

Connected

empowering teachers • inspiring students • elevating communities

Refocus on the classroom

Leading Political Action

Navigating Turbulent Times Together



NBTA

New Brunswick
Teachers' Association

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Your NBTA, Your Magazine

Have you ever thought about writing something for the *ConnectED* (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 *ConnectED* or to submit an article, contact Chantal Lafargue, editor of *ConnectED* by email at chantal.lafargue@nbta.ca or nbtanews@nbta.ca.

We look forward to hearing from you!

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From the President's Desk

Autumn has been a busy season, and I can't believe it's December already! Since my update in September, I have been proud to represent you through media interviews, meetings with representatives from the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, and educational partners. I've also attended numerous NBTA events, whether in branches or with NBTA committees. Thank you for the warm welcome and expressions of support that I've received throughout the province as I've begun my mandate.

The first NBTA Board of Directors' meeting of the school year was held October 4-6. During this meeting, we welcomed the following new directors: Jillian Wilton (0820), Jennifer Wright (1021), Jessica Cyr (1450), Carrie Ross (1610), and alternate director Liza Muise (0820), who is replacing Warren Coombs for the year. Board members volunteered to create a short video recap for all NBTA members, which was a change from historical practice, and this received positive feedback from members. More changes are on the way as we continue to align practice with our new organizational identity.

With the signing of the collective agreement behind us, I've turned my focus to the major issues we're facing in our classrooms. Unfilled absences continue to be a daily challenge at many schools, and government officials' lack of urgency to address this is frustrating. At every opportunity, your staff is ringing the alarm bells, and I encourage all members to continue to use our political action strategy to educate decision-makers and the public about the daily realities in our classroom. The ask is simple: it's time to refocus on classrooms.

The need for an educational budget that meets the demands of today's classrooms is crucial to our future, as every child deserves an opportunity to learn and excel. The perpetual shortage of human resources available to service the education system is staggering. Many teachers with whom I have spoken feel overwhelmed by the increasing expectations when services to address current needs are inaccessible or simply don't exist.

New Brunswick is not immune to the steady increase in classroom violence, and the protests in September have only fuelled debates that have created more division with-

in our school communities. These are extremely challenging times, but despite the distractions, I am confident teachers are doing all they can to ensure schools welcome and affirm every student regardless of race, national or ethnic origin, language, colour, ancestry, religion, sex, age, mental or physical disability, political belief, sexual orientation, gender identity, or expression.

New Brunswick schools and classrooms reflect the realities we are seeing in our communities right now —increased episodes of disrespect, online hate, child poverty, hunger, homelessness, abuse, addictions, and declining mental health to name a few. Mitigating these root-cause realities must be a government priority. A strong public education system is evidence of a society's commitment to levelling the playing field and creating equal opportunities for children to succeed.

It is time our elected officials step up and work alongside educators to address issues at the school community and classroom level. The government must also prioritize a comprehensive retention and recruitment strategy specifically for teachers, involving all educational partners. New Brunswick simply can't wait any longer; our future depends on it.

As for me, I am now settling into my new position and the hectic pace it entails. When I am not in a meeting or fighting for the changes mentioned above, I am trying to visit as many schools as possible and to see all the great work you, as teachers and principals, are doing to support students. Perhaps in December, I'll get around to decorating my office as I celebrate my fiftieth birthday on the seventh . . . but first things first!

In solidarity,

Peter



NBTA launches campaign to refocus on the real issues affecting N.B. students

On November 14, 2023, the NBTA called on Premier Blaine Higgs and his provincial government to refocus on the real challenges in classrooms.

"Teachers didn't choose this profession to be involved in controversy, but we've become caught up in recent political debates that don't reflect what's happening in classrooms and ignore the perspective of those who support students directly: our teachers," said NBTA president Peter Lagacy.

This campaign seeks to apply pressure on the provincial government to commit to a long-awaited teacher retention and recruitment strategy and increase funding for public education that directly supports teachers at the classroom level.

"I hope that by releasing these survey results and these first-hand experiences of teachers, we can refocus the attention of our Premier and his government to help us fill the critical gaps in our province's public education system," Lagacy said.

The effort seeks to elevate the voices of teachers through a survey and first-person anecdotes about the state of learning environments in the anglophone public education system. The poll was administered confidentially through a digital survey tool to NBTA's approximately 6,400 members and was available for 36 hours. A total of 2,916 individuals responded, although not every respondent answered every question, it received responses from teachers at all levels in the public school system and all levels of teaching experience.

The NBTA launched a website with the survey results and calls to action, including a toolkit which advises teachers and their allies on how to engage provincial politicians and encourage decision-makers to refocus their efforts to protect public education, support teachers and rebuild schools to the standard children deserve.



9 out of 10

...teachers reported being concerned for students due to the absence of mental health support or other care because of shortages within the system.

Refocus on the classroom



Trust and Respect School Communities

"As a veteran teacher, I'm extremely disillusioned with the direction and attention our current government is giving to education."

- NB Teacher

Refocus on the classroom



8 out of 10

...teachers reported having helped students find clothing or food over a recent two-week period.

Refocus on the classroom



Stop the Distractions

"Class compositions have drastically changed along with the increase of diagnoses and decline in mental health.

We are struggling to fill the academic gaps left from COVID (online learning and lack of instruction) on top of dealing with daily behaviour whether that be verbal, physical, social or emotional."

- NB Teacher

Refocus on the classroom



Protect Public Education

"I have been asked almost daily to cover classes for my colleagues as there have been no replacements."

- NB Teacher

Refocus on the classroom



A recent survey found...

6 out of 10

...teachers have considered leaving the teaching profession or the province to teach elsewhere.

Refocus on the classroom



Protect Public Education

Stop the Distractions

Trust and Respect School Communities

Refocus on the classroom



47%

...of teachers reported experiencing verbal or physical violence at work during a recent two-week period.

Refocus on the classroom



Refocus on the classroom



Political Action Toolkit for Teachers

Teachers have diverse political views, so the NBTA encourages its 6,400 members to become actively engaged in the political process.

Individual teachers may choose to align directly with specific political parties, but the Association works to educate and influence all parties, legislators, and community leaders about issues impacting publicly funded public education and the teaching profession in New Brunswick. Teachers can help with this important work.

There are many ways to get involved in political action, both individually and collectively as local branches, in ways that are consistent with the Code of Professional Conduct.

