in life leading to many other important sources that contributed to the rediscovery of his identity; Anishinaabe ceremonies, Indigenous literature and film, leaders, Traditional Teachers, and Elders.

Since then, Robinson has traveled throughout North America as a noted Anishinaabe artist, teacher, musician, educator, facilitator, trainer, writer, and now speaker. He has presented to numerous First Nations, Indigenous communities, local district school boards, colleges, universities, corporate institutions, as well as several Indigenous and non-Indigenous not-for-profit organizations.

With the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada putting forth the 94 Calls to Action, Mr. Robinson engages Truth and Reconciliation through a personal narrative of his journey not only growing up as an urban Indigenous person, but also reflecting on his professional experience and the learning he has received from several Indigenous organizations over the years. He discusses the utter importance of engaging Indigenous people in a respectful and reciprocal way. Mr. Robinson will also address the much needed alliance of Indigenous and non-Indigenous people throughout North America in order to begin the process of creating social change before even stepping on the path of Reconciliation.

Reconciliation is not only a personal journey of forgiveness of self and others in support of past generations but is very much about being mentally, physically, emotionally, and spiritually part of a legacy of resurgence.

Council News

Geocaching Fun!

By Shaun Murphy, Bessborough School

Bessborough School was fortunate enough to have a unique learning opportunity, pairing Ms. Comeau's Grade 3 class with Mr. Murphy's Grade 7 class for Geocaching!

Technology Mentor, Melissa LeBlanc, came to Bessborough on a chilly morning in November. However, the weather couldn't stop the students' excitement to get outdoors and learn something new. After the Grade 7s were taught how to properly use the GPS devices, they were then empowered to work with the Grade 3s and show them how to properly use the device.

Students were then instructed to find ten hidden caches in their teams of three (two grade 7s, one grade 3). Each cache had a treat for the students, and a letter, which they needed to collect. Once students found all ten caches, they returned to Mr. Murphy's classroom to put the letters together and spell a mystery word: Geocaching!

They all had a blast running around the school grounds and cheering each other on! This activity supported Social Studies curricular outcomes for both the Grade 3s and 7s.

Geocaching is a real-world, outdoor treasure hunting game using GPS-enabled devices. Participants navigate to a specific set of GPS coordinates and then attempt to find the geocache (container) hidden at that location.

(source: geocaching.com)



Council News

Motivating Writing through Play

By Nikita Poirier

Any teacher who teaches literacy has probably heard a student complain, “I have nothing to write about!”, or, “what do I write about?”.

I want to share a simple example of how I addressed this problem in my class with a play-based approach.

I am currently teaching Grade 1 English for the first time. I believe in differentiating my lessons, meeting students where they are, and helping them progress at their own pace. At the beginning of the year, I had created my long term goals, and made detailed plans to meet curricular outcomes. I felt ready and prepared.

Until I met my students.

They came to me with a variety of academic, behavioural, and emotional challenges. I quickly realized that the majority of my students were performing below grade level, and many had not met the kindergarten standards. Because of the wide range of individual needs, my long-range plans needed to be adjusted dramatically. It took months to establish routines, and it was difficult to do any direct literacy instruction as a whole class. I knew I had to change my method. The traditional style of teaching was not going to work with this class. They need to move around, touch things, and explore. They needed to play more.

I knew in my heart that this Grade 1 class needed something different. They needed motivation to learn. Most of all, they needed motivation to write. None of

my students wanted to write. For some, their fine motor skills were so underdeveloped that writing was hard. For others, writing was not fun, and they would say “I have nothing to write about”. They were easily frustrated and gave up easily.

I decided I needed to switch my teaching style to incorporate a play-based model. I know how important play is for young children, and I wondered why I wasn't allowing them to play more. I introduced a classroom “Mail” station in a creative way, during our Friday “Play Workshop”. I made each student a mail box, provided different writing materials, envelopes, postcards, paper, and different stationary. My students were thrilled to have our new station, and within minutes their attitude towards writing changed... but they didn't know it! They were writing, but they thought they were just playing.



