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# NBTA NEWS

NEW BRUNSWICK TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION



#Dedicated NB  
TEACHER



## 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 Chantal Lafargue, editor of the *NBTA News* by email at [chantal.lafargue@nbta.ca](mailto:chantal.lafargue@nbta.ca) or [nbtanews@nbta.ca](mailto:nbtanews@nbta.ca).

We look forward to hearing from you!

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**Cover photo:** Early career teachers participated in a Classroom Management 101 workshop in March.

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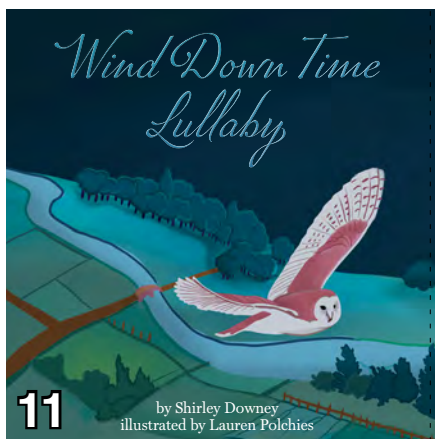
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# Message from the President

by Connie Keating,  
NBTA President



"April showers bring May flowers" is a phrase intended to bring a sense of hope and renewal after enduring the dark days of winter. From the lens of a teacher, the proverbial 'dark days' have lasted two years. A periodic glimmer in the tunnel flickered from time to time but produced little lasting light as often it seemed that we took one step forward and then suddenly we were two steps back. Now, we find ourselves in April 2022, and it may be challenging to trust that the light at the end of the tunnel is within our grasp as we set our sights on the month of June. I hope that springing forward into April allows us to shift our attention beyond the numerous challenges specific to the pandemic to focus on critical matters on the horizon in education.

Policy 322 is a perennial issue that has garnered a significant amount of effort on your behalf by your professional association. We expect Policy 322 reforms because of consultations that have been undertaken by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD) with stakeholders including teachers, school leaders, and the NBTA to name a few. As advocates, your NBTA staff and I are encouraged by the early signs that suggest the long-standing issues within our classroom learning environments may be addressed. We know that when investments are made in our classrooms, both the learning environment for students and the working environment for teachers improve.

Many rumours abound pertaining to governance reform and how it will affect school communities. Minister Cardy's Green Paper on Education released in 2019 alluded to future changes. At this point, there remain more questions than answers. Will District Education Councils (DECs) continue to exist, or will they be replaced with a new version? Will there be an improvement to communication between the community and EECD? I will continue to probe decision-makers to seek answers to these and many other questions.

Another key item to stay abreast of is the Review of the Official Languages Act and the Report on Second Language Learning in New Brunswick. This report and its recommendations will inform the government's thinking and future decisions regarding second language learning. Understanding the implications for schools will be crucial as knowing how various reports intersect and changes are considered.

As we consider the future of our profession, undeniably teacher recruitment and retention must be addressed in short order. Long before Covid, in many schools, non-classroom-based teachers were regularly being asked to cover classes for absent teachers due to the lack of certified supply teachers, an issue that was intensified by the pandemic. Classroom teachers and school administrators are also routinely relied upon to ensure supervision and instruction when there are unfilled vacancies. Covering absences internally is not a viable solution to address teacher shortages. I often wonder how the education system can work toward keeping more pre-service teachers who graduated from New Brunswick Bachelor of Education programs here in this province. If we are to truly address this issue system-wide, multistakeholder problem solving including New Brunswick's teacher organizations is essential.

Finally, we await our turn at the bargaining table where the New Brunswick Teachers' Federation will have the opportunity to raise numerous teacher issues that have been long-standing and others that have surfaced during the pandemic. Further, as we enter year three of this pandemic and set our sights on the road ahead, I believe that teachers' mental health matters now more than ever. Our three additional Teacher Counsellors have been a welcomed addition to the New Brunswick Teacher Counselling and Wellness Program as a steady stream of members continue to avail themselves of their services. It is my hope that this expanded team will continue to lend its professional expertise to our profession as we are models for wellness and resiliency for our students.

Given all the critical matters that lie ahead and the interconnected nature of their implication for the future of public education in New Brunswick, our ability to provide a strong, professional, and connected teacher voice is essential. We must move forward together in solidarity. Although at times, the media may be asking questions that do not fully reflect the issues that keep teachers up at night, I continue to reflect, and I ask you to consider this: What are the other important questions that your NBTA needs to be asking now that will allow us to spring forward rather than fall back?

As teachers, we need to remain determined that as this pandemic comes to an end, we can help shine a bright light on the path we need to follow to meet the challenges ahead.

*Connie Keating*

# 2022-2023 Education Leaves

*Education Minister Dominic Cardy and Federation Co-Presidents Connie Keating and Nathalie Brideau have released the names of the Education Leave recipients for the 2022-2023 school year. In all, forty-six (46) NBTA and nineteen (19) AEFNB members received leaves for the purpose of retraining, specialization, or professional growth.*

Education Leaves awarded to NBTA members amounted to approximately \$2,054,585. With the mix of full and part-time leaves, the Committee was able to grant 46 leaves.

In the past few years, NBTA leaves were awarded as follows:

2021-2022 — 45 leaves at \$2,164,727  
2020-2021 — 45 leaves at \$2,146,328  
2019-2020 — 44 leaves at \$2,032,533  
2018-2019 — 46 leaves at \$1,897,732  
2017-2018 — 40 leaves at \$1,897,455  
2016-2017 — 47 leaves at \$1,972,484

## Education Leave Committee

The Education Leave Committee, established under Article 37 of the Collective Agreement, met on January 17, 2022 to complete the difficult task of selecting the educational leave recipients for 2022-2023. The Collective Agreement specifies that the Committee will be comprised of eight (8) members representing the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD), the Superintendents, and the NBTA, AEFNB and NBTF. The composition of the Committee is as follows:

Julie Mason	MEDPE (Chair)
Craig Caldwell	EECD
Nathalie Brideau	AEFNB
Connie Keating	NBTA
Gilles Saulnier	AEFNB
Kimberley McKay	NBTA
Marc Pelletier	DSF-NE
Dianne Kay	ASD-W

## Process

The full Committee met virtually for a short time to review the reports on the 2021-2022 cohort, confirm the criteria to be applied in the selection process, and to verify the amount of money available pursuant to Article 37. The Committee then divided into two sub-committees to consider applications from NBTA and AEFNB members.

## Criteria

Although an educational leave must fall into one of the three accepted purposes — **retraining, specialization, or professional growth** — the Committee receives confidential comments and recommendations from principals and superintendents regarding the value of the leave to the school and district.

In considering applications from NBTA members, the sub-committee must consider the total funds available and the number of NBTA members in each district so that the funds can be allocated fairly throughout the province. This means that, while larger areas may be allocated multiple full and/or partial leaves, some smaller areas may get a leave every second or third year, and, in some cases, an even longer period of time might elapse between leaves. Although the Committee is not bound to award leaves on a direct total numbers/leaves available ratio, it is a factor that must be considered. Other factors considered are:

- program to be followed
- benefit of leave to school and school district
- position distribution (teacher, S.P.R., vice-principal, principal)
- grade levels (elementary, middle, high school)
- past professional involvement
- years of experience
- number of times teacher has applied
- certificate level
- subject specialty

There is also the expectation that Education Leave recipients will share their knowledge and expertise through professional development sessions in their school, district and/or province with interested colleagues.

## Leave Statistics for 2022-2023

There were 69 applications from NBTA members. Funds available for educational leaves, determined by the formula in Article 37.03 of the Collective Agreement, were \$3,225,509; the AEFNB share was approximately \$999,908.