That said, teachers must not be political or doctrinaire within the classroom or use students to gain political interest.

Here are some actions that the NBTA recommends.

Individual Action: How can I get involved?

Educate Yourself



Access NBTA's recent messaging on [key issues](#).



[Find out who your MLA is](#), who else is running in your riding during an election, and who are the opposition critics for education.

Engage and Educate Political Leaders



Contact your MLA and other parties' representatives (by phone, email, social media, at town halls, events, or visiting the constituency office).



Ask them what their views are on education and on the specific policies being proposed by the NBTA. Don't be afraid to share your personal, first-hand experiences with your MLA — these are the most powerful!



Follow up in writing after a meeting or conversation, and stay in regular contact with your MLA (or other parties' representatives/candidates) to educate them on issues, clarify facts, and provide feedback.



Attend in-person or virtual town halls/engagement sessions hosted by local political leaders. If given the opportunity to share your thoughts, don't be afraid to do so!

Join a Party



Voice your solutions for education issues from within a political party of your choosing.



Promote resolutions within political parties that focus on education.



Support a candidate in your riding in the next election.



Become a candidate in your riding in the next election.

Model Active Citizenship



Be a role model for active citizenship in your community.



Initiate opportunities for teacher voice(s) to be heard in the democratic process in your community.

Remember, you don't need to be an expert on every NBTA policy position. Share your own experiences, and if someone asks a question you don't know the answer for, tell them you'll get back to them with an answer.

Refocus on the classroom

Political Action Toolkit for Teachers

Collective Action: How can you help the NBTA get involved?

Lead Your Community Conversation



Watch what your MLAs (or candidates) are saying and doing to support education.



Share NBTA-endorsed public messaging, in any of the following ways, to the extent you are comfortable. Combine that messaging with your own personal experience on the job:

- In person, one community member and one conversation at a time, with a focus on your personal experiences.
- On your personal social media.
- In conversations with elected representatives.
- At community gatherings.

Lobby Political Leaders and Elected Community Members



Help host or attend networking opportunities and invite local MLAs, riding association representatives, or candidates to meet with teachers.



Invite members of your local Parent-School Support Committees (PSSC), District Education Councils, and Home and School Associations to participate in networking opportunities.



Clarify the facts and [propose solutions](#) that will positively impact schools.



Suggest a visit to schools for some experiential learning.



Keep the conversation going by pressing for change and follow up on commitments or actions promised.

Protect Public Education
Stop the Distractions
Trust and Respect School Communities

supportededucation.ca

Refocus on the classroom



Navigating turbulent times together

Sara Hayward,
Teacher Counsellor and Wellness Coordinator



I am enjoying my time as the newest team member of the New Brunswick Teacher Counselling and Wellness Program. I enter this role following a teaching career that started at the high school level and moved into elementary guidance before I became a member of a Child and Youth Mental Health Team with the New Brunswick Integrated Service Delivery Model. I am a licensed counselling therapist with the College of Counselling Therapists of New Brunswick and a member of the Canadian Counselling Psychotherapy Association. Outside of my role as a teacher, I have over a decade of experience in a community counselling agency, counselling youth, adults, couples, and families facing numerous issues.

I use an eclectic and integrated approach to meet the unique needs of each client. I believe the therapeutic relationship formed with individuals is the foundation for counselling. In addition, I tend to rely on these two principles: the only way out is through, and avoidance can serve as a huge roadblock when working to master life's challenges.

Throughout my counselling career, I have had the privilege to work with many clients in the 2SLGBTQIA+ community. Over the past decade, I have developed a strong knowledge base for working with individuals who are transgender/gender variant. This knowledge has been gained through training with the World Professional Association for Transgender Health (WPATH), collaborative work with medical professionals in New Brunswick, ongoing research, and through my work with my clients.

In my experience and observation, 2023 has been very difficult to navigate for members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community and allies. Allies within education are needed more than ever and are vital in supporting 2SLGBTQIA+ colleagues and students in a turbulent time that has caused fear for safety, anxiety, and other concerns for members of our school communities. Collectively we are supported by two NBTA policies, originally adopted in 1996 and 2002, which the NBTA Board of Directors reaffirmed as amended on April 14, 2023, at the recommendation of the NBTA Diversity and Social Justice Committee.

It is important for each of us to recognize that it is a difficult time to be an educator in New Brunswick. I challenge each of us to take the time to remind ourselves what led us to the profession in the first place. For many of us, we wanted to make a difference. You continue to make a difference. In addition, seeking out the support that you need within the profession can be helpful. Fellow educators and students are beacons of light if we take the time to pay attention to them. Finally, I believe that if we know better, we do better, but the desire to know better is key.

Remember, you have access to the New Brunswick Teacher Counselling and Wellness Program, and we are here to support you and your wellness. Some protective factors for me are golfing, kayaking, reading, watching movies, spending time with others, travelling, and volunteering (much of which is done in a sports setting). In these times, activities such as this provide me with some perspective, outlets to connect with, and joy.

What do you do for self-care that brings you joy? All too often when asked this question we think big, but it is the cumulation of the little things that helps with our overall wellness. Writer Anne Lamott sums the self-care concept up well: "Almost everything will work again if you unplug it for a few minutes, including you."

NBTA Policies 927 & 929

927 — Sex, Gender Identity and Expression, Sexual Orientation Equity*

1. NBTA believes that the Employer (EECD/School Districts) is responsible to ensure that students and staff are not disadvantaged because of their sex, their gender identity, nor their gender expression. Sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, and sex (including pregnancy) are all protected grounds against discrimination and harassment in accordance with the New Brunswick Human Rights Act.
2. NBTA believes that the Employer (EECD/School Districts) is responsible for developing and delivering programs and practices that promote equity of sex, gender identity, and gender expression.
3. NBTA believes that the Employer (EECD/School Districts) is responsible to support member awareness and employment of inclusive practices. Members should be aware that the intersections of a person's identity may increase their likelihood of experiencing oppression, and that this should not be assumed about all people with diverse genders.
4. Positive action should be taken to establish equitable practices such as:
 - (a) access to programs;
 - (b) the delegation of responsibilities in school based on merit (e.g., capacity, qualifications, skills, certifications), and not on gender and sex stereotypes;
 - (c) instructional materials and practices that reflect multiple gender and sex identities and the freedom to develop individual identities;
 - (d) recognition of bias and the use of just practices when engaging in evaluations;
 - (e) inclusive and non-discriminatory language, especially when using pronouns, addressing groups, and recognizing preferred names;
 - (f) career counselling that is based on the needs and interests of the individual and not on gender;
 - (g) the right to equal access to facilities, including washrooms and changing facilities that work toward increasing the dignity of all sexes and gender identities.

