

ConnectED

empowering teachers • inspiring students • elevating communities

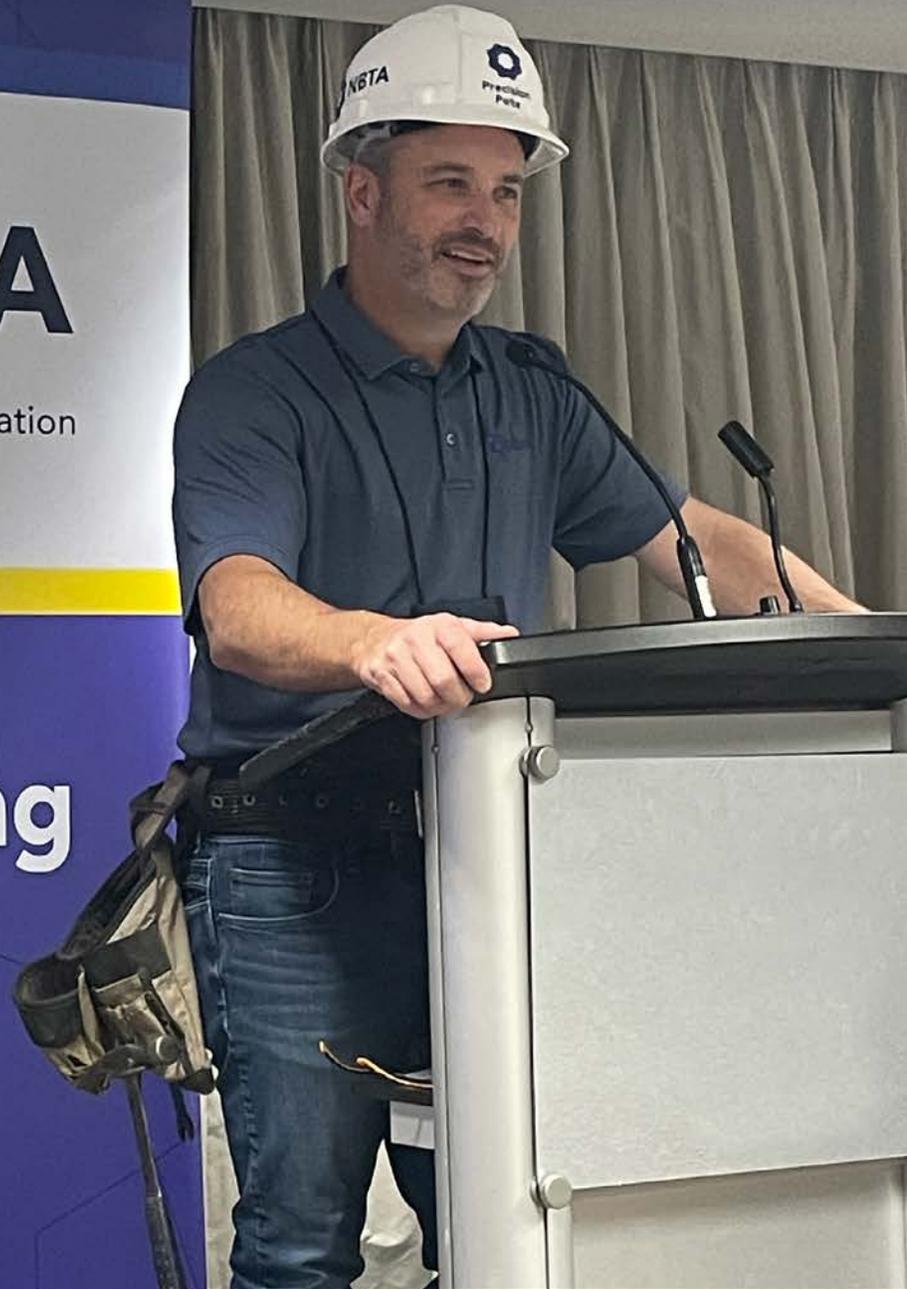
December 2024
Vol. LXII No. 2



NBTA

New Brunswick
Teachers' Association

Empowering Education



Branch Renovations

Report on EECD Steering Committee

Sports Ambassadors Program

In This Issue

- 4 Branch Renovations
- 6 Working Together to Address Our Challenges
- 8 Jim Dysart Receives Wayne Nightingale Award
- 10 Sports Ambassadors
- 13 Do you know a fantastic teacher?
- 14 Project Overseas: Belize
- 16 Stepping Up: Realizing Culturally Responsive Schools
- 18 TDPLG Information
- 19 Write a Letter, Change a Life
- 19 Governor General's History Award for Excellence in Teaching
- 20 PL Page
- 21 Council Page
- 22 From Surviving to Thriving



Your NBTA, Your Magazine

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ISSN 0317-5227

ConnectED is published four times a year.

Opinions expressed are those of the authors, not necessarily the NBTA.

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From the President's Desk

As I write this, the calendar has just turned to November. By the time you read it, I expect it will already be December, and you will be busy preparing for end-of-year celebrations and looking forward to a well-deserved break.

Since my last update, I have spent time representing you in various media interviews, meetings with government and community stakeholders, and at numerous NBTA events, such as Leadership 2024 and branch meetings, the Provincial Principal's and Vice-Principal's Conferences, and NBTA and NBTF committee meetings. I've also had opportunities to liaise with colleagues from the Council of Atlantic Provinces and Territorial Teachers' Organization (CAPTTO), the Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF/FCE), and the New Brunswick Society of Retired Teachers (NBSRT).

My recent visits to schools and conversations with members about their daily realities have provided current examples of the lived experiences of teachers. Thank you for the warm welcome and support you have offered me throughout the province. These interactions continue to inform discussions and decision-making at NBTA board meetings as we identify solutions to address longstanding challenges experienced by the teaching profession and the anglophone public education system. In the coming months, we will remain focused.