Simply providing them with special paper, colorful envelopes, sticky notes, and different writing materials was enough to captivate and motivate them. They finally had a purpose for writing and they wanted to learn

how to write better. The mail centre provided a fun and exciting way to extend and deepen their understanding through a hands-on experience. Having open ended materials, students began to not only write letters, they began to ask questions, express themselves, and extend their vocabulary.

Since adding this station, I have seen my students improving in many ways. They are self-regulating better, cooperating, building friendships, and most importantly, they are developing a love of writing and literacy. They want to work in small groups with me to improve their writing. They even ASK to take home envelopes and paper so they can write at home. The only problems I face now, are that my students want to write ALL the time and I am running out of envelopes!

“ Simply providing them with special paper, colorful envelopes, sticky notes, and different writing materials was enough to captivate and motivate them.”



Innovation and Engagement in ASD-S

By Michelle Lang Standing

ASD-S has put an emphasis on student engagement through the embedding of global competencies and the creation of a new position: Lead in Innovation and Engagement for K-12. This new position centers around working with teachers and PLC's to collaborate and share innovative and engaging pedagogy across the district.

Besides having the ability to reach teachers regardless of discipline or grade level, the lead is also responsible for administering Innovation and Engagement grants to support teachers looking to start a new learning experience with their students. These initiatives could be problem-based, project-based, entrepreneurial, experiential, or personalized. For example, 2018-2019 grants have supported classes wishing to incorporate more Acadian culture exploration through music, the creation of STEAM/STEM spaces, maker carts, and even an ongoing study on Truth and Reconciliation through fiction and non-fiction texts. It is exciting to see teachers' passions and the ideas they have to reach their students.

In addition to the grants, the Innovation and Engagement Lead coordinates presenters for a middle and high school showcase, "Day of Innovation." This will take place in the spring of 2019, and host representatives from each middle and high school throughout the district. During the showcase, attendees will be able to network, share, and be energized by their peers. To continue this momentum, the Innovation and Engagement Lead hopes to deliver a summer learning series surrounding innovation and engagement in the classroom.

To leave you with a final thought, John Hattie notes that the most effective agent for student engagement is the person in front of the room. This includes teacher credibility (0.90 effect size), teacher-student relationships (0.72 effect size), teacher clarity (0.75 effect size) and teacher expectations (0.42 effect size). It has been a joy to support the teachers of ASD-S in sharing their passions, helping them collaborate with each other, and be inspired by their colleagues. If there is an engaged teacher in front of the room, there will be engaged students in the room.



Students played biology themed boardgames to fossilize their learning.



Teachers from across the province were invited to a First Lego League robotics Professional Development hosted and led by Rothesay Netherwood School, in collaboration with Brilliant Labs and the ASD-S lead.

Professional Learning Chairpersons' Workshop December 2018



The Life-changing Magic of Tidying Up: Time for a 'Purge' of Practice?

by Ardith Shirley,
NBTA Staff Officer



Like many New Brunswickers (according to CBC), I recently ended up with one of the worst colds I can recall. Completely zapped of energy, I spent an entire weekend in my pyjamas feeling sorry for myself and mentally listing all of the things I should be doing while at the same time unable to find the oomph to begin even the smallest of tasks.

In my fevered, lethargic and Sussex Ginger-ale fueled state, I searched for comfort. I eventually found it in my fuzzy blanket, cozy couch and Netflix. The "Trending Now" options on my screen highlighted that Marie Kondo, bestselling author of "The Life-changing Magic of Tidying Up", had a new series. I mindlessly clicked. Three episodes later, I found myself standing in my closet as I surveyed and scrutinized my belongings. The temptation to start purging captivated me.

I would love to tell you that I was so inspired that I immediately dove in and began applying the 'KonMari' method of organization throughout my entire home and that it is now a complete Zen-like retreat. Alas, the cold was real and we are not even close to that fairy tale ending...yet! That said, I have found the petite Marie and her 'joyful' approach to our belongings occupying premium real estate in my mind - "What might it look like to apply a 'KonMari' approach to our professional practice?"