Forty-six leaves (full and part-time) were granted to NBTA members.

#### Leaves Awarded

K-8	25
Grades 9-12	15
Resource	4
Principal/VP	2

#### To Achieve

CERT VI	0
Masters	31
Princ. CERT	4
Other	11

#### Areas of Study

Administration	10
Curriculum Studies	10
Exceptional Learners/ Spec Ed/Spec. Needs	7
Guidance/M&R/ Resource/Counselling	13
Literacy	1
Technology	2
Other	3
Total	46

#### Conclusion

When all is said and done, 46 NBTA members will be happy to be receiving an Education Leave, while 23 members will be disappointed, and at least some of these members will feel frustrated by the process. The one thing that can be said is that the Committee did its best to weigh all of the criteria, consider all of the factors and award the leaves as fairly as possible.

To those teachers who received leaves, the Committee extends its best wishes for a successful and productive year of study and learning. And, to those who were not successful, the Committee thanks you for your interest and encourages you to apply again next year.

The NBTA recipients for the 2022-2023 school year are listed by district. The length of the leaves varies from four months to a full academic year.

## Education Leave Recipients

District	Name	Duration
ASD-E	Jessica Arseneau	Year
ASD-E	Paulette Diotte	5 months
ASD-E	Kara Doiron	Year
ASD-E	Shane Douthwright	Year
ASD-E	Krystal Leger	Year
ASD-E	Erin Martin	Year
ASD-E	Michelle Robichaud	Year
ASD-E	Julie Stewart	6 months
ASD-E	Monique - Lynn Vautour	Year
ASD-E	Tonya Wadden	Year
ASD-E	Sarah West	Year
ASD-E	Shannon Youden	Year
ASD-N	Aaron Johnston	Year
ASD-N	Hollie Keenan	Year
ASD-N	Deborah McDonnell	5 months
ASD-S	Kelly Cooper	Year
ASD-S	Malorie Dobbin	Year
ASD-S	Vicki Gunter	Year
ASD-S	Melissa LeBlanc	Year
ASD-S	Kerry Underhill	6 months
ASD-S	Earl Urquhart	Year
ASD-S	Courtenay Crosby	4 months
ASD-S	Peter Dalton	5 months

District	Name	Duration
ASD-S	Gail Fillmore-Crilley	4 months
ASD-S	April Logue	6 months
ASD-S	Elizabeth Anne McGrath	Year
ASD-S	Christine Morgan-Ahearn	Year
ASD-S	Anthony Nolletti	Year
ASD-S	Jillian Train	Year
ASD-S	Kendra French	Year
ASD-S	Erica Nelson	6 months
ASD-S	Kenton Pennington	Year
ASD-W	Correen Barrett-Smith	Year
ASD-W	Lisane Comeau	Year
ASD-W	Melissa Keehn	Year
ASD-W	James Gibson	5 months
ASD-W	Julie McNeill	5 months
ASD-W	Ian Chiasson	Year
ASD-W	Marcia Dupuis	Year
ASD-W	Katharine Hartnett	Year
ASD-W	Mariecke Leavitt	5 months
ASD-W	Julie LeGresley	4 months
ASD-W	Sheila Power	5 months
ASD-W	Danielle Roach	Year
ASD-W	Samantha Robichaud	6 months
ASD-W	Catherine Sypher	Year

# NBTA Board of Directors



*The Board of Directors conducted its February 2022 meeting face-to-face with satellite locations and virtual participation to adhere to Public Health measures. Pictured here are some moments that were captured “together while apart.”*



*Past President Rick Cuming presented President Connie Keating with her gold pin, which is an NBTA tradition that symbolizes the beginning of a new presidency. This occasion was delayed until such a time that a face-to-face gathering of the Board of Directors could occur.*



# All Supply Teachers must register each school year at [www.nbta.ca](http://www.nbta.ca) (after working their first day)

Visit these websites for more information on rights,  
responsibilities, and benefits:

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



click on:  
Early Career and Supply Teachers



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



click on: Publications > Category >  
Collective Agreement



Members' dues are deducted automatically, whether registered or not.

*\*Registering with the NBTA means you have also registered with the NBTF\**

If you are experiencing difficulty registering, contact Carlene Parker at  
(506) 452-1833 or [carlene.parker@nbta.ca](mailto:carlene.parker@nbta.ca).

# Responding To A Pandemic And Fading Diplomacy

by Tina Estabrooks,  
NBTA Staff Officer



For this issue, I intended to focus on the merit of standardized assessment amid a pandemic, a subject with deep-rooted and divided opinion amongst teachers, system leaders, and decision-makers. As I reflected upon this topic and the recent democratic disorder, my mind went beyond COVID, and I wondered what Joel Westheimer might be thinking these days. Joel is a professor and university research chair in democracy and education at the University of Ottawa. I had the opportunity to meet him years ago when involved with the Canadian Association of Principals (CAP). If you attended the 2016 CAP Conference, you may recall his keynote address. At the time, I was a school leader serving a high-priority community and his research on citizenship aligned with my thinking. I ponder his work more these days and it provides the backdrop to this piece.

In *What Kind of Citizen?* Westheimer proposes that "...how we teach our children [is choosing] the kind of society we believe in and the kind of people we hope will emerge from our schoolhouse doors" (2015, p.2). The expectation for schools to foster an ethical society has steadily increased. Unfortunately, this has left many teachers in a vulnerable conundrum. Although the expectation is on the school, imposed consequences and/or pedagogical practices that broaden social awareness and acceptance can be met with resistance. I would never dispute a parent's right to stand up for their child(ren) and their family values, but I would contend that there is a lack of common understanding and partnership when it comes to moral development, citizenship, and the balance of responsibility. In a world that seems out of control, community and school should unite to promote citizenship. Perhaps this recent bedlam will ignite conversations that strengthen our desire to work together to raise the ideal Canadian.

As I think about the next school year, I hope that students, teachers, and principals are given space for a mental and emotional reset. Will this need be acknowledged? Can decision-makers focus on the trauma with a concerted effort, or will we revert to historical priorities (pass that test!)? To truly heal from the crisis, we need to nurture our mental wellness while addressing the unprecedented upheaval occurring around us. Although attending to mental health is paramount, if we fail to prioritize citizenship, I fear our students will soon lose all understanding of the democratic nation I had the privilege to grow up in. If our future leaders are to challenge policy more peacefully and constructively, they need to master critical thinking skills and have a true appreciation of a democratic society. Unfortunately, the heightened desire for accountability has resulted in a reduction in social science curriculum.

As more and more time is dedicated to subjects that are assessed, democratic and social learnings are pushed out of the classroom and into extra-curricular programs or events. Determining successful acquisition of analytical skills, collaborative skills and citizenship are not compatible with bubble sheets and Westheimer suggests that "since we can't measure what we care about, we...care about what we can measure" (p. 27). Breaking the mould and moving to something less concrete is a substantive shift and risky. It deviates from the path other provinces and countries are on. We have become reliant upon easily captured data and we have created a society that believes standardized scores are a valid indicator of school success. I am not sure neither the decision-makers nor the voting public could or would consider letting it go.

Westheimer affirms that "improving society requires embracing... controversy so that citizens can engage in democratic dialogue and work together toward understanding and enacting the most sensible policy decisions possible" (p.12). He reminds us that "the goals of K-12 education have been shifting steadily away from preparing active and engaged public citizens and towards more narrow goals of career preparation and individual economic gain" (p.13). He even goes so far as to suggest that "pedagogical practices fostering thoughtful consideration and analysis of contemporary problems has been replaced by the single-minded drive to make students better test-takers, rather than better citizens" (p.14). When I ponder the likely resistance to alter an education system that competes on a global market, I suspect that we are too far in to turn back now.

