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Change...

I dare say our education system has experienced many changes over the past few years. On the eve of my presidency, the government announced job cuts which were later reversed due to immense PEITF, teacher, and public pressure. Later that fall, contract negotiations broke down and ended in arbitration for the first time in 15 years. We then witnessed the dissolution of the English Language School Board and subsequently a 6-month school review process, which caused great turmoil in several school communities. But despite the constant roller-coaster ride, it has been a truly, amazing experience and I am fortunate to have had the opportunity to represent all of you!

Last school year the Government established student well-being teams and this has been a positive step in supporting student mental health. Every day in our schools, teachers do their best to support the wellness of their students, however, the complexities of the mental health of students today continues to increase across this country. The student wellness teams have been well received to date, and have helped many students on the critical end of the spectrum.

When the need for supports for EAL students hit a crisis point, Government listened and invested funds to help deal with this issue. The added positions have helped to ease some of the pressures of the increased EAL student community who need language support to be able to engage in their own learning. While we still have large classrooms with diverse EAL needs, this aspect of class composition has improved.

The concerns we have on both of these positives, however, is that we don't see them as strictly educational policies. Student wellness teams are a social services initiative. EAL support is part of an immigration policy. They are both helpful to some teachers and some students, but they are of limited benefit to the majority of teachers and students. Yet, the current government sells them as big education initiatives. We have to continue to challenge that. The Government recently announced a large surplus, so we are hopeful that more education investments will be coming our way.

The issue of substitute availability has been another topic of concern. This has a profound impact on the system. We have teachers coming to work sick, missing important appointments, or missing professional learning opportunities due to the lack of substitute teachers in this province. We have Administrators forced to juggle schedules or to add to their already overburdened duties in finding ways to cope when no substitutes can be found. We know this is a major concern for teachers across the province and it is something we continue to work on.

As I mentioned at convention, negotiations to date have been slow and at times frustrating. The PEITF Economic Welfare Committee brought forward concerns regarding the working conditions of our teachers, to which we reminded Government, are the conditions in which our Island students learn. Providing a supportive learning atmosphere for today's students is a must, but so is making the job of a teacher manageable. We are still continuing to talk, however, and we remain hopeful at this point.

I would like to send out a special thank you to the Annual Convention Planning Committee for their hard work and dedication! I am certain you will agree that the committee went above and beyond to provide teachers with great new teaching strategies and professional development, which will benefit PEI students.

Thank you for ALL that you do. I can't say it enough... I am privileged and honored to represent Prince Edward Island teachers. Look after yourselves, as too often you put others first. Take the time to enjoy this Holiday Season with family and friends. I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.



Bethany MacLeod
President, PEITF

Being a teacher means...

You will never be bored.
 You will sometimes be frustrated.
 You will be surrounded by challenges.
 So much to do and so little time.
 You will carry immense responsibility
 Yet at times feel powerless.
 You will step into childrens' lives.
 And you will make a difference.
 Some will bless you. Some will curse you.
 You will see children face obstacles
 And difficult times.
 But you will never cease to be amazed
 At a child's capacity for love, courage, and endurance.
 You will experience triumphs
 And frustrating failures.
 You will cry a lot. You will laugh a lot.
 But most importantly... you have changed students' lives
 And they in turn have changed yours.

by Bethany MacLeod



Chad Gallant

Putting a Bow on PD

As I write this, we are a month removed from Annual Convention. With a November filled with other PD days, meetings, and storms, it seems that it took the turning of the calendar to have

the opportunity to reflect on what has been a busy month of Professional Learning.

Thank you to those that completed the surveys regarding the professional learning offered by the Federation either in whole (Annual Convention) or in-part (Joint Staff day). The information shared in the evaluations is reviewed by the committees tasked with putting together the programs for their respective events. These committees consider these suggestions and make changes where possible.

One such suggestion, made a few years back, was to reduce the amount of paper we use for the Annual Convention. As a result, we have moved to an online app. Along with other positive features, using the app has allowed us to reduce the number of “at a glance” brochures printed from 2500 in 2014 to 1000 this year. We do recognize that many teachers do not have another app on their phones, or may not have a smartphone, but overall, using an app for the convention has been received

positively. The planning committee will soon dig into the evaluations to decide on the use of the app for future conventions.