For those of you who have yet to be exposed, here is a quick summary of this tiny Japanese organizing expert's philosophy. Firstly, Kondo suggests that you collect everything you own in a specific category and you heap it into an enormous pile on the floor. As you stare at the mountain of stuff accumulated, you become acutely aware of the sheer volume you have gathered. In doing so, it is hoped that it becomes obvious how unnecessary much of it is due to duplication, poor fit or perhaps even being a bit worn out. As you sort through your pile one item at a time, Kondo suggests picking up each thing and you asking yourself, "Does this spark joy in my life?" If so, keep. If not, thank it for being part of your journey and set it (and yourself) free.

Perhaps it is our perennial environment of under-resourced schools and classrooms, or our daily interactions with children and families living in poverty, but I think most teachers are in a constant battle not to be hoarders. Many a teacher has filled their trunks to with "treasures" that someone might need. Odd mittens or socks? Someone may need an extra next time we are on playground duty. About to throw out an old Pringles can, paper towel roll or bread tag? Those will make great math manipulatives in next week's lesson!

The same goes for teaching and learning practices if we aren't careful. There is literally no end to the wonderful ideas and strategies that are available to us. The next BIG idea is always just around the corner. Unfortunately, trying to introduce all of them into our environments will result in cluttered confusion for ourselves and our students unless we intentionally consider and curate each of them first. John Hattie's meta-analysis and research in Visible Learning reinforces this point. After studying over 800+ meta studies he concludes that there are well over 200 strategies and approaches that show promise that when it comes to teaching almost everything works. The question becomes, what works best, given these students, at this time in my classroom? "Know thy impact!", is Hattie's refrain.

I think that for teachers, in order to find Marie's 'life-changing magic', John Hattie would suggest a shift in mindset. This would include acknowledging that less is actually more and giving ourselves permission to realize that every bright shiny new thing is not always for us. Honouring the fact that the 'tidying' (teaching) process is an individual journey - no one else can do it for you. Likewise, you can't do it for anyone else. What works in one closet (classroom) will not necessarily in another's. Teaching ourselves to become more intentional about what 'things' we bring into your space in the first place is magical... and after careful consideration, being able to toss away without guilt is where the real joy is found.

"We need to show consideration for others by helping them avoid the burden of owning more than they need or can enjoy."

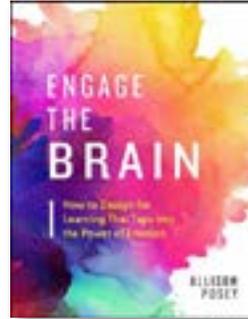
- Marie Kondo



Book Give-Away!

This month's draw is book draw is for **"Engage the Brain: How to Design for Learning that Taps into the Power of Emotion"** by Allison Posey (2019).

Sound interesting? Send me an email (ardith.shirley@nbta.ca) with the subject line **'Book Draw'** before March 10th!



“Education is the kindling of a flame, not the filling of a vessel.”
-Socrates



Outstanding Summer Professional Learning Opportunities

DSS 2019
Developing Successful Schools
Conference

July 2-5, 2019
Mount Allison University,
Sackville, NB

“This was an extremely practical session that will support our work with teachers and leads. Networking opportunities were very productive and I learned a lot from around Atlantic Canada.”

— DSS 2016 Attendee

Celebrating over 40 years of Atlantic Teacher Organizations

**CONTACT
2019**

Conference on New Techniques
and Classroom Teaching

August 6-9, 2019
Saint John, NB

This 3 ½ day conference explores educational trends as well as 'simply great teaching techniques' that stand the test of time. It includes sessions facilitated by classroom teachers from all four Atlantic Provinces.

Save the Date!

Fierce Generations®

NBTA is pleased to offer a new professional learning opportunity for New Brunswick educators – **Fierce Generations®**.

What: Are differences a source of strength within your team or a point of contention and division? For the first time in history, organizations are comprised of four unmistakably different generations, each with their own approach to, view of, and desired outcomes for work. Fierce Generations® is multigenerational training that provides a framework for uniting people and realizing the rewards of an inclusive culture.