When considering how embedded standardization is and how much weight it carries, one might note that breakfast programs are adopted, not simply on the merit of providing food to those in need, but also on the premise that when students are nourished, assessment results improve. The fact that a basic security is attached to desired testing results suggests that we have lost sight of just doing what is right. Can we be optimistic and think that perhaps a pandemic and unprecedented social disorder might cause a system rethink and reset? Yes, let's hope.

If you read Leadership Corner in September 2020 you may recall the concept of moral distress, which occurs when you know what is needed but the system fails to provide it. This phenomenon is evident when teachers cannot meet the emotional and physical needs of their students. If we fail to prioritize that many students are experiencing new levels of anxiety, teachers will become frustrated, demotivated, and perhaps leave the profession. This



should concern us as we are facing a global teacher shortage. Decision-makers in public education systems should see this as an “early warning sign” for the future of teacher retention and act now to bolster support for teacher induction and mentorship.

At the very least, we should accept that teacher satisfaction would be best served with time to reacclimate and nurture students. Teachers should be encouraged to embrace the social and civil aspects of school with fortitude and illustrate that we care about people first and academic achievement second. We need permission to put certain curricula aside (momentarily and perhaps only in part) and address what has/is happening in the world around us. We need to engage in discussion about the balance between social justice and empathetic democracy. Unfortunately, I fear teachers won’t be granted the necessary autonomy. Even though nurturing and developing critical thinking skills is imperative, the system will likely concern itself with the learning gaps exposed by those courses subject to standardized assessment?

So, what to do? A multitude of post-pandemic research is underway and some of it will influence high-level decisions. Reaction to any findings may attend to mental wellness but it will not be timely. Thus, teachers will need to continue to find space in their daily routine to provide much-needed wrap-around support for students. Unfortunately, I don’t anticipate social science pedagogy making the cut for upcoming research. Even if it did, it is unlikely that associated curriculum revision would be a priority. Regardless, school leaders can help teachers and children by prioritizing mental wellness and by initiating a dialogue that examines current critical thinking pedagogy. Westheimer provides a starting point by suggesting that schools create a school-wide learning culture that:

- Teaches students how to ask questions
- Exposes students to multiple perspectives and viewpoints on important issues that affect everyone’s lives
- Provides opportunities to analyze and discuss different viewpoints
- Shows that “facts” are less stable than is often thought
- Engages controversial issues.

In closing, I want to acknowledge that, despite the limited space provided in current curricula, teachers are likely knocking critical thinking out of the park. Also, the New Brunswick Department of Education and Early Childhood Development’s recent attention to global competencies illustrates the beginnings of a possible holistic shift in education. This allows for some optimism. However, if you are struggling to be enthusiastic because you’ve witnessed the multitude of ever-evolving educational initiatives that never stay around long enough to make a difference, I invite you to recall our recent media campaign. Several prominent New Brunswickers paid tribute to our teachers. Note that not one person mentioned an improved ability to pass a test. They expressed heartfelt gratitude for the teacher with whom they developed a connection and they shared how the relationship ignited their journey and enabled them to achieve personal success. So...let’s keep doing that. Despite all the change and challenge that will be, continue to prioritize your relationships with your students every day.

This is the last edition of Leadership Corner for this year. I am so proud to belong to a profession that puts children first, every moment of every day. I wish you all the very best as you approach the final days of the school year and hope you can rest and recharge over the summer.

Take good care,

Tina



#### Works Consulted:

Westheimer, J. (2015). *What Kind of Citizen?: Educating Our Children for the Common Good*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

# Embracing a Posture of Possibility

Chantal Lafargue,  
NBTA Staff Officer



*“Forward motion happens when individuals and organizations decide to adopt a posture of possibility. And that’s enabled by marketers ready to help them embrace that possibility.”*

- Seth Godin, March 6, 2022

Growing the NBTA’s capacity to meet its long-standing strategic goal of advancing and enhancing the status of the teaching profession within the membership, stakeholders, and the public is a timely priority. This year your NBTA Communications Committee has shifted its focus from products to experimentation with various platforms and practices. Rich conversations about communications developed from framing such as “What if we...?” and “What’s stopping us from...” to foster growth and future-oriented motion.

Examples of thoughtful conversations leading to purposeful shifts include:

- the launch of the NBTA website with enhanced automated features;
- the use of various hashtags and the promotion of #DedicatedNBTeacher;
- the creation of video or animations to convey information or important messaging;
- the deployment of polls or pulse-checks to infuse teacher voices into NBTA advocacy efforts; and,
- the strategic integration of NBTA social media channels to tune into conversations and bring awareness to issues affecting public education and the profession.

Another change on the horizon is that your NBTA News, your professional association’s news magazine, is moving from five issues to four. This change emanates from the 2021 AGM resolution requesting the NBTA examine printing and sustainability practices; the NBTA Board of Directors approved the recommendation of the Communications Committee and expanded the recommendation to include a redirection of projected savings to support digital communications.

As your professional association readies itself to enter an eventual post-Covid world that is reliant on technology-mediated

communications, market trends suggest that nonprofits such as the NBTA need to be responsive to this shifting landscape as:

- Video marketing and remote collaboration are here to stay
- The number of social media platforms is growing, and they are being used by different audience segments, each of which requires different marketing and engagement strategies
- Email is being replaced by cell phones and text messaging in terms of their efficacy to reach audiences
- Misinformation, disinformation, and artificial intelligence are factors to consider in the advancement of organizational messaging and brand
- Social movements continue to mobilize on social media, with Gen Z leading the charge (e.g., #BlackLivesMatter)

Acknowledging these complexities and the desire to become more proactive while remaining nimble, your Board of Directors invested in a just-in-time learning opportunity to help our organization grow capacity in the field of marketing. Thus, I have embarked on a journey through the Marketswell CMO (Chief Marketing Officer) Accelerator Program, which is a year-long series of individualized coaching sessions and masterclasses aimed at upskilling CMOs at startup companies. Benefiting from a substantial grant from the Department of Post-Secondary Education Training and Labour to defray most of the costs, we are excited to note that your NBTA was selected as this cohort’s nonprofit participant. The program’s design develops leadership skills in marketing an organization while walking shoulder-to-shoulder with their respective CEO (In our case your Executive Director – Ardith Shirley) whose role is to provide counsel and leverage resources to put plans in motion. Consequently, it is expected that this out-of-the-box approach to continuous improvement planning will prompt further conversations and changes for your professional association to consider and embrace as we move forward.

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# NBTA Sponsors Born to Read Book

by Bob Stranach

Shirley Downey was a passionate promoter of early childhood literacy. Founder of Born to Read New Brunswick Inc., Shirley led that organization for twenty years in its mission to ensure that each child born in our province received free of charge Born to Read's iconic little red bag containing four books carefully curated for their value in supporting various aspects of early childhood development.