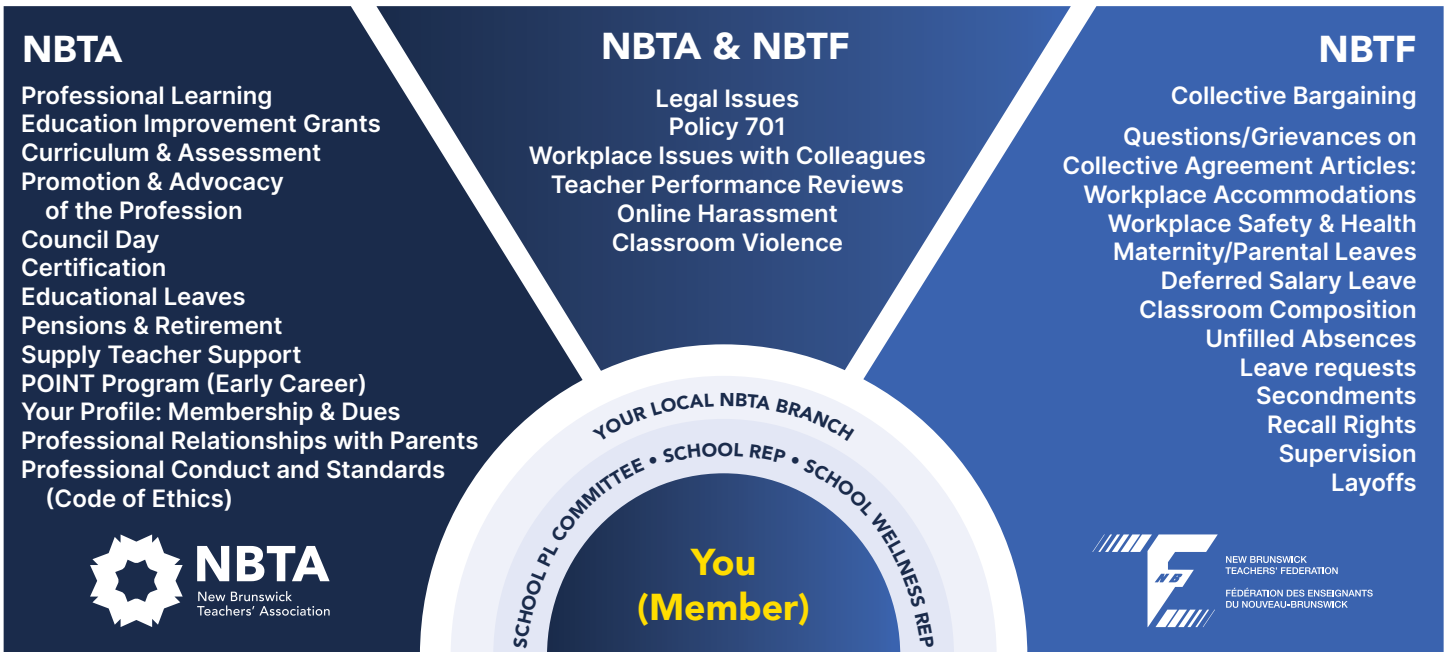
929 — Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI)* DEFINITIONS

In the past, the New Brunswick Teachers' Association (NBTA) has attempted to include definitions of key terms in this policy. Language pertaining to sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) continues to evolve and we recognize the authority of Egale to provide the most recent and respectful language and definitions. (See Egale's [Terms and Concepts](#) document. For more information about Egale www.egale.ca)

1. NBTA declares itself to be an ally of people with a diverse sexual orientation and/or gender identity and 2SLGBTQIA+ communities. The NBTA advocates for educational systems that are safe, welcoming, inclusive, and affirming for all sexual orientations and gender identities/expressions.
2. NBTA affirms:
 - a) that the role of teachers is critical in creating positive societal change to address the realities of 2SLGBTQIA+ matters for students, families, teachers, and members of school staff;
 - b) that an assumption of heterosexuality as the default sexual orientation throughout the school system is an impediment to achieving the goals of this policy;

- c) that SOGI diverse people have the right to:
 - be free from harassment, discrimination and violence;
 - be treated fairly, equitably and with dignity;
 - self identification and freedom of expression;
 - be included and to be represented and affirmed in a positive and respectful manner;
 - have avenues of recourse (without fear of reprisal) available to them when they are the target of harassment, discrimination and violence;
 - have their cultures, histories, communities, and unique health needs valued and affirmed;
 - have flexible, gender-neutral school attire expectations.
 - universally designed washroom facilities that are safe and provide dignity;
 - assemble with all the support and protections that are afforded all other groups;
 - the right to counselling that is supportive and affirming.
 - (d) Transgender people have the right to:
 - (i) have their legal gender and sex assigned at birth kept confidential;
 - (ii) be addressed by a name and pronoun corresponding to their gender identity; and,
 - (iii) safe facilities and the right to use a washroom that best corresponds to their gender identity.
3. The NBTA will work in support of initiating comprehensive SOGI inclusive education that promotes equitable and safe learning environments.
 4. The NBTA believes:
 - That SOGI inclusive education must include accurate representation across the curriculum, materials, pedagogy, policies, practices, and learning environments
 - That leaders of SOGI diverse programming (e.g., Gender Sexuality Alliance) and teachers delivering SOGI inclusive sexual health) need clearly articulated protections in place to ensure their safety and an increased sense of security.
 5. The NBTA believes that effective SOGI inclusive education entails that:
 - (a) teachers reflect on their personal biases, educate themselves, and model respectful interactions;
 - (b) teachers must take actions to make schools safe for staff, students and families of all sexual orientations and gender identities as outlined in EECD Policy 713.
 - (c) teachers must have access to ongoing professional learning opportunities to enhance knowledge and confidence in delivering SOGI inclusive education;
 - (d) the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development will uphold the requirements as outlined in Policy 713.