Government Relations and Advocacy

The election of Susan Holt, the first woman to serve as New Brunswick's premier, marks a significant milestone for our province. With her Cabinet members recently selected, I will seek opportunities to work with Claire Johnson, the newly appointed minister of education and early childhood development. NBTA will continue to press for immediate action to address the retention and recruitment of certified teachers, including new approaches to mitigate unfilled absences and class complexity. I am pleased that both topics were identified in the Liberal platform.

Another commitment that received much attention during the election campaign was addressing student hunger through a provincial breakfast and lunch program. While we applaud the desire to ensure a nutritious, sustainable, and comprehensive school food program, we will continue to voice the position that operationalization must not be the responsibility of teachers or school administrators, as their expertise is in student learning and well-being.

We will also continue to monitor the work identified by the partners at the Executive Steering Committee and continue to push for meaningful action to reach the school and classroom level, as noted in the accountability framework.

Collective Bargaining

Our collective agreement expires at the end of February 2026, and bargaining may commence up to six months prior to the expiration date. The Federation Committee on Terms and Conditions of Employment (FCTCE) will meet in February. FCTCE is mandated to review all submissions and propose an asking package to the NBTF Board of Directors. Branches have been requested to forward submissions to be considered for our asking package by December 13, 2024. This package will be reviewed and approved at the April NBTF board meeting and will remain embargoed until bargaining commences. Thank you to members who will serve on this committee, which plays a very important role in this process, and to all those who expressed an interest in serving in this capacity or who forwarded submissions for consideration.



Branch Renovations

Our NBTA leadership conference was held in Moncton on October 25-26 and focused on branch renovations. Branch leaders and delegates from across New Brunswick gathered to finalize the action plan for restructuring NBTA's twenty-seven branches into thirty. During this two-day event, participants collaborated within and across branches to develop blueprints, identifying key milestones leading up to their respective branch AGMs and the NBTA's provincial AGM in May 2025. Those branches not directly involved in reorganization also conducted a comprehensive review of their current operations and identified areas to enhance member engagement as outlined in *Insight 2024*, the most recent member-satisfaction survey. I believe all attendees left the event equipped with new approaches to work with you and serve teachers at the grassroots level. A special section is dedicated to this topic in this issue of *ConnectED*.

On behalf of the NBTA and NBTF, I want to extend our heartfelt thanks to all teachers and educational staff for your incredible efforts this fall. As you enjoy a well-deserved break with family and friends, please know that we are grateful for your commitment to our students. Wishing you a safe and happy holiday season as we welcome the arrival of 2025!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter Legacy". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

This is the house that **we** built.



Over 100 teacher leaders attended Leadership 2024 in Moncton on October 25-26. Under the theme of Branch Renovation, all NBTA branches conducted a comprehensive review of their current practices and identified areas to enhance, initiating local action plans to restructure NBTA's branches.



Identity Statement: Our Purpose, Values, and Culture

The New Brunswick Teachers' Association is the anglophone professional association and is the respected collective voice of its members. The NBTA works in collaboration with the NBTF (union), the AEFNB (francophone association), the EECD, and other stakeholders to advocate for the teaching profession, influence public policy, provide service, and offer opportunities for professional growth. The NBTA promotes a culture of belonging within the membership through its accessibility, visibility, informed and timely decision-making, and streamlined communication.

650

1903

HOW DID WE GET HERE?

Branch Reorganization Timeline

2019

Provincial AGM

Structure & Services Review
Recommendations: NBTA to reorganize from 27 to 30 branches.

2020

NBTA Board pauses reorganization due to COVID and recommends revisit after NBTF contract negotiations.

2024, January

NBTA Executive directs staff to action recommendation for decision at AGM 2024

2024, May

AGM adopts recommendation with specific 30 branch configuration.

2024, October Leadership

2025, August

Phase 2 of Branch renovation complete

In May 2019, the NBTA provincial AGM approved a recommendation to reorganize the current 27 NBTA branches into 30 branches and to do so following consultation with the branches in each district. In March 2020, action on this recommendation was paused due to both bargaining and then COVID. In January 2024, the NBTA Executive directed staff to action the 2019 recommendation in preparation for a recommendation to AGM 2024.

The goals of NBTA branch reorganization are:

- to implement a structure that allows effective representation of members across all branches;
- to implement a structure that can be leveraged to enhance member engagement; and
- to implement a structure that considers equitable size as a key consideration.

A poll conducted with current Branch Executives and School Representatives, saw 67% of respondents indicate that the decision should be made that represents what is in the best interest of the provincial organization long-term. Face-to-face consultations conducted in all four districts elicited themes of balancing urban and rural voice, planning for projected growth, impact on member engagement – both positive and negative, and perceptions of power.

The process to arrive at the Board of Directors' recommendation included five different rounds, including input from every NBTA Branch during consultations. The complete recommendation as adopted by our provincial AGM is below.

- Divide Branch 0215 (Moncton) into 3 Branches
- Divide Branch 1826 (Fredericton) into 3 Branches
- Combine Branch 0820 (Saint John) and Branch 0619 (KV) and divide into 4 Branches
- Combine Branch 1536 (Dalhousie) and Branch 1538 (Campbellton) into 1 Branch
- Combine Branch 1428 (Nackawic) & Branch 1429 (Woodstock) into 1 Branch *(Keswick Valley School to leave Branch 1428 and join Branch 1826)
- Combine Branch 1450 (Grand Falls) and Branch 1454 (Edmundston) into 1 Branch

The recommended new structure will maintain 30 directors, will increase from 27 to 30 branches, and will not cross district boundaries. Any approved recommendations will be implemented in August 2025, giving the NBTA a one-year transition period. The overall recommendation will directly impact 10 branches, with the other 17 branches remaining unchanged.