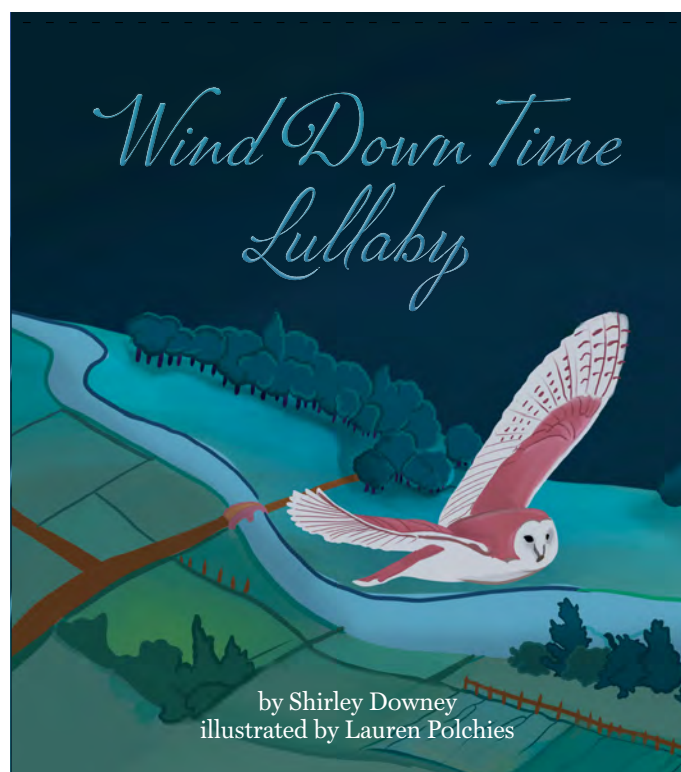
For many years Born to Read has been committed to ensuring that one of these books is created here at home, being written, illustrated, designed, and published by New Brunswickers. Every couple of years UNB's Early Childhood Centre has overseen the production of an original new book in partnership with and through generous annual donations by NBTA, supplemented by funding from Born to Read. NBTA's support assists with the production of new books and reprints of earlier titles as needed.

The latest book in this series, *Wind Down Time Lullaby*, currently being printed, will be launched this year. A loving tribute to Shirley Downey, who died in 2020, *Wind Down Time Lullaby* contains some of Shirley's unpublished poetry obtained from her shortly before her death and is published with her family's permission. Shirley loved playing with language and understood the power of picture books, several of which she authored over the years. *Wind Down Time Lullaby* is illustrated by Wolastoqey artist and designer Lauren Polchies, whose vibrant interpretation of Shirley's verse draws upon the beauty of New Brunswick landscapes. The project team consisted of project directors, Pam Whitty, Sherry Rose, and Lynda Homer, editor Sue Fisher, and art director Julie Scriver of Goose Lane Editions. Along with financial assistance from NBTA, project production costs were supported by a special grant from the NB Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.

NBTA has been a long-standing partner with Born to Read and is represented on the organization's Board of Directors, along with representatives of the New Brunswick Society of Retired Teachers, New Brunswick Public Library Service, NB Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, Horizon Health, UNB Faculty of Education Early Childhood Centre, Bell Aliant Pioneers, IODE New Brunswick and the Literacy Coalition of New Brunswick. Born to Read delivers English books to Anglophone parents alongside its sister organization, Le gout de lire, which serves Francophone families throughout the province. Besides books, the bag also contains information and guidance for parents on early childhood development and library programs.

Since 1997 Born to Read has delivered its book bags to parents through regional hospitals, the staff of which have been dedicated supporters of the program. Unfortunately, COVID-19 restrictions have limited some hospitals' ability to distribute the bags on-site during the past two years. Even so, those hospitals have continued to provide parents with Born to Read contact information so that those wishing to receive a bag can make a personal request for a bag to be mailed to them. Born to Read hopes to restore normal distribution as soon as conditions allow.

A non-profit registered charity, Born to Read is completely a volunteer organization. All funds received are used in their entirety for the costs of books, bags (manufactured in New Brunswick) and distribution costs. There have never been costs associated with staff, office space or administration. Additional information on Born to Read can be obtained at the organization's website (<https://www.borntoreadnb.com/index.html>) or Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/btrnb>).



# Stepping UP: Realizing Culturally Responsive Schools

## The Cultural Diversity at Edith Cavell School is a Beautiful Thing!

by Sheila Johnston

in collaboration with Tina Estabrooks, Francis Bennett,  
Monique Hughes, Craig Williamson, Kathy Whynot

Located in the downtown core of Moncton, Edith Cavell (EC) School has a culturally and linguistically diverse population. As of March 2nd, 2022, almost 46% of our students are newcomers to Canada who have arrived with rich prior knowledge and experiences as well as varying degrees of formal schooling. Students at EC come from 35 different countries and speak 24 different languages. It is a K-8 school with a population of 318 students, 145 of whom registered via the International Welcome Center. This diversity is an enrichment to the entire school community and culture, but it also poses some challenges. Our staff have needed to develop creative ways of engaging students in their learning.

### **When did your journey toward becoming a Culturally Responsive school begin, and what was the motivation?**

Our journey toward becoming a culturally responsive school began in 2016 when many Syrian families joined our community. In 2018, Greater Moncton welcomed 1,450 newcomers with both immigrant and refugee backgrounds. The city set a goal of doubling this number and intends to welcome 2,700 newcomers annually, by 2024, to maintain the growth targeted by the region's current economic development strategy. These increasing numbers continue to have a significant impact on our school community. As a school, we have recognized the need to meet our newcomers where they are and to ensure we set them up for success. We have worked hard at connecting and building relationships while focusing on a strengths-based approach as well as using instructional strategies to support them in learning English as an additional language (EAL).

Our vision at EC is "to be a community of learners achieving our full potential". Our vision inspires us to teach from a globally-minded perspective centred around the ability to empower, lead, and inspire the school community. The focus is on building skills and school equity, while also creating strong social-emotional learners. We strive to develop a mindset for learning in our students that focuses on growth in school and life. We reflect on, and appreciate, the diversity of people and their accompanying perspectives. Our teachers face the impact of trauma in their classrooms every day. The trauma that some of our newcomers are faced with can hinder their "learning-ready" brains. However, we know through research that the brain can adapt and recover. Mental health supports are so important to help us navigate through this, and we often collaborate with our guidance counsellor, psychologists, Child & Youth Teams, and others. When educating and supporting newcomers, there are many things to take into consideration to prevent an 'amygdala hijack' (when emotion takes over). Building alliances with students, being active listeners and offering actionable corrective feedback have helped our students experience success.

### **What did you find you needed to learn? How did you overcome this?**

We felt we were doing a lot in terms of supporting our newcomer students however, when we took the time to reflect and dig a little bit deeper, we knew there was more to do and learn in this area. Using a team-based approach is important to ensure we are utilizing all the community and school resources available. We work closely with The Multicultural Association of the Greater Moncton Area (MAGMA), a settlement agency that supports immigrants. MAGMA also assists us in providing translators for families in need. Newcomer students must first register at the International Welcome Center (IWC), where they complete the necessary paperwork and in-take assessments before setting foot in school. We value the work of the IWC in preparing students for their arrival and promoting smooth transitions. We have EAL tutoring services, with the tutor having a full schedule and seeing a variety of individual students, and groups, Monday through Thursday. Based on our current EAL needs, we also received an Education Support Teacher for English as an Additional Language (EST-EAL) this school year. Their duties include assisting teachers with the co-creation of Newcomer Support and Transition Plans, progress monitoring, co-teaching, and co-planning, as well as providing tier 2/3 intervention for select students.

### **Describe the involvement and reaction of students and families.**

Due to the high number of newcomers joining our community as well as the transience of our school's population, we implemented a welcoming system entitled: "Welcome Wednesdays." Welcoming students on Wednesdays has been a game-changer! Connecting with our newcomer families begins on day one. It allows us time in preparing for their transition in terms of having their pre-assessment data, notifying the tutor, having the parent packets ready, and arranging for a translator if required. Our EST-EAL, guidance counsellor and administrators greet the new student and their family at the front door. We make sure to ask the student for their preferred name and the correct pronunciation as that is very important. Before COVID, we had student ambassadors take each student to their classroom and be on hand to support the student during their first few days at EC.