Target Audience: This session will be open to any New Brunswick educator who has received the certificate for completion of training for Fierce Conversations®.

Date: February 8, 2019 (evening session)
(NBTF Building Fredericton)

Watch for complete registration details at
www.nbta.ca

Fierce Accountability®

NBTA is pleased to once again offer **Fierce Accountability®** as a professional learning opportunity for New Brunswick educators.

What: Fierce Accountability® is an instructor-led workshop that explores the cost of blaming, protecting, defending and playing it safe. Develop a new context about accountability – one in which you and your organization welcome responsibility and deliver agreed-upon results, despite obstacles.

Target Audience: This session will be open to any New Brunswick educator who has received the certificate for completion of training for Fierce Conversations®.

Date: February 9, 2019 (morning session)
(NBTF Building, Fredericton)

Watch for complete registration details at
www.nbta.ca

NBTA welcomes contacts from groups of teachers who may be interested in any of the Fierce Conversations® workshops. We would be happy to discuss different delivery models in order to partner with New Brunswick educators who have a strong interest in this training. Contact ardith.shirley@nbta.ca

ATTENTION TEACHERS! Are YOU eligible for a PAY RAISE?

Are you an **EARLY CAREER TEACHER** with previous work experience that is related to teaching?

Apply to have previous work experience count!

If you are a new teacher who has previous work experience that is related to teaching, you may apply to the Office of Teacher Certification to have it considered for an increase on your salary grid. The form you need is available from the NBTA website www.nbta.ca. Click the Certification button and download the form called **Application for Work-Related Experience for Salary Purposes**. You should also contact your district office to ensure that all supply teaching experience has been credited.

The deadline is March 31st to have the increase back-dated to January 1st, 2019!

Are you a teacher who has **COMPLETED COURSE WORK** towards a certification upgrade?

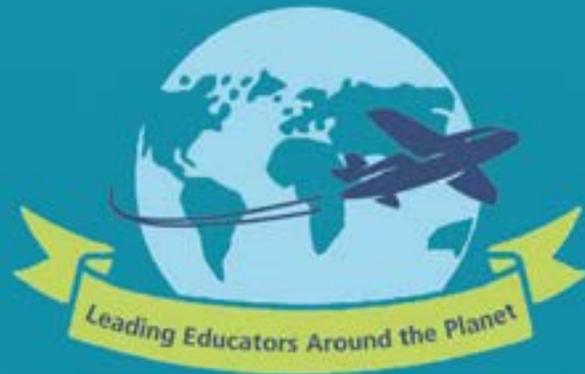
Don't forget to apply for your certification increase!

The form you need is available from the NBTA website www.nbta.ca. Click the Certification button and look for the Application for Upgrading Teacher Certification Level at the bottom of the page with other forms.

The deadline is March 31st to have the increase back-dated to January 1st, 2019!

Don't forget to include the evaluation fee of \$70.00.

LEAP: An Invitation to Share School Leadership Internationally



An Enriching Program for Principals/Vice-Principals/Supervisory Officials

LEAP (Leading Educators Around the Planet) is a program designed by educators from New Brunswick and Australia to provide an opportunity for administrators to engage in strong professional dialogue about common and diverse issues facing school leaders around the world. The program is offered through NBTA and UNB.

Visit www.nbta.ca for further details.



NBTA Sponsored Professional Course

NBTA Sponsored Professional Courses may be used towards Teacher Certification.
Contact teachercertification@gnb.ca to confirm if this is a fit for your certification path.

Enrichment Triad Training Course

Target Audience: Teachers (K-12)

Cost: Tuition **\$500 + \$25** material fee

Location:

**NBTF Building, 650 Montgomery Street
Fredericton, NB**

Registration Deadline: See below

(Please make cheques payable to NBTA)

Find registration form at www.nbta.ca and clicking on the Enrichment Triad Training Course.

**Instructor: Barb Buckley
(former District Supervisor/Coordinator
of K-12 Programming & Enrichment)**

Register Early - Limited Enrolment!