Working Together to Address Our Challenges: An Update from the NBTA on the work of the EECD Steering Committee

Ardith Shirley, NBTA Executive Director

As the dust settles after the recent provincial election, the New Brunswick Teachers' Association (NBTA) remains focused on addressing the issues that matter most to you and our profession. The shortage of certified teachers willing to work within the current realities remains one of the most pressing concerns affecting our schools and the quality of education for students across New Brunswick.

Your NBTA has been channeling efforts to improve this situation through the Executive Steering Committee, which Ryan Donaghy, Deputy Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development, invited us to co-chair alongside Assistant Deputy Minister Dr. Tiffany Bastin. The Association has actively participated in this committee and appropriate work groups since the NBTA Board of Directors accepted his invitation in April 2023.

Project teams have continued their work during the summer and early fall to make progress on the recommendations according to the scheduled accountability framework announced in April 2024.

Here's a glimpse of the progress made to date:

Recruitment

- The Government of New Brunswick has established a dedicated recruitment team focused on attracting teachers and health professionals.
- The first virtual job fair in Education was held on August 13, 2024, working with the Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training, and Labour. More than 2,100 people registered and learned about job openings in teaching and support roles across the province's seven school districts.
- A marketing campaign ran from August 7 to September 2 to encourage the province's recent education graduates to return to teaching in New Brunswick's K-12 classrooms. This campaign generated over 650,000 impressions on social media.

Retention

- EECD has funded a position at the NBTA to work full-time on the EECD project team to improve teacher retention strategies. NBTA conducted an exit survey, and focus groups of those who have recently left the system have been held.

- A working group has been formed to examine the school calendar and identify creative approaches to provide more flexibility during the work week, facilitating more access to planning time.
- Hiring continues for supply teachers on contract in targeted schools to address the challenges of filling classroom vacancies based on school data.

Realities in Schools

- As part of the near-term recommendations announced in July 2023, 166 Behaviour Intervention Mentors and 137 Academic Support Teachers have been hired to support learners across the anglophone sector.
- We're also working together with various school districts to gather information on chronic absenteeism. Jurisdictional research has been completed, and a new project plan is ready.
- The NB Lead initiative has expanded this school year to include a release day for all vice-principals and 22 other participants in the new Aspiring Leaders Program; release days, the collective leadership network, and dedicated leadership professional learning opportunities continue to support all current and future school leaders.

Several additional initiatives are underway through the project teams, including work with middle school teachers and leaders to redefine the middle school philosophy, plans to raise awareness about the need for more daily movement at the elementary level, the promotion of French learning opportunities through the Centre of Excellence for Language Learning, and experimentation with artificial intelligence in online learning courses to enhance accessibility.

The work featured here is not exhaustive, and the accountability framework can be accessed on the Executive Steering Committee's website (Use the QR codes to access them). Please continue to contribute your thoughts and suggestions to the EECD Steering Committee at engage.EECD-EDPE@gnb.ca

Your NBTA Executive and Board of Directors help to ensure your voices, and the realities of classrooms, are central to each discussion and decision. Together, we're working on multiple strategies, including retaining and recruiting qualified teachers, and advocating for improved working and learning conditions. We are determined to create an environment that encourages teachers to stay and thrive in our province while attracting new teachers.

Together, we are navigating a time of change and challenge, but we can use this momentum to reinforce the strength of our profession. Thank you for your dedication, resilience, and the exceptional work you continue to do for students and our communities. Your voice matters, and it is my privilege to support your NBTAP President, Peter Lagacy and the elected Board of Directors to ensure it is heard and valued as we advocate for a bright future in New Brunswick's anglophone public education system.



Accountability Framework



Steering Committee Website

Ensuring the Right Expertise in our Classrooms



RECOMMENDATION:

Improve retention and recruitment of qualified teachers and specialized health service professionals in education.



OBJECTIVE:

Create a culture within the sector that encourages and supports professional educators and specialized health professionals to choose to work and stay working in the anglophone sector in New Brunswick.



OUTCOME:

More teachers and health professionals entering the anglophone education system and retaining those who are in the system beyond the first five years.

TIMELINE	2024-2025				2025-2026				2026-2027				2027-2028			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4												
Recruitment and Retention Strategic Plan																
Credential Recognition																
Create Central Recruitment Team																
Implementation of Strategic Plan																
Recruitment for Health Vacancies																

Jim Dysart Receives Wayne Nightingale Award

Presented by NBTF Co-Presidents Stéphanie Babineau and Peter Lagacy

The Wayne Nightingale Award was created to recognize and honour a person who has demonstrated unusual dedication and made an outstanding contribution to the New Brunswick Teachers' Federation. This year's award was presented to Jim Dysart. Throughout his distinguished career, Jim has demonstrated a profound passion for public education and the teaching profession. He has embodied that through his steadfast dedication to New Brunswick's three provincial teacher organizations: NBTA, AEFNB, and NBTF.

Jim joined his branch executive in his first year of teaching in 1969 and was a dedicated member, branch president, and branch director. From 1985 to 1987, Jim served as NBTA president and NBTF co-president alongside AEFNB president Ovila Doiron. Jim and his co-president were the initial force that led to the purchase of land and eventual construction of the current NBTF building. Jim's time in elected office saw many challenges. He was on the NBTF executive during the one-day strike in 1981. During his term as NBTF co-president, the government's reform tactics under Premier Richard Hatfield included the introduction of

inclusionary practices and another contentious round of bargaining resulting in work-to-rule.

Jim co-chaired the Federation Committee that revamped the negotiating process and set the groundwork for the current negotiating process. During a difficult round of negotiations, one of Mr. Dysart's famous quotes, when a reporter asked if teachers were prepared for any strike action, was: "Teachers are not known for being unprepared!"

Jim was also very active at the national level and served on the board of directors of the Canadian Teachers' Federation from 1985-88, including a term as vice-president from 1987-88.