***Adopted in 1996 and 2002 respectively, and reaffirmed as amended on April 14, 2023**



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Wellness and Teacher Counselling

Individual or group counselling • Crisis response in schools • Wellness workshops and programming

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Thank you to the approximately 75 NBTA school reps who signed up to participate in a School Rep Basics session through the NBTA Leadership Empowerment Series offerings. Sessions took place in Bathurst, Fredericton, Saint John, and Hampton between September 28 and October 17. The session focused on the primary responsibilities of the school rep, including mandates, communication, and networking. Intermediate (virtual options) and Advanced (F2F) offerings begin in February 2024.

Essentials for NBTA School Reps

Learning Experience II: Beyond the Basics: Digging Deeper into the Role of the NBTA School Rep.

Description: This learning experience will consist of asynchronous and synchronous virtual 30-minute sessions of a variety of topics.

Availability: Launching Feb. 2024

Learning Experience III: Your NBTA School Committee: Advanced Skills for School Reps. & Friends — Relational Trust and Role Connection

Description: Your school-based team is getting it done and this session will take you to new heights! Bring together your school-based NBTA team (PL Committee, school reps, wellness rep) for conversation, reflection, self-assessment, and goal-setting that will guide you towards elevating the school-based support for your colleagues and students.

Availability: Feb. 2 & 3, 2024. Registration details coming soon at www.nbta.ca

Is my school better because I lead it?

Michael Butler, Director Member Benefits and Services









In my role supporting school leaders, I am continually looking to further my own professional learning. I recently had the opportunity to hear Principal Baruti Kafele deliver a talk entitled “Is my school better because I lead it?” During that keynote he repeated a mantra that resonated with me: *You are the number one determinant of the success or failure of your students.*

That statement elevates the importance of the role our school leaders play — and places a heavy weight upon those who fill those positions. It also underlies the necessity of having a cohesive and effective program to ensure current school administrators, and those who will fill those roles in the future, continually improve their own knowledge and skills, with the ultimate goal of ensuring our teachers have the support they need for their students.

During my sixteen years in school administration, I had the opportunity to participate in some very effective, collaborative professional learning opportunities, but I also experienced times where my own professional growth was stymied by the ever-increasing demands our school leaders face. For schools to thrive our leaders must be able to access the professional learning they need and deserve.

This year, NBTA is co-chairing an initiative involving multiple partners designed to bring a comprehensive and coordinated approach to supporting the professional learning of current and aspiring school leaders. This, along with the ongoing work of our NBTA In-School Administrators’ Committee, has me optimistic about our ability to offer current and future school leaders the ongoing professional learning they need to ensure our schools are better because they lead them.

Pension Information Sessions 2023-2024

What?	When?	Where?
Purchasing or Transferring Previous Service	Tuesday, October 10 7:00 – 8:00 p.m.	Teams 
Comprehensive Pension Seminar	Saturday, November 4 9:30 – 11:30 a.m. Deadline to register: Oct. 16, 2023	Teams 
Using the Vestcor Pension Calculator	Monday, January 15 4:00 – 4:45 p.m.	Teams 
Comprehensive Pension Seminar	Monday, January 29 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. Deadline to register: Jan. 8, 2024	Teams 
Comprehensive Pension Seminar	Saturday, February 3 *DATE CHANGE* 9:30 – 11:30 a.m. Deadline to register: Jan. 15, 2024	Sussex Regional High School
Retirement Allowance Pre-Retirement Vacation	Monday, March 25 4:00 – 5:00 p.m.	Teams 
Pension Plan information for Supply Teachers	Monday, April 15 4:00 – 5:00 p.m.	Teams 

Register at www.nbta.ca

World Teachers' Day National Townhall: A Focus on Teacher Retention and Recruitment

Nika Quintao, Director Public Affairs, CTF/FCE



In an atmosphere of celebration and reflection, the Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF/FCE) launched its first World Teachers' Day townhall on October 5, 2023, in Ottawa. The event welcomed teachers, education stakeholders, and members of Parliament both in person and via livestream.

In her opening remarks, CTF/FCE President Heidi Yetman zeroed in on the teacher retention and recruitment crisis. "Many factors have contributed . . . including a growing student population . . . increasing teacher workload, deteriorating working conditions, and chronic underfunding."

Yetman went on to note that recent conversations with global partners recognize a need for significant structural shifts to the profession: "this structural shift must include the voices of teachers. Your professional voices need to be heard."

Lending a voice to the profession's ongoing transformation was the night's first guest speaker, Kristina Salciccioli, department head at Hamilton's Cathedral High School (OEC-TA). Focusing on the myriad shifts she's witnessed throughout her twenty-five-year career, Salciccioli painted a vivid picture of the impacts of digital technology on pedagogy and student life. She pointed to the ever-present issue of bullying in the age of smartphones, somberly offering, "I had a student once say to me that 'the bullying never stops,' because they carry it with them . . . in their hand." The audience fell silent. In equal measure, Salciccioli reflected on the progress she's witnessed over the last two decades, specifically regarding inclusivity and the 2SLGBTQQIA+ community.

The night's keynote panel discussion welcomed Martin Shields, MP for Bow River (CPC), Niki Ashton, MP for Churchill-Keewatinook Aski (NDP), and Carol Sarich, president of the Canadian Association of Principals. The three offered

expansive yet often intersecting perspectives on the challenges facing the profession. When asked about the role of the federal government, Shields pointed to underused funding to support educational and employment pathways for Indigenous youth.

Ashton followed: "education on First Nations is a federal responsibility . . . there has been some funding in the last number of years, but nowhere near enough. The recruitment and retention crisis on First Nations is . . . I would argue acute. It is particularly bad in remote communities."

Mining direct insights from her membership, Sarich offered sobering examples of the crisis's impact from classroom sizes and complexity to the nationwide rise of school-based violence. "There are a lot of people who are starting to really move away from teaching, especially in those first five years," she said.

MP Shields offered up perhaps the most salient issue facing the crisis. "I believe that the public doesn't know. When my wife was told by our granddaughter, 'Oh, I went home today because we didn't have classes because there were no teachers,' my wife was upset that this was happening, but she didn't know . . . She didn't know."

In her closing remarks, President Yetman reiterated the vital importance and inherent nobility of the teaching profession. Most notably, she insisted that the teacher-retention and recruitment crisis demands not only our collective attention but innovative solutions possible only through inspired collaboration.