Other examples of initiatives we have implemented successfully are our welcome sign in the foyer (with the word welcome in many different languages) and the world map indicating each country represented in the school. We celebrate various cultures or countries monthly, invite families to bring in different foods, and create various educational projects that promote diversity and social justice issues. We also offer a free lunch program for students in need with a halal option. This year, we wanted to involve our newcomer parents in our parent committees. We



gained representation from our newcomer families on both the PSSC and Home & School Committees. The knowledge and expertise that these parents bring to our committees is yet another step in strengthening our school community.

#### **What were the results and/or benefits of the work?**

Positive results are seen in the rate at which students are learning how to speak and write in English. For example, a newcomer student who could only write one sentence when they first arrived several months ago is now creating texts with several well-written paragraphs. Based on the teacher perception survey data, 100% of teachers feel that processes are in place to welcome and include families in this school. This is evident in our welcoming process and our relationship-building with students. Families are feeling more connected when they receive school communication in their home language and also when they witness us celebrating holidays from around the world. Our teachers have opened their classroom doors to share new ideas and practices. They have created partnerships with our students' families. They haven't been afraid to enhance class practices and include more culturally responsive techniques that bolster brainpower. There have been some very important conversations surrounding race and implicit bias. Teachers have learned to focus on asset-based language, rather than focus on student deficits or lack of/interrupted formal schooling. Through our various efforts, newcomers are gaining a lot of confidence while also increasing their overall sense of belonging.

#### **How will you continue to move forward?**

The cultural makeup of our school community is a beautiful thing however, there is still work to be done in promoting and celebrating diversity. With the lifting of the province's COVID restrictions, we will return to having our ambassadors greet newcomer students at the door on their first day of school. We will continue to create multilingual signs and ensure classroom libraries are full of books that represent all students in the school. Worldwide celebrations and holidays will be recognized. School administrators will continue to implement culturally

responsive techniques during our Monthly Virtual Assembly to enhance engagement from our newcomers while also modelling strategies for our educational staff. We will continue to work closely with our EST-EAL, as well as our EAL tutor, to ensure we are targeting multilingual learners and offering culturally responsive instructional strategies. Lastly, we are planning a school-wide campaign entitled "This is Us" (#ThisIsUs). The campaign will focus on recognizing and celebrating what makes our school so special. We believe that diversity, collaboration, and a welcoming environment are at the heart of EC. One of the ways in which we would like to celebrate the welcoming nature of our school community is by highlighting the experiences of those when they first arrive at our school. No matter if they've come from across the province, the country, or the world – we want to hear about their impressions of Edith Cavell. Students' impressions will be shared on our social media accounts.

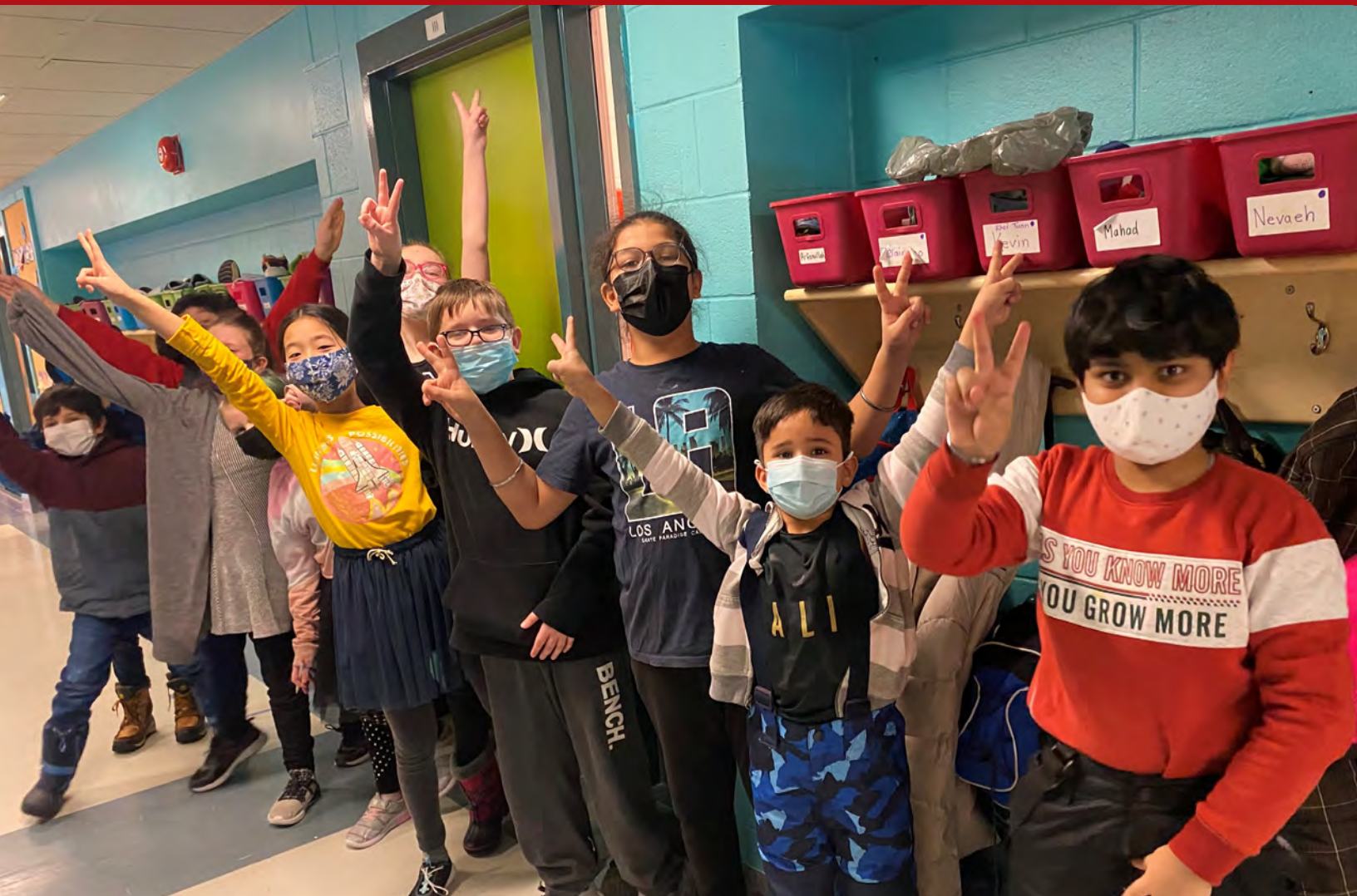
#### **What advice might you give to others who want to work on realizing a culturally responsive school but are unsure of how to start?**

Focus on one thing at a time. It can feel overwhelming to implement all the culturally responsive teaching strategies and practices all at once. Remember to give yourself grace. A great place to start is by looking at the New Brunswick Self-Assessment Inclusion Look-Fors which provides some excellent examples on how to strengthen support for multilingual learners and newcomers. Remember to use a team-based approach and look to outside agencies for support when needed. Take the time to complete an environmental scan to reflect on the possible manifestations of "culture" present in your school. Schools may be surprised by the areas that culture is visible while also allowing them to reflect on areas that can be improved. Parent forums can also be extremely valuable. Hearing from the families themselves in terms of the support they need to be successful can help drive your school improvement planning.

If you are interested in learning more, you can contact Sheila by email [Sheila.Johnston@nbcd.nb.ca](mailto:Sheila.Johnston@nbcd.nb.ca)







### Book Giveaway

If interested in these titles, please email [tina.estabrooks@nbta.ca](mailto:tina.estabrooks@nbta.ca) and provide the name of the book and your current school.

*Your Student My Student Our Students: Rethinking Equitable and Inclusive Classrooms* ~Lee Ann Jung et. al.