In 1989 Jim was hired as the NBTA director of communications. He was later appointed NBTA deputy executive director and, therefore, a member of the NBTF Strategies Committees until he retired in 2007. Jim Dysart was always ready with a quote for the media, and in an interview for the NBTA 100th Anniversary Presidents' Series he stated:





“The Federation is the marriage of two individual and independent organizations – the AEFNB and the NBTA. The wisdom of the people who developed these organizations in the late '60s and early '70s, allowing the two linguistic groups to work independently on matters education and work collectively on matters syndical, creates a unique structure in Canada, certainly in New Brunswick as well, and one, I think, that is worth fighting for and worth putting a lot of time into maintaining and developing.”

Since his retirement, Jim has remained deeply involved in supporting teachers and their respective organizations in various capacities. He continues to this day to support the NBTF and associations as an IT adviser. Jim Dysart's dedication, leadership, and exceptional service to teachers through his involvement with NBTF for over fifty years make him an exceptional recipient of the NBTF Wayne Nightingale Award.



Sports Ambassadors: Sharing Stories of Perseverance to Inspire Every Child

Ben McFarlane, Communications Officer, New Brunswick Sports Hall of Fame

I read *Can't Hurt Me: Master Your Mind and Defy the Odds* by David Goggins in my late thirties. It's his autobiography, starting from when he was a depressed, overweight exterminator who wished he was a Navy SEAL. It's a famous story now: one about meeting overwhelming adversity with what you might call a radical growth mindset. I wish I had read it sooner.

I mention that book because it changed me from inactive and downcast to active (running every morning) and optimistic. It transformed my life in the same way I hope the program I am now organizing will transform the lives of New Brunswick students: namely, the New Brunswick Sports Hall of Fame's Sports Ambassadors Program.

What is It?

In the late 2000s, the NB Sports Hall of Fame saw the need for children to become more active. Its response in 2009 was to pilot a program to bring athletes and sports builders to classrooms to tell inspirational first-hand stories like the one that helped me. In 2011, the bilingual program won the approval of the Department of Education and was soon available for free to classrooms across the province.

We had a full roster, recruiting athletes like Dave Durepos, the first captain of the Canadian Olympic wheelchair basketball team, NHL All-Star Danny Grant, as well as coaches and builders like Bill Saunders, mentor of baseball legend Matt Stairs. The program soon recruited Indigenous athletes and sports builders like Jason Peters and Pat Bernard and hit its stride as our team shared inspirational stories with just over forty thousand students by 2020.

Students were surprised to hear Dave Durepos say his accident was the best thing that ever happened to him because it led him to wheelchair basketball. They were inspired to hear Bob Deap's story of the Minto Wildcats rising like the Mighty Ducks to become an unbeatable team. Overall, we observed that students responded to our hall-of-famers with awe, respect, and attention.

A New Beginning to the Program

The impact of COVID-19 on the program was what you might expect. It paused completely for two years and resumed in diminished capacity. Many sports ambassadors had moved on or aged out of the program. It could have lost momentum entirely if not for a few passionate presenters.



When I was hired, I began to get to know our ambassadors one at a time, including Clem Tremblay, a hockey player who spent many years on teams in Canada and the United States. He has a star power with children who, despite getting an autographed sports card from him, still sometimes ask him to sign sweaters or running shoes.

When I spoke to Clem about his classroom presentations, he told me he likes to connect with children about pursuing a dream and relying on each other. "I tell them, 'You have a dream. Keep on dreaming, keep on planning, but at the end of the day, in order for you to achieve that dream, you have to be dedicated to *work*—and don't work in a silo, work in a *team*.'" Thanks to Clem, Jean-Guy Poitras, and Melissa Adams in particular, the program has regained momentum.

Stories for all Students and Educators

The program also shows students that becoming a great athlete isn't the only goal you can strive for in sports. World champion curler Melissa McClure Adams recounts: "One of my favorite moments was how excited one kid got when he found out refs and umpires are some of our fellow inductees [in the Sports Hall of Fame]. He was motivated to be a ref in the NHL."

As a program dedicated primarily to storytelling, it is relevant to multiple curricula, including social studies, lan-

guage arts, and personal wellness. Stories like Marianne Limpert's silver medal win or Ron Turcotte's Kentucky Derby victories are great material for writing, but even stories from lesser-known figures are full of toil and triumph and make great research material. Every year we see dozens of sports-themed projects at district heritage fairs.

Give us a Try!

I've only just joined the Sports Hall of Fame, and to be honest this is my first time running any kind of program. Truthfully, I would never have had the self-confidence to try something like this even just a few years ago. But I can honestly say that running has given me a mental foundation that I've only ever caught glimpses of in the past. Now, when I recall my childhood, I can see that whenever my life was going well, I was regularly active, either on my own or, occasionally, in sport. That's why I care so deeply about this program. I want children to get the messages our sports ambassadors have to share. They are stories that I have needed to hear my whole life.

I hope you'll join us by booking a free classroom visit from one of our ambassadors. Please have a look at our ad on page 12, as we are just getting started.





The **New Brunswick Sports Hall of Fame** has partnered with New Brunswick's most accomplished athletes and sports builders to inspire youth toward sports and active living with a program of **FREE** in-class visits.

Child inactivity is ever-increasing. It's a problem that has increased post covid, and a trend that portends a bleak future for the mental & physical health of children.

In response, The New Brunswick Sports Hall of Fame is sending New Brunswick's most inspiring athletes and builders into classrooms across the province.

The Key objectives of the Sports Ambassadors program are:

- To promote the benefits of sport participation
- To inspire youth to participate in sport through the delivery of compelling personal stories
- To contribute to the long-term mental and physical well-being of students



Watch our video to find out more about the program



For more information or to bring a **Sports Ambassador** to your classroom, contact us:

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Email: info@nbsfh.ca
Web: www.nbsfh.ca



Book a Sports Ambassador



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Do you know a fantastic teacher?