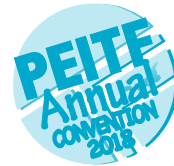
When planning an event such as the Annual Convention, many moving parts are considered, and your Annual Convention planning committee works hard to find sessions that teachers will find beneficial. We do try our best to provide at least one session per time slot of interest to grade level groupings, with a focus on new teaching methods, pedagogy, current trends, or wellness. We are always looking for suggestions on speakers. A few suggestions for sessions at 2019’s event have been received and noted through the evaluations and by email.

That being said, some of the highest rated sessions are those that are done by classroom teachers. Teachers genuinely appreciate sessions led by their peers that live the shared experience of teaching on Prince Edward Island. The problem is, these teachers are often humble and do not feel that what they are doing is special or deserving. This makes these expert teachers often hard to find.

The PEITF is seeking individuals that are willing to share their skills for professional learning activities such as annual convention, professional learning days and summer learning opportunities (i.e. CONTACT). Generally, these sessions do come with some remuneration, and in the case of CONTACT, a chance to attend the conference for free!

If you would like to be considered as a possible presenter for a PD day activity or know an administrator, teacher, coach, or consultant, that you feel would facilitate a great learning opportunity, please send that name along. You will find a link on the front page of the PEITF Website.

I wish you and yours all the best this Christmas season.



PEITF
Newsletter

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Editor: Chad Gallant
chad.gallant@peitf.com

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Member CEPA

by Chad Gallant

Prince Edward Island Teachers' Federation Executive



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CSLF



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Member-at-Large
WATA



David Chisholm
Member-at-Large
WATA



Federation House will close
on Friday, December 21, 2018
for the holiday break.
The office will re-open
on Thursday, January 3, 2019.



BOARD OF GOVERNORS Area Coordinators and Assistants 2018-2019

This issue features the teachers who continue to work hard to support and represent your viewpoints and concerns. The members of the Board of Governors give generously of their time to do this work. On behalf of all teachers, accept our thanks for representation, hard work and professionalism.



Anne-Marie Rioux
École Pierre-Chiasson
Coordinator
AELF



Julie Desjardins
École François-Buote
Assistant Coordinator
AELF



Sherri Campbell
Morell Cons.
Coordinator
EATA



Helen Smith-MacPhail
Bluefield Sr. High
Assistant Coordinator
EATA



Sharon Anderson
Somerset Elem.
Coordinator
WATA

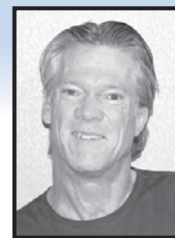


Kendra Silliker
O'Leary Elem.
Assistant Coordinator
WATA

L'association des enseignantes et des enseignants de langue française



Rachelle Gallant
École Pierre-Chiasson



Carl Peterson
École Saint-Augustin



Ghislain Sonier
École Évangéline

Missing Photos:
Eric Arseneault - École François-Buote
Jocelyn Plourde - École La-Belle-Cloche
Christopher Daigle - École-sur-Mer



Sheila Gaudette
Tignish Elem.



Paul Quinlan
Amherst Cove Cons.



Anne Marie Muise
St. Louis Elem.



Barbra Forbes
Three Oaks Sr. High



Mary Hart
M.E. Callaghan Int.



Lesley Cousins
Kinkora Reg. High



Karen Smith
Greenfield Elem.



Kimberley Williams
Westisle Composite High



Heather Harris
Alberton Elem.



Paul Shepard
Parkside Elem.



Melanie Gorveatt
Miscouche



Rory Herget
Bloomfield Elem.



Eamon Graham
Kensington Inter.



Kaye Noonan
Elm Street Elem.



Jennifer Rozell
Ellaeslie Elem.



Susan Gallant
Queen Elizabeth Elem.



Melanie Gallant
Somerset Elem.



Melanie Corcoran
Hernewood Inter.



Mark MacNeill
Summerside Inter.



Krista Newman
Athena Cons.



Cara DeCoste
Three Oaks Sr. High



Judy Warren
Public Schools Branch
Summerside



Michelle Silliker
Substitute Teacher
Rep.

Missing Photo: Sarah Smallman
O'Leary Elem.
Glenn Campbell
M.E. Callaghan Int.

EASTERN AREA TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

7



Jill Coffin
Bluefield Sr. High



Edwena Arbuckle
Montague Cons.



Natalie Bulger
East Wiltshire Int.



Alison Kelly-Doyle
L.M. Montgomery Elem.



John Michael Murphy
Birchwood Int.



Scott MacCormack
Colonel Gray Sr. High



Joanne MacNevin
Birchwood Int.



Krista Mutch
Southern Kings Cons.