Founded in 1920, the CTF/FCE is a national alliance of provincial and territorial teachers' organizations that represents over 365,000 teachers and education workers across Canada. The CTF/FCE is also an affiliate of Education International, which represents more than 32 million educators.



Curriculum gets fresh look

Kimberly Bauer, Director of Learning and Achievement, EECD



The New Brunswick Department of Education and Early Childhood (EECD) staff and educators began collaborating on modernizing curriculum in 2018. After much hard work behind the scenes, the revamped “holistic curriculum” was introduced at the start of the 2023-24 school year. To tell you about the changes and how they pertain to you, we’re providing you answers to frequently asked questions.

What are your roles and responsibilities?

According to the Education Act, a teacher must maintain their professional competence. When a curriculum that you’re teaching is released, you need to start using it. But there’s no expectation you will have fully implemented it the first year unless there’s something in the old curriculum that’s no longer true. If you’re new to the area, and the curriculum is new as well, you’d start using the new curriculum.

What are the changes to the curriculum process and why?

We had curriculum at various stages of checking and validation. We found some really old curriculum. The older the curriculum, the heavier the lift for the teacher to change if they’ve been teaching it all along. We consulted with teachers, and you told us there’s too much in the curriculum and a lot of times it’s vague. So, we worked to develop a format that everyone will use and have put it on a digital platform. To have a digital platform that’s streamlined, the format must be consistent. That influenced some changes in some areas, but we worked hard to stay as close as possible to the curriculum that existed previously, unless a critical change was needed.

Who writes curriculum, and what is the process?

When a curriculum is identified for review, initial research is undertaken to look at other jurisdictions and key learnings in the field. Once this is completed, we bring together a small team of experts. That’s usually a few teachers, a coordinator, and someone who is an expert in the field and/or someone who teaches at a university or community college. It really depends on the curriculum area. They intensely work to develop the essential curriculum. Once that is solid, a companion document is developed by an expert teacher or an expert in the field. As soon as a draft is ready, we upload it for feedback. It’s completely transparent, and at any time, you can send feedback to curriculum.feedback@gnb.ca, which is checked every few days. Just put the title of your curriculum area in the subject line, so your feedback can be properly directed.

What does an implementation year mean?

The year a curriculum is released, you have the full year to adjust to the changes. If you’re a new teacher, you use the new curriculum. But if you’ve been teaching for a number of years, you should take that opportunity to adopt and adapt and plan for how you will integrate the changes over the next year.

How do we know what curriculum will be developed and where to find resources?

We have a three-year development cycle, which can be found on a Sharepoint called “Resources and Instructional Tools.” When we update a curriculum, we provide a one-page briefing on what’s changed and why. We also encourage you to check out the current curriculum offerings through this digital platform: <https://curriculum.nbed.ca/>

How does the new digital platform work and what does that mean for high school?

You told us the curriculum doesn’t really reflect all the things you’re expected to do. The curriculum design, this time, is a holistic curriculum. There are seven shared tenets — which are so important to the learning environment — that every school is expected to implement as part of the curriculum. Six pedagogies have been identified, which are overarching areas to the instructional approaches that support learning. These were identified because teachers have indicated that they are tired of the constantly changing terminology. In order to recognize the importance of behaviours, the dispositions we agree to foster and model for how we learn together have been adopted. We want these characteristics to be consistent from grade to grade, as one unified message from all of us over time can have an impact on behaviours. In each learning expectation, we’ve embedded alignment to Global Competencies, which we adopted in 2018.

Not all high school curriculum is in the new format. What is the expected date to have all high school curriculum updated?

The digital platform provides the curriculum framework that outlines the standard. The full complement of courses for high school won’t be on the digital platform until the end of 2027, because there are more than 150 high school courses to update. Still, we are ahead of schedule. Some courses are in the new format, and for ease of access, we have created special links for those that have not yet been updated. You’ll also start to see companion documents as they are completed and resource bundles as teachers develop them.



The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development's anglophone sector provided a holistic curriculum update to more than 100 EECD colleagues and educators at Moncton Legends on Sept. 13. Photos: Bruce Hallihan/EECD



What are the resources for teachers?

In 2014 a waste walk was conducted, and EECD found that a large percentage of purchased resources were not being used. Some resources were still in packaging, years after they were provided. At that time there was a shift to providing districts with funding for resourcing curriculum. EECD does provide some resources, especially those that need to be custom-made, but for the most part it identifies resources and facilitates the sharing of teacher-created resource bundles. Aside from resource bundles, the funding going to

schools for curriculum was increased last year by about \$57 per student. This might mean new books for the language arts classroom, new equipment for the science lab, or new instruments for music class. How curriculum resource funds are allocated is up to your school team. If a specific need is identified that is best funded through a large purchase (e.g., changes to tools and equipment for skilled trades), EECD will facilitate this approach.

One Team. Twelve Nations.



Lisa Martin, NBTA Branch 1454

Since its inception in the early nineties, Saint Mary's Academy (SMA) has been a very small school. The increasing arrival of immigrants in the area, however, has almost doubled the school's population in the last year.

Recently, several students approached English as an additional language teacher Bethany Toner about forming a soccer team. To make this happen, she asked Kevin Topolniski if he would volunteer to coach. Next, she started contacting parents to see if they were willing to let their kids play for the school. She reached out to the City of Edmundston to book time to use the field at Cité des Jeunes, and she found uniforms for the team. She also applied for grants from Acadian Timber and Soccer New Brunswick and held a bingo fundraiser at the school. Not only did Bethany ensure students had transportation to practices, but she also went to both home and away games. She was the driving force behind this wonderful opportunity for students. For the first time in fifteen years, the school has a soccer team —although, to use what most of the players consider its true name, we should call it football.

Coach Topolniski and his loyal assistant, Ms. Bailey, had one goal: for the kids to have fun. At first, the coach was looking at students from grades 7 to 12. In the end, the

team grew to include grade 6 students. Players were from twelve countries all over the world and spoke different languages, and they had to practise together and learn each other's style of play. But when they met on the soccer pitch, age did not matter, nor did skill level. Everyone played, and all were included.