*Big Ideas For Expanding Minds: Teaching English Language Learners Across the Curriculum* ~Jim Cummins and Margaret Early

*Cultivating Genius: An Equity Framework For Culturally and Historically Responsive Literacy* ~Gholdy Muhammad

*Being The Change Lessons and Strategies to Teach Social Comprehension* ~Sara K. Ahmed

*Punching The Air* ~Ibi Zoboi and Yusef Salaam

*The Newcomers: Finding Refuge, Friendship, and Hope in America* ~Helen Thorpe

*Supporting English Learners With Exceptional Needs* ~Patricia Rice Doran and Amy K. Noggle

*Better Than Carrots or Sticks: Restorative Practices for Positive Classroom Management* ~Dominique Smith et. al.

*Stolen Lives: The Indigenous Peoples of Canada And The Indian Residential Schools* ~Various Authors

*21 Things You May Not Know About The Indian Act* ~Bob Joseph





### Recommended Resources:

We would highly recommend the Culturally and Linguistically Inclusive Schools (CLIS) online course offered by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD). This course provided us with an opportunity to learn strategies for the support of multilingual learners (MLLs) in our school as well as enhance our culturally inclusive practices. The information presented in this course inspired us to dive into the vision and values that inform an inclusive, equitable and engaging MLL learning environment. We reflected on our school environment and then created an action plan. We also offered a professional learning session to our educational staff involving similar content by our very own staff member, Lisa De Luca. Lisa spent several years working in our district as a lead for English as an Additional Language and is also a mentor for the CLIS course. Another powerful session offered to our educational staff was given by BreeLove Counselling Services which covered the following topics: equitable-minded practices, systems of privilege and oppression, trauma-sensitive spaces, gender equity, and restorative and mindfulness practices.

Other resources we have been using include “Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain” by Zaretta Hammond and “Boosting Achievement: Reaching Students with Interrupted or Minimal Education” by Dr. Carol Salva. Both are phenomenal resources that look at achievement gaps as well as circumstances, such as upheaval due to war and political turmoil in their native countries, which have contributed to minimal formal education experiences. They also provide instructional strategies that incorporate authentic learning experiences while focusing on the students’ unique backgrounds and perspectives.

*“A Mindset for Learning: Teaching the Traits of Joyful, Independent Growth”* by Kristine Mraz and Christine Hertz.

*“Fostering Resilient Learners: Strategies for Creating a Trauma-Sensitive Classroom”* by Kristin Souers with Pete Hall.

### School Indicators:

- 1.1 The School Improvement Plan is developed based on the review of a variety of information. Sources include data and evidence pertaining to student academic, behavioural, social-emotional, and cultural engagement, and development.
- 6.1 School leaders are actively involved in creating and furthering an inclusive school culture.
- 7.2 The school environment encourages and supports the engagement, active involvement, and inclusion of every student academically.
- 7.3 The school environment encourages and supports the engagement, active involvement, and inclusion of every student socially and emotionally.
- 7.4 The school environment encourages and supports the engagement, active involvement and inclusion of every student culturally.
- 10.1 Shared decision-making is an established practice.
- 10.2 The principal encourages, welcomes, and employs feedback from staff members, students, and families.
- 10.3 Administrators facilitate and support engagement in professional learning and leadership activities for and by staff members.
- 11.2 School leaders provide staff members and students with thanks and other recognition for contributions and accomplishments.
- 16.3 Families and community members are actively involved in the school.
- 18.1 Staff members engage in ongoing professional learning and research to improve their understanding of current pedagogy and methods.
- 22.1 Teachers personalize learning experiences and foster engagement by promoting autonomy, competence, relatedness, and relevance in their instructional planning.
- 28 The learning of additional languages (plurilingualism) is valued and promoted.

# Council Day 2022: Forever Evolving

by Dawn Beckingham,  
NBTA Staff Officer



We are entering the home stretch! I always found that school calendar benchmarks gave me a much-needed personal check-in to assess what I've already done and what I need to accomplish next during the school year. Thanksgiving, December break, March break, and Council Day were always the main check-ins for me. Once Council Day arrived, I knew the school year was quickly coming to an end and it gave me that little boost of energy to cross the finish line. That date is almost here.

Your three NBTA Councils acknowledge that to put on a great conference, early planning is needed. That is why in October

2021 it was decided that because of the uncertainty of future Covid-19 restrictions at that time, it would be wise to plan for a virtual conference. I wish to thank all the Council members who had input on planning Council Day 2022. They amazed me with their dedication to the teachers of New Brunswick as they worked collaboratively to put together a great program, all while facing the challenges that were thrown at them during this school year. Hats off to them!

Wishing you all a great Council Day!

## Top 10 Things to Know for Council Day



A PDF version of the full program will be available for viewing on the NBTA website.



Alternate proposals will not be used this year since everyone will be able to participate virtually. The organizers tried their best to provide sessions that address all levels.



There is no need to preregister for the conference because there will be no restrictions on how many members can participate in each session. (We are aware of some issues with this last year, and we believe this will be rectified by using Zoom Events.)



The Music, Art and Phys Ed specialty strands are represented in the program and are open to all teachers.



You will have access to the Zoom session links on the day of the conference by using your membership number through the NBTA website.



Council Day is occurring on a workday and participation will occur in your respective schools.



Everyone will begin the day in the Opening Session Zoom link, and you will then select which sessions you wish to attend throughout the day.



There are countless teachers that can be recognized for Council Teacher Awards, and I hope you join your respective Council AGM on Council Day to acknowledge the many fabulous teachers around our province.



We will once again have an NBTA virtual support committee to help with technical coordination. (I want to thank those 10 members who stepped up and volunteered their time to make the day the best it can be. Fingers crossed we have no major technical issues, including no power failures!)



There will be several vacancies on each Council that will need to be filled. It is a very rewarding experience, and although the last three years have been unusual for these committees, we will one day meet again in person, and you will make long-lasting friendships and professional connections.



## Featured Keynotes

### 50 Shades of Beige: Communicate with the Cross-cultural Advantage

Featuring Tina Varughese



Successful organizations understand that being able to communicate cross-culturally in the workplace leads to enhanced productivity, performance, and employee engagement. Managing diversity drives profitability, leads to innovation, and promotes an inspiring workplace culture. Everybody can benefit from communicating more effectively, however, when 20% of Canada's population is foreign-born, communicating with the cross-cultural advantage is arguably one of the most important types of communication in the 21st century.

#### Key Takeaways

- Cultural differences in communication: Indirect vs. direct speaking styles.
- Effective non-verbal communication techniques.
- How to use the VAK model of Communication for a cross-cultural advantage.

#### Presenter Biography

Tina is an Indo-Canadian daughter of first-generation East Indian parents, which allows her to find 'the best of both worlds' and shed light, knowledge, and most importantly universal humour into the intercultural workplace. For fifteen years Tina Varughese, B.A., B.Comm., worked with immigrants in her roles with the Province of Alberta's immigration office as well as running her own successful relocation and settlement firm. She is currently the immediate Past-President of the Canadian Association of Professional Speakers (Calgary). Tina is a contributing writer for the Human Resource Institute of Alberta's Network magazine, Calgary Real Estate News, Home to Home magazine, and was profiled in Alberta's Venture Magazine.

### Personal Climate and Culture ... It's Up to You

Featuring Gerry Brooks

Gerry uses his videos to develop a strategy for making the workplace a pleasant place where faculty, administrators, and support staff all maintain mutual respect, regardless of personal differences, resulting in more efficient and fulfilled workers. In his virtual presentations, he uses object lessons to make these strategies meaningful. Gerry will share policies that he has incorporated that promote a healthy, respectful working relationship even when opinions differ. He will also share ideas that maximize opportunities to get to know staff members and create camaraderie, taking advantage of 15 seconds here and there throughout the day.