Spring:

Dates: Apr. 6, 13, 27, May 4,
11 (9 am to 3:30pm)
+7 hours outside of class

Reg. Deadline: March 1st

Summer:

Dates: July 8-12
(9 am to 3:30pm)
+7 hours outside of class

Reg. Deadline: June 21st

The Enrichment Triad Model is a literacy-rich, inclusive, cross-curricular, student-driven model. Its primary goal is to improve schools from within the classroom by differentiating and enriching the curriculum for ALL students in the regular classroom through interdisciplinary studies. It encourages the use of a wide variety of instructional strategies and styles while allowing students to experience self-directed, innovative learning based on their individual interests, strengths and learning styles. If thoroughly implemented, this model will offer the students three levels of enrichment.

Participants will be introduced to the work and philosophy of Joseph Renzulli and Margaret Beecher. This will be followed by an intensive, in-depth training of what the enrichment triad model is and how to implement it in the classroom. The training will include multiple handouts, activities, video clips of the model, discussion articles and actual practice. There will be lesson demonstrations of key skills to be taught and practice of each phase of the triad.

Participant Comments (2018)

"I learned how the Enrichment Triad Model has such an amazing impact on student's learning and their lives."

"I had such fun! I was not expecting to have laughed and cried, be so moved and motivated. I feel invigorated and excited about implementing this model."

PERSONALIZE LEARNINGoverset • INCREASE SELF-ESTEEM • CELEBRATE STUDENT SUCCESS

Professional Course

Name: _____

School: _____

Email: _____ Member Number: _____ Cell: _____

Spring (Apr. 6, 13, 27, May 4, 11) Summer (July 8-12)

You will be emailed with a confirmation of your seat.

Please print and mail registration form with payment (cheques payable to NBTA) to:
Judy Deveau, Executive Assistant, Professional Learning
NBTA, PO Box 752, Fredericton, NB E3B 5R6

You are encouraged to apply well in advance because of limited enrollment.

NBTA Sponsored Professional Course

Kagan

Attention Teachers!

NBTA Sponsored Course
Kagan Cooperative Learning Credit Course

NBTA Sponsored Professional Courses may be used towards Teacher Certification.
Contact teachercertification@gnb.ca to confirm if this is a fit for your certification path.

When: Monday to Friday, 8:30 am - 4:00 pm
July 8 - 12, 2019

Cost: Tuition \$500.00 + \$119.00 materials fee
(Please make cheques payable to NBTA)

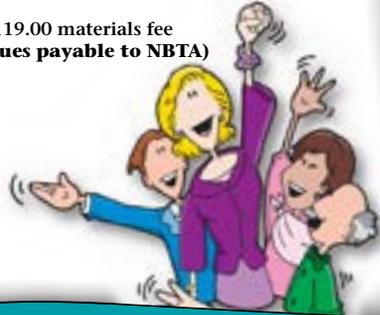
Where: NBTF Building, Fredericton, NB

**Registration
Deadline:** June 21, 2019

Instructor: Michael Smith
Certified Kagan Instructor

Register by June 21st by going to www.nbta.ca and clicking on the Kagan Button

Please make cheques payable to NBTA



It's All About Engagement

Workshop Highlights

Structures for Success™

- Put the best research into practice in your classroom
- Use cutting-edge structures that promote success
- Boost your students' achievement through practical, classroom-proven structures
- Make your lessons come alive
- Use strategies to reach all your students
- Make learning more fun for everyone

Improve Your Class Climate

- Create a caring, cooperative classroom through energizing classbuilding activities
- Foster belonging for students of all ability levels
- Have fun with your students with indoor and outdoor cooperative sports and games
- Promote full-class cooperation with scoring and recognition systems
- Establish a classroom environment where everyone wants to be - including you

Build your Students' Social Skills

- Teach your students the skills they really need to succeed in school and throughout their lives
- Promote caring, kindness, empathy, respect, and responsibility without separate lessons
- Develop your students' character in the context of learning together
- Improve student relations in your class and beyond

Form Successful Learning Teams

- Create and manage teams in your class where **Together Everyone Achieves More**
- Learn a better approach than simple group work
- Transform your lessons into engaging, interactive learning events that guarantee success
- Release the power of true cooperative learning

Participants Rave!