Coach Topolniski and Ms. Bailey never deviated from this plan to unite students from Cameroon, Haiti, Serbia, Benin, Russia, Japan, Saudi Arabia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Madagascar, South Sudan, and Canada. At first, for the most part, the players did not know each other. School staff gathered at local games to yell encouragement, and the team began to believe in themselves, as did their spectators. It did not matter that they played against teams of high school students. Language did not matter. Style of play did not matter. None of that mattered because they became a TEAM, and all that mattered was the game.

Did they win it all? No, they did not. Against all expectations, they went to the playoffs and won their first game. They held their own against a very strong team from Fredericton and were so very heartbroken when they were defeated. But they became one group, one school, and one entity.



All but four players will be back next year: one is graduating, two brothers moved away, and the other is a visiting international student. New students are moving into the area all the time. More will join next season, and sixteen of them will be back to give Saint Mary's Academy more hope. They will have grown in a year: physically, emotionally, and cognitively. The sky is the limit! On the pitch, all that matters is belief in their teammates, a little encouragement from their school community, great coaches, and absolute love for the game of football.



Council Day: May 3, 2024

Dawn Beckingham, Director of Professional Learning



Councils are professional learning communities dedicated to the life-long learning and the ongoing professional growth of NBTA members. The Elementary, Middle Level and High School Councils share a common mission: To promote and foster opportunities for professional learning, communications and curriculum assistance for the teachers of New Brunswick. NBTA members select the Council they wish to join annually as part of the NBTA member registration process. The preferred Council does not need to reflect current grade level/position.

Each May, the Councils organize a day of professional learning organized for teachers, by teachers. Here are some must-knows for Council Day 2024:

There will be a virtual option for all teachers who are unable to attend an in-person event.

- Elementary Council and Art strand is hosting in Fredericton.
- Middle Level Council and Music strand is hosting in Saint John.
- High School Council and Physical Education strand is hosting in Moncton.

The message that Council Day 2024 will not be accepting any alternate proposals is slowly making its way to members. This decision was made by the three NBTA Council executive members at their joint meeting last spring. This is a group of approximately 40 volunteer teachers from around the province who work on your behalf to plan Council Day and make it a top-notch conference. They are always looking for extra support, so if this is of interest to you, please reach out.

NBTA Policy 612 lays out the guidelines for our three Council days that have been negotiated through collective bargaining. Currently, two of these days take place in August during the first week that teachers are back in school and the third day in May, which we all identify as "Council Day". Section 2 of this policy refers to alternate proposals.

Policy 612, Section 2. Alternate Proposals

"In the event that a teacher is unable to attend the Spring Council Conference, an alternative proposal for an independent professional learning activity should be submitted to the School-Based Professional Learning Committee four (4) weeks prior to the Council Day. (Guidelines for School-Based PL Committees are outlined in NBTA Members' Handbook and/or on NBTA Website at www.nbta.ca.)"

This policy was established for members who were unable to travel for various reasons. Because Councils will be offering a virtual option at Council Day this year, the three Council executives determined that alternate proposals were not necessary. If a member is not able to travel to the event in person, they can participate virtually. Details of the programs for the in-person and virtual events are not yet available but stay tuned for the next edition of ConnectED for more information.

Did you Know?

- If you present a session on Council Day, your expenses are covered, and you receive an honorarium.
- The call for presenters is currently live on the NBTA website.
- Each of the Councils is seeking classroom teachers who have a great presentation to offer. Great things are happening in your classroom. Consider giving a session.
- The more teachers we have offering sessions, the richer the programs will be!
- The deadline to submit a proposal to present a session is December 18th.



Elementary Council Day Theme:
Identity



Middle Level Council Day Theme:
Teachers in Harmony



High School Council Day Theme:
Stronger Together

Elementary Council



Elementary Council Members

Barbara Brown, council program chair, is the principal at Napan Elementary School in the North.

Misty Campbell, vice-president and awards, is a French immersion teacher at Nackawic Middle School in the West.

Sarah Christie, member at large, is a grade 1 French immersion teacher at Keswick Ridge School in the West.

Tracey Comeau, president, is a resource teacher at River-view Middle School in the East.

Melissa Gaudet, member at large and institutes chair, is a grade 1 French immersion teacher at New Maryland Elementary School in the West.

Stacey Killam, member at large and social team, is a kindergarten teacher and school counsellor at Montgomery Street School in the West.

Katherine Loughrey, member at large, is the principal at Stanley Consolidated School in the West.

Karen Miller, acting past president, is a grade 5 teacher at Royal Road Elementary in the West.

Patricia Miller, member at large, is a First Nation education and social studies lead with the Dalhousie Learning Centre in the North.

Lindsay Morris, secretary and exhibitors, is a grade 2 French immersion teacher at Keswick Ridge School in the West.

Francine Roul Beaulieu, member at large, is an FSL coach in the Anglophone South School District.

Jennifer Winchester, treasurer, is a primary teacher at L.E. Reinsborough School in the North.

Dawn Beckingham, NBTA staff member.

High School Council



High School Council Members

My name is Jake Estabrooks. I am currently teaching technology, art, and personal interest at St. Stephen High School. I am also the communications director for the High School Council.

My name is Megan Crosby, and I teach math and financial literacy at Harrison Trimble High School. My role on council this year is past president and on-site coordinator for Council Day 2024. In the past, I have served as treasurer and president.

My name is Mark Lobban. I am a methods and resource teacher at James M. Hill Memorial High School and have taught here for eight years. I am currently the secretary of the High School Council and have enjoyed my time working with council over the past few years. It has given me the opportunity to work with and get to know many high school colleagues.

My name is Andrew Champion, and I am in my seventeenth year of teaching. I've spent the last five years of my career teaching history at Fredericton High School. I currently hold the position of treasurer for the High School Council.

My name is Alice Walker, and I teach biology, geoscience, and essential skills at Bathurst High School. I am currently in my first year as institute chair on the High School Council, but I previously served on the council for four years as secretary and then as president and past president.

My name is Sheridan Mawhinney, and I teach grades 10 and 12 math as well as Spanish at Oromocto High School. This is my twenty-fourth year of teaching. I am currently the vice-president of the High School Council, but I have also served as president, awards chair, and as a member of the Finance and Institutes Committees.

My name is Tyler Green, and I teach at John Caldwell School in Grand Falls, New Brunswick. I am member-at-large and new to council. I am also on the NBTA Communications Committee.

My name is Martina Shannon, and I am a teacher at Saint John High School. This is my first year on council as a programmer.