#### Presenter Biography

Gerry Brooks has been an educator for 25 years, beginning as a third-grade teacher in Palm Bay, FL. He earned his master's in administration and has been an elementary principal for 15 years. Originally using humorous videos to encourage his staff, Gerry has become a national encourager for teachers through social media and speaking events. He is a voice for teachers, but his passion is leading others to be responsible for their own personal climate and culture in the workplace. His book, "Go See the Principal," outlines strategies for taking on this responsibility. Gerry and his wife, Kelly, have three adult children and live in Lexington, KY.



# Council Day 2022

## Specialist Strands

### Phys. Ed. Strand hosted by Elementary Council

Elementary Council is hosting the Physical Education Specialist Strand for Council Day 2022. The Phys Ed organizing team will be offering their specialized sessions within the main Council Day program. This will be accessed through the NBTA website. Teachers will join in the general opening ceremonies, then select the session of their choice, and end the day with a general closing ceremony at their respective Council Level.

Any session within the program is available to all teachers based on their area of teaching and interest. This year's focus for the Phys Ed strand includes Outdoor play and risk; Mindfulness CBT, and Movement; Introduction to rugby; BOKS Canada; healing trauma; and many more. Presenters will include Jenny Kierstead and Blair Abbass from Yoga in schools; Chris Tremblay with BOKS Canada; Sophia Rae Kierstead Abbass, a student sharing her experience on healing from trauma; Alden Briggs president of Fredericton Pickleball Club; and several others. We are looking forward to a successful Council Day for all.

### Art Strand hosted by Middle Level Council

The following description provides an overview of the sessions offered by the Art Strand on Council Day 2022, which is open to all NBTA members. Information regarding these and other sessions will be available on the main program, featured on the NBTA website.

This year the Art Stand was able to secure three talented speakers: Jacob Tingley from Brilliant Labs, Susan Galbraith from Carleton North High School and Jennifer Aiken-Smith from Maplehurst

Middle School. Each of these three sessions will offer innovative ways to incorporate art in all subject areas. Jacob's half-day session will be interactive and smash together art, technology, and coding to blur the boundaries of art, mathematics, and community culture. Susan will use rich picture books as a springboard to build engaging art activities that can be seamlessly integrated into several subject areas. Jennifer will explore how to empower your students and reduce the "I don't like \_\_\_\_" moments through Project Choice and Creativity Bingo.

### Music Strand hosted by High School Council

This year the High School Council is hosting the Music Specialty Strand for Council Day 2022. Within the main program, that you will access through the NBTA website, there will be four sessions dedicated to music teachers. Although these sessions target music teachers, they are open to all interested, especially for cross-curricular purposes.

Topics covered include the importance of music education, the Wolastoq Song documentary, the body as a percussion instrument, and practices to support healthy vocal production. The presenters are David Myles (singer-songwriter), Sarah Francis (leader in First Nations Education), Ollie Tunmer (former cast member of 'Stomp' and director of the 'Beat Goes On'), and Kiera Galway (choral conductor, musician, and educator). Participate in these sessions to be entertained by talented artists, absorb the knowledge of these professionals in action, and transfer new learning to your classroom.



# May 6, 2022

## Virtual Council Day 2022: Forever Evolving



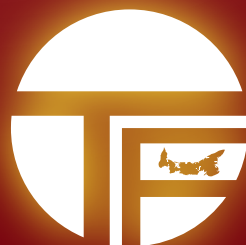
Elementary Council



Middle Level Council

More information coming soon at

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



For NBTA members, please contact [Darla.Anderson@nbta.ca](mailto:Darla.Anderson@nbta.ca)  
by May 9th to register. Max 30 seats.



# Upcoming Opportunities

## FIERCE® Conversations

### Summer 2022 FIERCE® Conversations

NBTA is pleased to offer **FIERCE® Conversations** as a professional learning opportunity for New Brunswick educators.

**What:** FIERCE® Conversations teaches participants how to ignite productive dialogue that interrogates reality, provokes learning, resolves tough challenges, and enriches relationships.

**Target Audience:** This session will be open to any NBTA member and is limited to 30 participants

**Cost:** \$30.00 for resource kit

**Date:** July 18 and 19, 2022  
NBTF Building, Fredericton  
9h30 – 3h00

Watch for complete registration details at [www.nbta.ca](http://www.nbta.ca) beginning June 1.

### Fall 2022 FIERCE® Conversations

NBTA is pleased to offer **FIERCE® Conversations** as a professional learning opportunity for New Brunswick educators.

**What:** FIERCE® Conversations teaches participants how to ignite productive dialogue that interrogates reality, provokes learning, resolves tough challenges, and enriches relationships.

**Target Audience:** This session will be open to any NBTA member and is limited to 30 participants

**Cost:** \$30.00 for resource kit

**Date:** October 13 and 14, 2022  
NBTF Building, Fredericton  
Friday Evening 6h30 – 8h30  
Saturday 9h00 – 2h30

Watch for complete registration details at [www.nbta.ca](http://www.nbta.ca) beginning June 1.

## DSS 2022 Developing Successful Schools Conference

July 12-15, 2022  
(Tentatively)

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

— DSS Attendee

## Teach Abroad

### Teachers and Administrators Required

#### ARE YOU

- a new teacher looking to gain classroom experience?
- a mid-career educator looking for a new pedagogical experience?
- a retired educator looking for something new?

Further your career and gain valuable life experiences at a New Brunswick affiliated off-shore school.

If you are looking for an adventure, please complete the online application form at:

<https://aei-inc.ca/teach-abroad/job-listings/>



Benefits of teaching at a NB affiliated school \*may vary with each partner

- Competitive salary
- Taxes paid for by the employer
- Designated accommodations
- Airfare to and from destination
- Contribution to medical insurance
- Assistance through work visa process
- Paid vacation days
- Enhanced opportunity to travel



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# Deciding to Retire

Michael Ketchum,  
NBTA Staff Officer



Deciding to retire can indeed be a challenge. In fact retirement is more of an evolution from teaching full time, to changing your lifestyle, to a life away from school. A number of factors are to be considered along this evolving path, some of which are determining the details of your pension, personal financial factors, family situations, job satisfaction, among many other personal factors. It is indeed a personal decision that only the teacher can make based on consultations with various important people in their lives.

Once the decision is made to change your lifestyle and retire, it can become a very exciting and celebratory time in one's teaching career.

There are some formal aspects to retirement and they are:

1. Ensure you are eligible to retire by checking with the NBTA or Vestcor Pension administration.
2. Write a letter indicating your intention to retire (always the last day of the month) and forward it to your Superintendent. Email is fine.
3. Once this is done, you will hear from the school district human resources people. They will require the following from you:
  - a. A copy of your birth certificate and that of your spouse or common law partner, if you have one.
  - b. Your most recent Income Tax Assessment
  - c. A void cheque or direct deposit form completed by your bank.
  - d. The contact information of the financial organization who will invest your Retirement Allowance
4. Once you have completed the forms for the school district, you will eventually receive some documents in your home mail from Vestcor Pension. It is on these forms that you will make the choice of percentage of your pension your spouse will receive in the event of your death. This is a one time irrevocable decision.

This complete process will take approximately 90 days. If you intend to retire at the end of the school year and want to ensure your first pension deposit occurs in July, we recommend you begin the process by March.

If you retire after the end of March, you may not receive the first pension deposit in July. However, as long as the retirement date is prior to June 30th, pensions will be paid for each month after this, but there may be a delay in receipt of the first pension deposit. Normally pension deposits are received on the 24th of each month.

If at any time during this process of retiring, you have questions or need assistance, please contact Michael at the NBTA.

Congratulations and enjoy the ride to retirement!