Nominate them for one of the NBTA's provincial awards:

- Centennial Award
- Vince Sunderland Award for Outstanding Educational Leadership
- NBTA Credit Union Award for Excellence in Teaching
- Indu Varma Award for Creativity in Education

Deadline extended:
January 15
www.nbta.ca

online nomination process

Project Overseas: Belize



Meg King, Teacher, Woodstock High School

In October of 2023 I submitted my application to the NBTA and was selected in January 2024 to be a part of Project Overseas with the Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF/FCE). I was offered a position on Team Belize with three other Canadian teachers: Sandra, Kristjana, and Marcia. I immediately accepted the offer, and the cohort of over fifty Canadian teachers began meeting in February. Every few weeks my team met via Teams to get to know one another and begin planning. Unfortunately, we lost our team member Marcia, who was switched to another team. After many virtual meetings with the CTF and my Team Belize, it was finally time to begin the adventure.

On Canada Day, I flew to Ottawa to participate in two days of meetings with the CTF/FCE and the other Canadian teachers participating in projects in countries in West Africa, South America, and the Caribbean. The CTF/FCE staff reviewed protocols, our mission, and their expectations with us. Due to Hurricane Beryl, our original team member Marcia was invited to rejoin our team, and Team St. Vincent and the Grenadines was cancelled; sadly, the hurricane hit landfall there. On July 3, we began our travels to Belize via Vancouver and Houston. The twenty-two-hour trip was long but successful, considering the likelihood of Hurricane Beryl interrupting our flights.

On July 4, the wonderful vice-president of the Belize National Teachers Union, Jorge, picked us up at the airport. We were driven to Belmopan for our first week of professional learning. The next day we met our co-facilitators

and were able to finalize our professional learning that we would be co-facilitating with the Belize teachers. I was very fortunate to be paired with Consuelo, who is not only a teacher but works as a professional development trainer, project manager, consultant and mediator. One of my first observations about the Belize teachers was how hard they work. Many have outside jobs after school hours.

Our first week of professional learning consisted of approximately sixty teachers from as far as two hours away. We worked at the Garden City Primary School. Participants were divided into four groups and each day, Consuelo and I received a new group, repeating our workshop on assessment. The other three groups presented workshops on the topics of well-being, teaching strategies, and technology. On the Friday, the union presented to everyone and stressed the importance of being part of the union as well as teacher well-being. The week ended with a remarkable cultural presentation of dancers and drummers by the Garifuna, a group that travels worldwide. The Garifuna people are people from West Africa who found refuge from enslavement in St. Vincent and over time had cultural and interrelations among the Arawaks and Caribs. They were eventually expelled by the British and subsequently settled in Belize.

Our second week, we moved to the town of Orange Walk in the northern part of Belize. Here we had fewer participants, but it was also the second week of their summer vacation. We continued teaching at the Louisiana Government





School, like the week before. It was interesting to experience two different primary schools in Belize. There were big differences between the two schools' facilities and amenities. Once again, the week ended with another cultural presentation, this time by the Mestizos. This Mestizos were the first Maya and Europeans to arrive in Belize. This presentation included dancers balancing trays of drinks on their heads and beautiful dresses. We also shared some of our Canadian culture with the Belizeans, including a reading of the Story of Turtle Island.

Each teacher was grateful for their free professional learning that earned them 18 hours toward the 120 hours they must earn every five years to retain their teacher certification. We are very fortunate in Canada to not have to track our professional learning hours, which are mostly free, or renew our certification every five years. My prior experience in Australia taught me the same thing. They too must participate in 20 hours per year and renew their certification each year.

Each day, a delicious lunch was provided for all participants and in the evenings, we enjoyed as much Belizean food as possible, sometimes eating tacos three times a day (by choice)! The main meal in Belize consists of rice and beans and different variations of a meat that is often stewed or barbecued. They also eat lots of fresh fruit, pig tail, fish,

ceviche, escabeche, empanadas, tostadas, and tortillas in many variations. On the weekends, our fabulous tour guide and vice-president of the BNTU took us sightseeing to Cahal Pech Archaeological Reserve, the Belize Zoo, St. Herman's Blue Hole National Park, Belize city, Corozal, and Lamanai Archeological Reserve. It was an abundance of history and unforgettable cultural experiences. These experiences were not required, but we were grateful for the gift of time and teaching us more about the Belize culture.

This experience was educational beyond measure, and I appreciate the opportunity I was afforded to represent the NBTA and CTF/FCE. I was fortunate to extend my stay in Belize after my commitment to the CTF/FCE concluded. My children and I went to Cave's Branch and slept in the jungle in a hut with only screens and no windows, which meant braying bull frogs all night. We also went ziplining through the jungle. Unfortunately, we missed our cave tubing experience due to high waters; it was the rainy season, after all. Following our jungle excursions we travelled to the island of Caye Caulker, an hour off the coast of Belize city. While on the island, we went on a boat tour that included snorkeling, fishing, a beach lunch, and swimming with the manatees, sharks, and stingrays. The island is full of happy people, good food, and a relaxed vibe; their motto is "Go slow," which I packed in my suitcase as a reminder of my time in Belize and to hopefully incorporate into my Canadian life.



Stepping UP: Realizing Culturally Responsive Schools

“I look forward to going to work every day because I find it fulfilling”

Bruce Hallihan, Internal Communications, EECD

Having immigrated to New Brunswick from the Philippines three years ago, Cris Tamula understands the challenges of adjusting to life in a new country. She is pleased to be able to share her knowledge as the intercultural support worker at the Student Welcome Centre located within Hillcrest School in Moncton.

“I look forward to going to work every day because I find it fulfilling,” she said. “I know I am assisting newcomers by providing them with valuable information to help ease their transition.”

In her first year in this role, Tamula has assisted over 650 families who are new to the Anglophone East School District.