"I would HIGHLY recommend Kagan training to anyone and everyone who has any interest in helping kids succeed! One of the very BEST trainings I've ever been to!!"

- Katie Canar 4th Grade Teacher

"This method, in my opinion, can change the face of education! Amazing stuff!!"

- Josh Scott, 9-12th Grade Math Teacher

"This is life changing! I don't understand why every teacher isn't doing this!! A+!"

- Beth Box, 7-8th Grade Teacher

"Kagan training is the BEST professional development I have attended. I look forward to attending many, many more workshops"

- Shannon White, 4th Grade Teacher

Professional Course Summer 2019

Name: _____

School: _____

Email: _____ Cell: _____ Member Number: _____

I would like to attend: Kagan Cooperative Learning Credit Course (\$619)

You will be emailed with a confirmation of your seat.

Please print and mail registration form with payment (cheques payable to NBTA) to:

Judy Deveau, Executive Assistant
NBTA, PO Box 752, Fredericton, NB E3B 5R6

NBTA Sponsored Professional Courses may be used towards Teacher Certification.
Contact teachercertification@gnb.ca to confirm if this is a fit for your certification path.

“Great News” Stories Submitted to our Facebook Page



*“Our school has been focusing on students from various levels engaging in “buddy” activities. Students from middle/high school are buddies to various elementary students for reading, phys ed, cooking, and whole school assemblies.”
(Stanley Consolidated)*



*“On November 30th, our grade 5 classes had a fantastic day touring NBCC St. Andrews. It was educational, fun and very interactive! Here is a picture of Claire Whittier, making a wooden Christmas ornament in the carpentry class.”
(St. Stephen Elementary School)*



*“On November 14th, we had a fantastic career day for our students with 19 community members as presenters.”
(Marshview Middle School, Sackville)*

Teacher's Pet!



William Leonard McMonagle wearing the blue onesie

The NBTA is selling bodysuits for babies!

They are available in three colours: blue, pink and green, and in two sizes: 6 months and 12 months.

These are available on a trial basis as we assess the level of popularity.

To keep shipping and administrative costs down, for now these will be available only at the NBTA Office in Fredericton. If you are interested in purchasing one, simply e-mail blake.robichaud@nbta.ca or carlene.parker@nbta.ca.



CTRI | CRISIS & TRAUMA
RESOURCE INSTITUTE

PUBLIC WORKSHOPS COMING TO NEW BRUNSWICK WINTER-SUMMER 2019

NAVIGATING DIFFICULT CLIENT RELATIONSHIPS

Fredericton: February 14; Moncton: June 11

ANXIETY-Practical Intervention Strategies

Moncton: February 26

DEPRESSION-Practical Intervention Strategies

Moncton: February 27

TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE-Building a Culture of Strength

Fredericton: March 21

MOTIVATING CHANGE-Strategies for Approaching Resistance

Moncton: March 25-26

VICARIOUS TRAUMA-Strategies for Resilience

Fredericton: April 11

COGNITIVE BEHAVIOURAL THERAPY

-Tools for Thinking Differently

Moncton: April 24

MENTAL HEALTH CONCERNS IN CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Fredericton: May 7

TRAUMA-Strategies for Resolving the Impact of Post-Traumatic Stress

Moncton: May 28-29



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MICRO SELF-CARE

Simple and Effective Practices

by Lisa Calhoun,
Teacher Counsellor

*Professional Counselling
Service for Teachers*

Working in the field of education, it is not uncommon for people to feel overworked and under-nourished.

One of the questions that I ask teachers when they come to see me is “How do you take care of yourself?” Or “How do you practice self-care?” Often the answers include “Not much”, “I don’t know”, “I don’t remember how”, “I don’t”, or some variation along that theme. As educators, it is vital that you practice self-care and self-compassion on a regular basis as you are constantly caring for and giving to others. We need to nourish and support ourselves in order to maintain our strength and ability to do so for others in our lives- both at work and at home.