My name is Tracey Dale, and I am a teacher at Fredericton High School. I have been an educator for over thirty years, and my role on council is member-at-large. I am looking forward to a great council this year!

High School Council

Great Canadian Partners for Social Studies Education in Canada

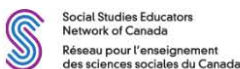
Laura McCarron, Fredericton High School

Social studies teachers in New Brunswick: did you know that there is a national not-for-profit organization working to bring you resources and teaching strategies? The Social Studies Educators Network of Canada (SSENC) is a network of professional social studies associations across Canada, representing all thirteen provinces and territories. The mission of SSENC is “to advocate and build capacity for high-quality social studies education by facilitating networking between educators and engaging with partners across Canada.” It partners with organizations including CIVIX, Samara Canada, THEN/HiER, Defining Moments Canada, Elections Canada, the Korean War Legacy Foundation, the Aga Khan Foundation Canada, the Collaborative, the Diefenbaker Centre Canada, and Canada’s History Society.

While New Brunswick does not have a professional association for social studies educators, we are members of SSENC with two representatives, Kevin Foster (ASD-E) and Laura McCarron (ASD-W), who attend monthly meet-


ings and vet resources for classroom use. Most recently, we represented SSENC at the May 2023 NBTA High School Council with a booth and two sessions on using resources on the Korean War. We will continue to collaborate with NBTA councils to offer social studies professional learning opportunities for all grade levels. This year we will host several sessions within the elementary council program that are relevant to K-12 social studies pedagogy and teaching resources. Stay tuned for more information on that.

In the meantime, we plan to produce newsletters to keep you informed of the latest resources available through SSENC’s partners. These will be posted on District Teams pages for social studies. We encourage you to visit SSENC’s website for more information about this organization and resources for the study of the Korean War: <https://sencressc.ca/> Also check out the New Brunswick Social Studies Educator Network on X @NBSSEN and SSENC on X @SSENCRESSC.



Français 

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Connecting
social studies
teachers
across Canada

The mission of the **Social Studies Educators Network of Canada** is to advocate and build capacity for high-quality social studies education by facilitating networking between educators and engaging with partners across Canada. [Learn More >](#)

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Saturday, Jan. 27, 2024

Harrison Trimble High School,
Moncton, NB

RSVP by January 12, 2024 to
alice.walker@nbed.nb.ca

POINT 2.0

Support for early-career teachers

Dawn Beckingham, Director of Professional Learning

As I meet with early-career teachers throughout the province, it's apparent that there is some confusion on which services apply to which teacher and who provides those services. This article clarifies the programs and services offered by the NBTA.

Currently two programs support new teachers. Although the leads of the two programs work together on some planning components of each, they are two separately funded entities.

POINT stands for Professional Orientation and Induction of New Teachers, and it's funded through the NBTA. This program aims to support teachers in their first five years. To qualify for the POINT program, you do not need to have a teaching contract. Your first five years of teaching is your cumulative experience of contract and supply time together. This means that POINT also supports supply teachers in their first years.

POINT provides access to one signature benefit per cohort year and can be accessed through your POINT representative. Each NBTA local branch has a POINT rep who acts as a support person to early-career teachers. If you don't know who your representative is, please inquire with your school or branch or contact me.

Here are the benefits:

Year 1 Cohort: Your NBTA branch will be provided funding to plan "Welcome to the profession" events for you.

Year 2 Cohort: You will be eligible to attend Compass, the NBTA early-career conference.

Year 3 and Year 4 Cohorts: You will be eligible to apply for one day's release time to attend a professional learning event of your choice. Details about how to apply will be sent to you early in the fall.

Year 5 Cohort: Your branch will be provided funding to plan support opportunities for you.

NTCL stands for New Teacher Learning Community and is funded through the New Brunswick Department of Education and Early Child Development. This program provides support for under-contract teachers in their first and second years. A lead at each of the districts plans local professional learning targeting new contract teachers. Through this program, a provincial conference is held in the fall and another in the spring. There are also virtual professional learning sessions offered on various topics.

Because the two programs have different criteria to qualify, it is very possible that you can be in two different groups and participate in both programs. For example, if this is your first year on contract and you have two previous cumulative years of long-term and/or day-to-day supply teaching, you would be in year 1 with NTLC and in year 3 with POINT. Confusing? Possibly.

If you have questions, reach out. You will receive support from someone, and your NBTA is here to help POINT you in the right direction.

TEACHER DESIGNED PROFESSIONAL LEARNING GRANTS 2024

by Kimberley McKay, Deputy Executive Director

INTRODUCTION

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.

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 upon student and teacher learning activities within a job-embedded context and supported by both time and resources is the ideal professional learning context.

WHAT IS A TEACHER DESIGNED PROFESSIONAL LEARNING GRANT?

TDPL is an annual school-based professional learning opportunity funded by the New Brunswick Teachers' Association. NBTA will award up to five \$1,500 grants for the calendar year January 2024 – December 2024. Interested teams of 3-5 teachers are invited to apply. Application forms will be available online after November 20th, 2023.

The TDPLG is intended to fund proposals from teachers who seek a peer leadership role in curriculum, instructional practice or supporting other teachers.

WHAT ARE THE GOALS OF THE TDPL GRANTS?

There are three goals associated with this grant:

1. support teacher professional learning within the context of improving student learning

2. foster teacher leadership
3. facilitate the sharing of exemplary practices

WHAT IS THE TDPL GRANT SELECTION PROCESS?

- Applicant teams develop a project proposal and complete an application form. Applications received after 4 pm on Thursday, December 11, 2023, will not be considered.
- The NBTA committee established to administer the grant fund will screen all applications received by the deadline. Proposal selection criteria are described in detail in the next section.
- Five successful team applicants will be notified by January 8, 2024. Start-up materials and funding will be delivered to each team.
- Unsuccessful team applicants will be notified by January 8, 2024.

WHAT IS THE SELECTION CRITERIA FOR TDPL GRANTS?