“It’s a busy job, and each family is unique, coming from different countries. My family and I arrived during the COVID pandemic, when everything was online, so I understand how challenging it can be to start afresh in a new place. Many newcomers may feel uneasy because they are unsure of what to expect next. My aim is to give them peace of mind.”

Tamula offers families guidance on various topics such as bus transportation, cafeteria options, school hours, locations for updates on closures, registration for the parent portal, navigating the school website and calendar, as well as additional resources for their convenience.

“Most of our discussions revolve around school,” she explained, “but we also want them to feel at ease in our community. We inform them about upcoming events in Moncton-Dieppe-Riverview or activities they might enjoy, like visiting the Tidal Bore or Hopewell Rocks. Most of these families are seeking a better future for their children. That’s their main reason for coming to Canada. They want to provide their kids with better opportunities.”

Tamula, originally from Tarlac in the Central Luzon region of the Philippines, faced challenges early on in life. Following the loss of her mother when Tamula was only six years old, her father had to work in Manila to support his three children. While her brother lived with their grandparents, Tamula and her sister stayed with their aunt.

“Losing my mom was incredibly difficult,” she shared. “I had to become independent at a very young age. However,

“...I understand how challenging it can be to start afresh in a new place. Many newcomers may feel uneasy because they are unsure of what to expect next. My aim is to give them peace of mind.”

watching my dad work tirelessly for us served as motivation for me to pursue my goals.”

Tamula worked hard to obtain a degree in computer science and attended a caregiver school in the Philippines. Despite her qualifications, she chose a career in business and rose to leadership roles, including as a school administrator.

“Moving to Canada has been a dream come true for me,” she reflected. “What I did in my home country is quite similar to what I do now.”

“Cris has been a wonderful addition to our team at the Student Welcome Centre,” said Laura Jeffrey, principal of enrollment manager and newcomer services “With so many newcomers arriving, having someone to help them navigate some of their first steps in New Brunswick, specifically in Anglophone East, has been very impactful.”

Tamula is thorough when she meets with families to introduce them to school life here, Jeffrey said. “She takes time to answer all their questions, everything from how to dress for the cold weather to logging in to BusPlanner. Families have a lot of questions, and oftentimes they are both ex-

cited and nervous. Having Cris as a primary contact is an important resource for many families.”

Tamula “goes above and beyond” to help new families as they arrive, Jeffrey added. “She helps with understanding public transportation to how to access many services that newcomers are unsure how to navigate.”

Tamula’s husband and daughter have also embraced their new life in Canada. Mark works as a service adviser for Mercedes-Benz Moncton, while Mia, fourteen, is a grade 9 student at Harrison Trimble High School. She received the grade 8 leadership award at Birchmount School, “which made us incredibly proud,” her mom said.

“When we first arrived in Canada, Mia was very shy in grade six,” Tamula recalled. “But she has blossomed and discovered her potential. Canada, and specifically New Brunswick and Moncton, have provided us with numerous opportunities. The people here are kind, and we are eager to give back to the community. I feel fortunate to have the job that I do, as it truly doesn’t feel like work. I am genuinely happy and feel that there is a reason we are here right now.”



The “Stepping UP: Realizing Culturally Responsive Schools” series is coordinated by EECD and NBTA contributors Kathy Whynot, Craig Williamson, Monique Hughes, and Chantal Lafargue. This article series is a space to highlight schools’ journeys in embracing culturally responsive practice.

TEACHER DESIGNED PROFESSIONAL LEARNING GRANTS 2025

by Dr. Kimberley McKay, NBTA 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 2025 – December 2025. Interested teams of 3-5 teachers are invited to apply. Application forms are available online now.

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 9, 2024, 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 10, 2025. Start-up materials and funding will be delivered to each team.
- Unsuccessful team applicants will be notified by January 10, 2025.

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

Write a Letter, Change a Life



Kevin Foster, NBSSSEN Director and ASD-E Teacher
& Laura McCarron, NBSSSEN Director, NBTA Staff

On December 10, 1948, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The Declaration states that each person is entitled to fundamental rights, like the right to equality, the right to freedom of religion and speech, and the right to participate in the cultural life of the community. Many New Brunswickers take pride in the role Hampton-raised John Peters Humphrey played in the creation of this document as the director of the United Nations Human Rights Division (1946-1966). John Peters Humphrey would go on to receive the United Nations Prize for Human Rights Advocacy in 1988.

In honour of Human Rights Day on December 10, teachers and students across the country are invited to participate in Amnesty International's Write for Rights Day. (This activity can also be done another day or week.) Amnesty International has created teacher toolkits to incorporate this activity within classroom lessons, including activities to learn more about the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights and about specific cases of rights violations. Over the years, more than one hundred people have been freed from torture, harassment, or unjust imprisonment. Teachers are invited to have a write-a-thon in their classrooms or organize a co-curricular activity. Teachers can sign up to participate in Write for Rights Day or access the toolkits by going to the Write for Rights campaign on the Amnesty International website.

NBSSSEN partners with a pan-Canadian, not-for-profit organization committed to the awareness and the growth of social studies to connect teachers with social studies teaching resources and professional learning opportunities for all grade levels. To join the NBSSSEN mailing list and to receive our Rising Tide newsletter, please email kevin.foster@nbed.nb.ca and laura.mccarron@nbed.nb.ca or nb@ssencressc.ca.



Governor General's History Award for Excellence in Teaching

For her exceptional commitment to sharing Canadian history from a new perspective, **Connie Shea**, a teacher at St. Malachy's Memorial High School in Saint John, has been named a recipient of a Governor General's History Award for Excellence in Teaching, the country's most prestigious honour in the field of history.



Connie Shea
St. Malachy's
Memorial High

Over four months, Shea's Grade 11 and 12 students collaborated with local experts and community partners to research important people and events from First Nations, Black, and LGBTQ+ communities, as well as women, in New Brunswick and Wabanaki Territory, whose stories had too often gone untold. They created ten digitally interactive postcards containing information and artwork, more than 500 of which were distributed throughout their community. Each postcard was linked to a website where the public could learn more about the topics and provide feedback to the students.