Sometimes when people think about self-care, they think of things that require a lot of time, effort and money and therefore may get overwhelmed and give up before they even get started. Things like go to the gym, do yoga, take a cooking class or a painting class, learn to play an instrument, take mini-vacations, change your diet, get more sleep, and so on, are often suggested for self-care. While all of these are great ideas, tackling any or all of them can be daunting, especially when you haven’t been practicing any self-care strategies.

So how can you build smaller, or micro self-care practices into your day? The idea is to reap the benefits of making small, sustainable changes on a regular basis. As we have learned from the research on neuroplasticity, the brain’s ability to reorganize itself with new neural networks happens with the targeted use of brief, repetitive experiences. Small and frequent works better than big and seldom to create desirable neural pathways.

Building new habits and making them a part of your routine is not always easy, but with practice you will start to see a difference. One of the things that can help form a habit is to include a trigger, or a prompt. It might be taking a deep breath or two whenever you stop at a traffic light or stop sign on your way to and from work. Gently bring the focus out of your head and into your body, while breathing in and out. Another idea may be to do a grounding technique at the beginning of your workday (maybe in the car while in the parking lot, or once you get inside your classroom/office). Try setting the timer on your phone for one minute and just focus on your breath. Breathing in, say to yourself “I am calm”, and on the out-breath, say “I am grounded”. Nature sounds can also be helpful for grounding, so you might try having that in the background. As you sit in your chair, close your eyes, feel your feet on the ground, and gently tune in to your breath for one minute. This short practice will allow you to start your day feeling more centered and calm, instead of anxious and rushed.

Visuals are a great way to remind us of the habits we are trying to build or strengthen. Try placing a little coloured dot (Dollarstore) on your watch, on the corner of your computer, your phone, your planner, your dash, your lunch container-anywhere to remind you to take a breath or two and get out of your head and into your body. Maybe you need a bigger visual reminder- coloured sticky notes with a word like breathe, calm, peace, grounded, or whatever words speak to you. Place these notes wherever you will see them regularly to help strengthen this mindfulness habit.

*Well-Being:
It's within your reach...*



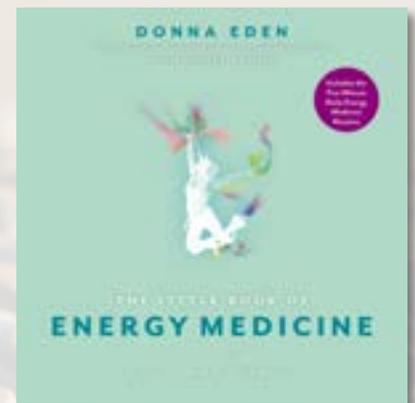
A practice to try post-lunch to increase your energy for the afternoon is called “Cross Crawl”. Marching in place, knees high, cross your right hand/elbow to your left knee and your left hand/elbow to your right knee (for 30 seconds to 1 minute). This is one of the exercises from Donna Eden’s “Daily Energy Routine” found in her book *The Little Book of Energy Medicine*. This is an easy and quick way to balance and energize the nervous system and get you ready for your afternoon.

As an end of work day practice, you might try another breathing technique such as breathing in for 4 and out for 4 for a count of 4. I like to encourage people to try building 4 by 4 breathing into their day at least 4 times. You might start your first round before getting out of bed, maybe another round before/after a challenging class or meeting, before walking into your house or picking up your children, and lastly when you go to bed. Placing one hand over your heart and one on your belly has the added effect of a mini self-compassion practice.

I invite you to try these micro self-care practices while saying to yourself “This is how I’m going to take care of myself today. I need to replenish, nourish and re-energize, and I deserve self-care.” This will help you to set the intention to continue the practice and strengthen the habit of caring for yourself while caring for others. Remember, small and frequent practices can create new and desirable neural pathways and help you to be your best self!

- Prompts and visuals to remind you to take a few conscious breaths.
- Grounding techniques
- Cross Crawl
- 4x4 Breathing Technique
- Affirmations

For more ideas check out www.ashleydavisbush.com, “Shortcuts to Inner Peace”, as well as “The Little Book of Energy Medicine”



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By Dawna Scott, NBTA Credit Union

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