For any additional information on the above process, please contact:

Michael Ketchum  
[michael.ketchum@nbta.ca](mailto:michael.ketchum@nbta.ca)  
(506) 452-1722

Teachers retiring this school year will be able to choose the option of having a donation made in their honour to the **Make-A-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 20, 2022** ([tammy.boon@nbta.ca](mailto:tammy.boon@nbta.ca)).



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





# Classroom Management 101



*Early career teachers from all four districts met in Fredericton in March for a classroom management workshop with NBTA staff.*





# Make a Nature Connection: It's Good Medicine for Teachers



by **Andy Stewart**, Teacher Counsellor and Wellness Coordinator

At the age of 17, I left rural NB and moved to the big city life of Montreal to attend university. It was an exciting time, full of so many new sights, sounds, smells, tastes, and adventures. By that October, I had settled into a routine but there was something missing. An uneasiness set in despite all the new experiences and action. One day, I looked up between the skyscrapers and noticed a hill covered with the colours of fall. It was Mont Royal, the city's well-known park. As I walked down one of its winding wooded trails with the sound of fallen leaves rustling under my feet and of birds singing in the trees, a calmness returned to me, and the uneasiness fell away.

At that moment, I experienced what people all over the world have noticed and written about for centuries. It was the importance of time in nature to rejuvenate and recharge us. Some have described contact with nature as a salve for our mental well-being. E.O. Wilson developed the idea of biophilia, which suggests that we are innately connected to other living things and that elements of nature help us regain balance, clarity, empathy, and hope.

There is also a growing body of research to support these ideas of nature as healer. In Japan, Shinrin Yoku or "Nature Bathing" is now a standard preventative medicine practice. It involves engaging all our five senses in natural environments and has proven to lower blood pressure, help immune system function and decrease depression and anxiety. Researchers in the USA have also found that spending time outdoors actually increases our creativity, ability to concentrate and problem-solving. In South Korea, the use of "healing forests" has proven to reduce stress. In another study out of Finland, the research shows that we experience significant health benefits when we spend at least five hours a month in nature. So, both individual experiences and studies show us the advantages of spending time outdoors. During this time of uncertainty, nature is our constant. Lean into it and let it provide you with comfort and calmness. I would enjoy hearing about how you make your nature connection. If you would like to share, send me an email at [andy.stewart@teacherwellness.ca](mailto:andy.stewart@teacherwellness.ca)



**Covid Campfire**  
**March 2020**



How you choose to connect with nature depends on the time you have available and your location. How big of a dosage of nature medicine would you like? Here are some ideas below.

**Small Dose:**

- Add some plants to your space
- Listen to recorded nature sounds to wind down
- Go for a walk outside
- Have a campfire
- Get your favourite beverage and sit out in your backyard
- Go stargazing

**Medium Dose:**

- Put a bird feeder in your backyard
- Buy a Parks Canada pass and use it: [www.pc.gc.ca/en/index](http://www.pc.gc.ca/en/index)
- Journal about your nature adventures/experiences
- Organize an outdoor adventure with family and friends
- Go for a hike [www.hikingnb.ca](http://www.hikingnb.ca)
- Go geocaching

**Large Dose:**

- Join your local nature club and go on regular group outings
- Join Nature NB- <http://www.naturenb.ca/home/>
- Join Nature Trust of NB- <https://www.naturetrust.nb.ca/> - become a Volunteer or Ambassador
- Join The Nature Conservancy of Canada NB – Volunteer
- Join Bird Studies Canada- <https://www.birdscanada.org> – become a citizen scientist
- Plant a garden
- Sign your family up for the 1000 hours outside - <https://www.1000hoursoutside.com>
- Do a 3-day canoe trip

**Trees Please**

Try Nature Bathing and get a small dose of nature medicine.

For this activity, go out in your backyard or your special spot in nature and find a nice tree to sit under. Once you are settled, just breathe in the fresh air and look around at everything. Now you are ready to do the Five Senses Activity:

What are 5 things that you see? Look around and notice 5 new things.

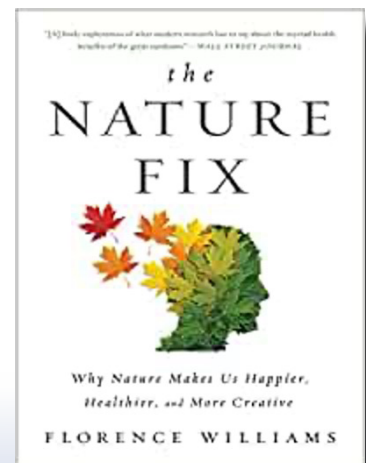
What are 4 things you can feel? Notice the ground, a leaf, a rock.

What are 3 things you can hear? Listen to all the sounds around you.

What are 2 things you can smell? Take a deep breath and notice the smells of nature.

What is 1 thing you can taste? Have a snack or your favourite beverage and notice the taste.

Want to learn more about how time in nature is good for our health? Here is a book to check out.





**Keep It Simple • Small Steps Count • Have Fun!**

## PRIZES

The winning school in each category will receive a \$100 gift certificate for a **“Wellness Break”** from the New Brunswick School-Based Wellness Program.

The **Grand Prize** is **\$200** for staff wellness for the school that has created the most inclusive and sustainable initiative to promote wellness in their school.

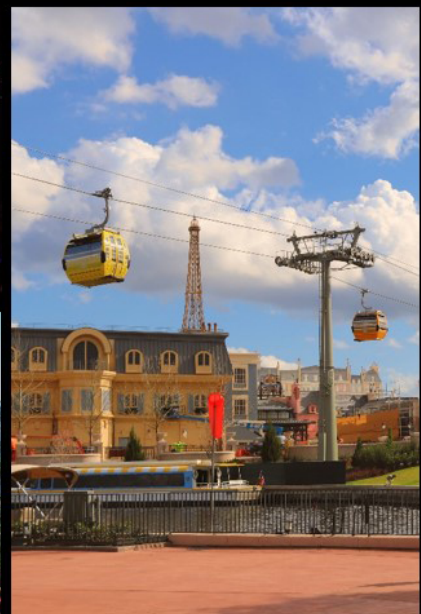
## TO ENTER IS EASY

Submit your photos and captions to [nbta.communications@nbta.ca](mailto:nbta.communications@nbta.ca) Winners will be announced on social media.

**Duration: March 28 - May 6, 2022**



High School teachers and your students  
Now booking **March Break 2023** (our 6<sup>th</sup> year)  
Escape our winter for fun, sun and education  
Information: [www.buchananthemedtours.ca](http://www.buchananthemedtours.ca)



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## Worried About Retirement?

*By Margery Nichol, General Manager, NBTA Credit Union*

Like many people, I have mixed feelings about retirement. I am looking forward to not having to drive in the winter unless I want to, not having to set my alarm clock unless I want to, and not having to turn on my computer unless I want to. On the other hand, I will have to adjust to possibly having too much time on my hands, spending more time with my spouse, and collecting my pension and making it last to the next month.

On that note, it was recommended to me that I work out my monthly budget before I walk out of my office door for the last time. Most of us have moved away from using cash and the convenience of a debit card can make it hard to keep track of what we are spending each day. So, a budget is very important.

It was also recommended that I speak to my financial advisor to get the best advice for my retirement allowance. The first thing he told me was to never (ever) take my retirement allowance in cash. He told me to check my last notice of assessment to see how much contribution room I have left for an RRSP. He also gave me great advice on the timing of my retirement. I might not be ready for everything retirement brings but with some expert advice I feel better prepared for this next phase of my life.

CONGRATULATIONS to all our teachers retiring in 2022!



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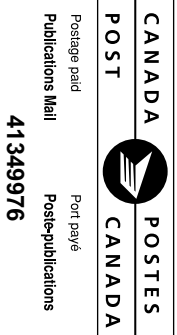


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