Learn more here: CanadasHistory.ca/GGHA2024



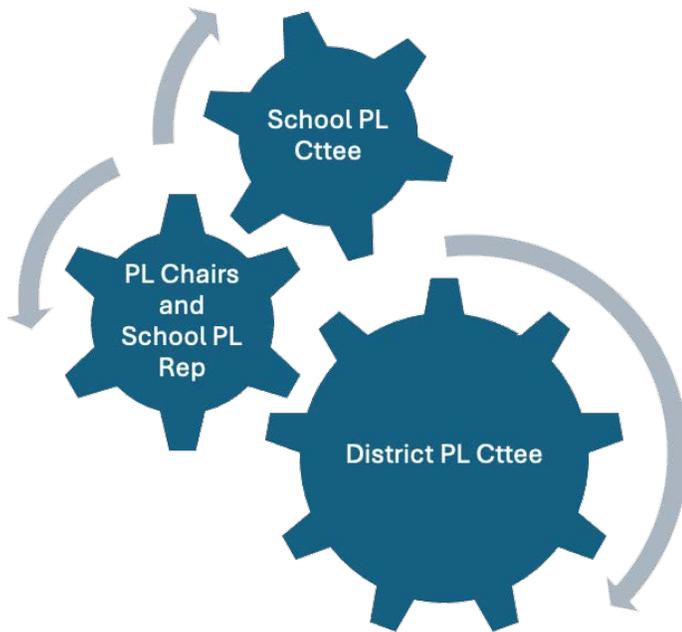
Connie Keating CTF/FCE Vice-President & NBTA Past President had the honour of attending the National War Memorial to lay a wreath on behalf of Canadian teachers, accompanied by NBTA President Peter Lagacy who was joined by students and teachers from James M. Hill Memorial High School who were taking part in the 11 Days of Remembrance Program. Lest we forget.

The Three NBTA Council Days

Dawn Beckingham, Director of Professional Learning



Article 36.02 of the collective agreement provides teacher with three (3) days during the school year in which PL is mutually arranged by NBTA, AEFNB and EECD.



Mutually Arranged? There is a structure in place.

- School-based PL: Each school should have a dedicated PL rep that leads a school-based PL team.
- Branch-based PL: Each branch should have a PL committee that is made up of the Branch PL Chair and one rep from each school.
- District-based PL: Each district should have a PL committee that is made up of the NBTA PL Chairs and the Director of Curriculum and Instruction.

Council Day: May 2, 2025



Elementary
& Phys. Ed. Specialists Strand
Miramichi

Middle Level
& Art Specialists Strand
Moncton



High School
& Music Specialists Strand
Fredericton

Call for Presenters!

The deadline for submissions for May Council Day is **December 16**. You are an expert, and we need you!

presenters.nbta.ca



Awards

Nominate a fantastic teacher for a Council Award today, and they will be recognized at their respective Council AGM in May!

nbta.ca/councils



Elementary Council

Katherine Loughrey, Principal, Stanley Consolidated School

The New Brunswick Teachers' Association Elementary Council is a dedicated group of twelve members representing diverse perspectives and expertise from across the province. This council plays an important role in shaping educational practices and advocating for the needs of elementary educators.

Meet Our Council Members:

- Francine Roul Beaulieu (ASDS) — Member-at-large
- Melissa Gaudet (ASDW) — Grade 1 French immersion teacher, member-at-large - Institutes, Awards
- Misty Campbell (ASDW) — Grades 6-8 French immersion and PIF teacher, member-at-large - Awards, ELWE chair
- Patty Miller (ASDN) — First Nations education and social studies lead, council vice-president - ELWE alternate, Exhibitors, Joy and Sorrow
- Stacey Killam (ASDW) — School counsellor and STEAM teacher, member-at-large - Programs, Scanners
- Tracey Comeau (ASDE) — Resource teacher, council past president - Programs, Nominations
- Sarah Christie (ASDW) — Grade 1 French immersion teacher at Keswick Ridge School, council secretary - Clothing, Takeaways
- Lindsay Morris (ASDW) — Grade 2 French immersion teacher at Keswick Ridge School, third year on council - phys. ed. strand liaison, Prizes
- Jennifer Winchester (ASDN) — Grades 1 and 2 teacher at L.E. Reinsborough School, council treasurer
- Kerry-Lea Ryder (ASDE) — Academic support teacher at Hillsborough Elementary, first year on council - Social, Awards
- Katherine Loughrey (ASDW) — Principal at Stanley Consolidated School, council communications
- Barbara Brown (ASDN) — Principal at Napan Elementary School, council president

Together, these educators bring a wealth of knowledge and commitment to improving the educational landscape in New Brunswick.

Exciting Developments: May Council Day in Miramichi

We are thrilled to announce that the upcoming May Council Day will take place in Miramichi! This event provides a platform for educators to connect, collaborate, and share insights.

The call for presenters is now open and will close in December. This is an excellent opportunity for members to showcase their expertise and best practices. We encourage all educators to consider sharing their knowledge and experiences to enrich our community: presenters.nbta.ca

High School Council

Peter Woytiuk, President and Program Chair, NBTA High School Council

The High School Council Program Committee would like to take this opportunity to invite you to apply to present at this year's Council Day. Our theme is **Bridges in Education: Connecting for Success**.

If you have presented in the past, you know how rewarding the experience can be. We are looking for presenters from across all areas of curriculum as well as administration and guidance. This year we are in Fredericton at Leo Hayes High School. If interested in presenting, please fill out the form on the NBTA website: presenters.nbta.ca

Sneak Peek

We have secured two outstanding keynote speakers who will be presenting in person: **Drew Dudley (AM)** and **Big Daddy Tazz (PM)**

During the keynotes, limited other sessions will be offered. Feedback from last year's Council Day suggested that we limit sessions during the keynote speakers so presenters can attend keynote sessions.