- I. The extent to which the project proposal is guided by characteristics of effective professional learning:
 - a. Coherent – project is designed within the context of both best practices for student learning and provincial/district/school mandates.
 - b. Goal-Oriented - project clearly connected to student learning, daily practice and provincial/district/school mandates.
 - c. Sustainable – proposal includes practice time, reflection time and a plan to progress over time with grant funding used for resources critical to the project.
 - d. Evidence-Informed – proposal considers current research as well as any formal or informal relevant data.
- II. The extent to which the project proposal demonstrates the following general characteristics:

- a. Quality – proposal is well thought out and realistic
- b. Impact – proposal has the potential to impact student development as well as the learning of participating teachers
- c. Measurable – project goals can be measured and clear description of how this will be done
- d. Sharing – proposal incorporates a specific plan for sharing the project with other educators
- e. Demographics – general consideration will be given to distributing grants to various levels (K-12) as well as geographic location, team composition, etc.

WHAT IS REQUIRED OF SUCCESSFUL TEAM APPLICANTS?

- meet with NBTA Staff Officer for a brief overview of TDPL requirements (school-based meeting/approx. 30 minutes)
 - carry out activities described in project proposal/application form
 - share project and team learning with colleagues via:
 - o Written article for *ConnectED* at project completion
- Or**
- o Team Choice (i.e. presentation to staff, offer Council Day session, electronic posting, etc.)
- submit a short report of the project using NBTA template
 - submit a financial report using NBTA template

Questions? Contact
kim.mckay@nbta.ca



NBTA
New Brunswick
Teachers' Association

Classroom Management 101

NBTA will once again be offering a full-day classroom management workshop in a location near you. The session is designed to support early-career teachers, but all levels of teaching experience are welcome. Join us to reflect on:

- Who you are and why that matters.
- Who your students are and why that matters.
- How to connect with students.
- An action plan moving forward.

If you are in year 3 or 4 of the NBTA POINT program, then you can use your professional learning release day to attend. Contact your local POINT rep for more details.

Register today by emailing Janet.Peabody@nbta.ca to save your seat for a session in your district:

- February 5 ASD-S at Saint John Ed Centre (Donaldson room)
- February 13 ASD-N at Bathurst Ed Centre (Chalmers board room)
- February 15 ASD-W at Woodstock Ed Centre (St. John room)
- February 24 ASD-E at Riverview Middle School



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 EECD Teacher Certification webpage. You should also contact your district office to ensure that supply teaching experience has been credited.

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 on the EECD Office of Teacher Certification webpage.

Don't forget to include the evaluation fee!

https://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/services/services_renderer.599.Teacher_Certification.html



NB Teacher Counselling &
Wellness Program

Strive for Five: Bringing yourself back to your preferred energy

Ronna Gauthier, Teacher Counsellor and Wellness Coordinator

In the counselling/psychology world, many charts, ladders, and diagrams explain the flow of energy through the nervous system. They demonstrate how mood, stress, and the feeling of being overwhelmed can impact the system. This use of imagery also helps to explain how to find your “flow” or “sweet spot.” Strive for five is another such explanation.

Think about your nervous system and its functioning as if on a scale of zero to ten. Zero is “shutdown” — a dark, low-energy feeling where very little is getting done. Ten is high emotion (anxiety and stress), over-activation, and where fight-flight-freeze-fawn occur. Some even refer to an eleven — that space beyond ten where you shove all the feelings and experiences of being at nine or ten down into the recesses of your body and move into autopilot.

The Magic Five is considered prime functioning. It’s that amazing feeling where the energy is moving freely. You are productive, motivated, accomplished, and activated in a positive way; you are “in the zone” with a good flow going.

Teaching in schools can sometimes be more of a seven-to-eight experience. There are hundreds of nervous systems interacting with one another, and some zeros, tens, and elevens

are in the mix. Also, many educators have challenging personal experiences that may mean they face high activation at home, as well. It is more important than ever that educators build “five” into their schedule as much as possible, to balance out the experience and return to regulation.

We encourage educators to intentionally think about and examine what their five looks and feels like. Getting to five, or having five experiences, is a very individual thing. For some it is time in nature, playing an instrument, doing a mindful activity with your students, coaching, reading a good book, a family meal, quiet time alone, an exciting time with others, a fun trip or outing, or a good workout at the gym.

If five experiences are embedded and prioritized into your daily/weekly/monthly schedule, you will discover that you recover more quickly from experiences on the outer range of the scale. It’s challenging, but we encourage educators to embed a few five activities into their workday, even if just for a few minutes. It does make a difference. Head over to the calendar on your fridge or laptop and have a look at your lesson plan. Are there five activities for you?

Growing the muscle of five results in less frequent and less intense ner-

vous system activation when exposed to stressful stimulus, and the time it takes to return to five is reduced.

The big key to success in growing and maintaining your five muscles is to be mindful, in the moment, free from judgment, and, if after school hours, unblended from work while the experience is happening. Mindful five experiences have the greatest and longest-lasting impact on nervous system regulation.

It is also beneficial to have a few strategies that help move you from the higher or lower ranges of the scale towards five. Simple strategies such as breathing, cross-body movement, short exposure to cold, signing or humming, and practising gratitude, all help energy to flow so you can get towards five. So many educators are now implementing these practices in their teachings that we are building students’ capacity to regulate. That is wonderful; thanks for that!

As we head into the winter season, the teacher counsellor teams wishes you health and happiness. It is hoped you find meaningful time to unblend from work and feel peace and contentment amidst the challenging times, and that you intentionally strive for five.

Listen to the
Official NBTA Podcast:

HighlightED
PODCAST

on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, Prime Music, Google Podcasts,
or wherever you find your favorite podcasts!

**January's Podcast:
Episode 5: Teacher Well-being: It Matters**

Join Dawn in a conversation with Ronna Gauthier and Michael LeBlanc, two NBTA Teacher Counsellors, as they highlight the importance of teacher well-being. They explain the New Brunswick Teacher Counselling and Wellness Program, explore the ins and outs of staying well, and emphasize that if teachers are well, schools are well.



NBTA Men Teachers Curling Bonspiel

**January 19-21, 2024
Carleton Curling Club, Saint John**

No more than 16 teams will be accepted on a first come, first served basis. Entries should include skip's name, and/or contact person with an active email address. (If you want to participate but aren't on a team, contact Terry.)

Send entries and cheque to:

**Terry Kilfoil, Chairperson
NBTA Men Teachers Curling Bonspiel
21 Meadow Drive
Rothesay, NB E2H 1K9
Tel: 506-847-5429
Email: kilfoilt@nbnet.nb.ca**



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