From Surviving to Thriving

Karrie Harris, Teacher Counsellor/Wellness Coordinator
Hampton Education Centre and East Saint John

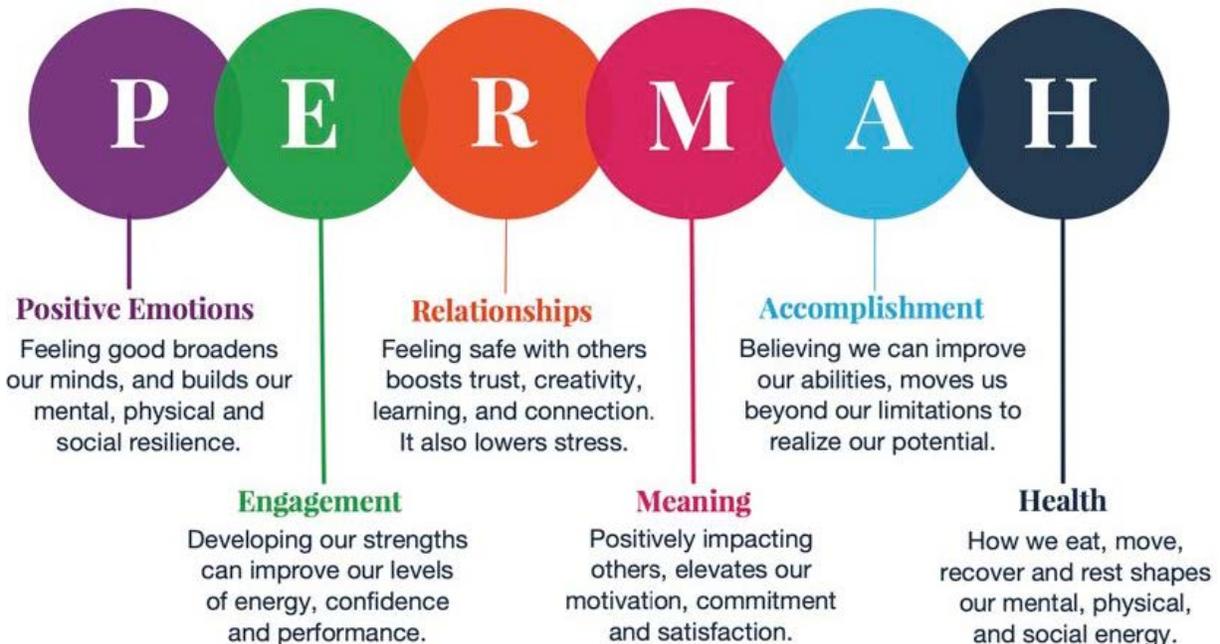
When we think of well-being and what it means to really take care of ourselves, we are often led to invest in all kinds of external resources with the promise of feeling better. While traditional self-care practices such as yoga classes and bubble baths play a part in our health, finding true wellness is an internal job that requires us to connect with our unique gifts and values. The quest for Happiness and Well-Being has gained a lot of popularity in recent years and now, more than ever, we as educators are called to pay attention to what it means to live the “Good Life” and move from surviving to thriving.

Positive Psychology, the science of well-being provides us with a Framework that if followed, can lead us closer to the

best, most balanced version of ourselves. This framework is known as the PERMAH+ model. Each letter in PERMAH+ represents an essential element of well-being. When we pay attention to these elements, reflect on how to develop them and commit to actionable next steps, little by little our true selves emerge.

As the days get shorter and darkness settles in, it is the perfect time for introspection. I'd invite, this season to take some time to focus inward, have a moment of honest self-reflection and ask yourself, “What do I need to feel good, function effectively and feel a sense of peace.” You can start by using the PERMAH+ self-assessment chart below as a tool to start your well-being journey.

Wellbeing = Feeling Good + Functioning Effectively



Tiny is mighty when it comes to caring for wellbeing



Personal Well-Being Self-Assessment Chart	Rating (1-5)
Positive Emotion	
How often do you experience positive emotions?	
What activities bring you joy?	
Are you able to manage negative emotions effectively?	
Engagement	
How often do you lose track of time while doing activities?	
Do you have hobbies or activities you are passionate about?	
Are you fully present in your daily activities?	
Relationships	
How would you rate the quality of your relationships?	
Do you feel supported by friends and family?	
How often do you engage in meaningful conversations?	
Meaning	
Do you feel a sense of purpose in your life?	
Are you involved in activities that align with your values?	
How often do you reflect on what matters to you?	
Accomplishment	
Do you set and achieve personal goals?	
How satisfied are you with your achievements?	
Do you celebrate your successes, big or small?	
Health	
See PERMAH+ questions broken down (right)...	

PERMAH+	Rating (1-5)
Optimism	
I generally expect good things to happen in my life.	
I believe that even when bad things happen, something good can come from them.	
I find it easy to focus on what's going well in my life.	
Sleep	
I usually get enough sleep to feel rested and refreshed.	
I have a consistent sleep routine (e.g., going to bed and waking up at similar times).	
I rarely have difficulty falling asleep or staying asleep.	
Physical Health	
I feel strong and healthy overall.	
I engage in regular physical activity that supports my health (e.g., exercise, walking).	
I take steps to maintain or improve my physical health regularly.	
Nutrition	
I eat a balanced diet that includes a variety of nutritious foods.	
I am conscious of the quality and nutritional value of the food I eat.	
I avoid overindulging in unhealthy foods or beverages.	
Review	
After completing the chart, review areas where you rated yourself lower and brainstorm actionable steps to improve your well-being in those areas.	

NBTA recognizes Positive Psychologist, Martin Seligman for his work on the PERMA+ Model. This framework was adapted for NB teachers and presented to branch leaders at NBTA Leadership 2024.

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