Alexander Field
Colonel Gray Sr. High



Jillian Power
East Wiltshire Int.



Linda Gallant
Stonepark Int.



Kurt Duncan
Sherwood Elem.



Brenda Larsen
Eliot River Elem.



Elizabeth Johnston
Spring Park Elem.



Tracey Evison
West Kent Elem.



JoAnne Jay
Spring Park Elem.



Elizabeth Crawford
West Royalty Elem.



Lana Mill
Belfast Cons.



Norma Jean Williams
Central Queens Elem.



Michaela Oliver
Morell Cons.



Jennifer Mutch
Queen Charlotte Int.



Anne Dixon
Charlottetown Rural High



Jennifer Victor
Montague Reg. High



Mark Gaudet
Montague Int.



Bethany Ellis
Sherwood Elem.

Missing Photos: Janice Broderick, Charlottetown Rural High - Lynn Sherren, Souris Reg. - Loretta Hawley-McAleer, Public Schools Branch Charlottetown - Timothy Payne, Public Schools Branch Charlottetown



Andrea Robbins
Parkdale Elem.



Sally Dunn
Prince Street Elem.



Carole McLeod
St. Jean Elem.



Chris Harkness
Stonepark Int.



Marion McGaughey
Donagh Regional



Vanda Deighan
West Royalty Elem.



Stephanie Ellsworth-Reid
Westwood Primary



Quinn Mills
Georgetown Elem.



Melissa MacKinnon
Mount Stewart Cons.



Mark McGillivray
Gulf Shore Cons.



Lori-Dawn Gordon
Morell Reg. High



Clodagh Peverley
Westwood Primary



Kevin Peters
Souris Reg.



Carolyn McQuaid
Bluefield Sr. High



Rachelle Ward
Queen Charlotte Int.



Gillian Veld
Englewood Cons.



Hailey Batchilder
Substitute Teacher
Rep.



Cheryl Turner
Public Schools Branch



Monica Rafuse
Dept. of Education, Early
Learning and Culture



Heather Campbell
East Wiltshire Int.



Lori Targett
Vernon River Cons.



April Iguidez
Stratford Elem.



Roy Power
Cardigan Cons.

Missing Photos: Victoria Coulson, Glen Stewart Elem. - Allana Toole, Glen Stewart Elem. - Kayla Dunsford, Glen Stewart Elem.

2018 Special Awards Presentation



Bethany MacLeod with PEITF Excellence in Teaching winner Andrew Stewart (Right) and PEITF Special Recognition Award Winner Linda Inman-Hyson (Left). Missing from photo: PEITF Honorary Membership Award Winner, Paul Cyr

Notice to Itinerant Teachers and Teachers Required to Travel

All teachers, including itinerant teachers, should have a designated base school for the purposes of their travel allowance. The base school should “generally be the school where the teacher spends the greatest portion of his/her work time. Exceptionally, the Employer may designate a teacher’s base school as a workplace other than where the teacher spends the greatest portion of his/her work time provided the designation is not made to avoid mileage expenses.” (Memorandum of Agreement, section 1:07).

Teachers are entitled to mileage for any travel beyond the distance between their home and their base school. For example, if Sandra lives in Hunter River and her base school is Charlottetown Rural High School (20 km), where she is required to work at Summerside Intermediate School (45 km from her home), she is entitled to 50 km of mileage [(45 km - 20 km) X 2 (to-and-from) = 50 km].

Teachers who have not been assigned a base school and who have not yet claimed their mileage allowance should contact the PEITF as soon as possible. Note that where a teacher has applied for an appointment to two separate part time positions, mileage is not payable.

Selina Pellerin

Working Conditions Did you know...

In my role in member services, I sometimes receive questions from members that warrant being shared with the membership as a whole, without disclosing identifying information. Here are a few questions that have recently been raised:

What is a pre-retirement Leave? Am I eligible?

Within five years of retirement, teachers are eligible to take five paid leaves each up to 20 school days. The granting of such leaves is at the discretion of the school board. Pre-retirement leaves are funded through the teacher’s own service gratuity; each day used for a pre-retirement leave is reduced from the teacher’s service gratuity.

If I am on leave for part of the school year, am I still entitled to 20:03 days?

As a permanent or probationary teacher, you are entitled to your three 20:03 days regardless of whether you are away for part of the school year. In other words, if you take a maternity leave, parental leave, deferred leave, unpaid leave, etc. for part of the school year, you are still entitled to your three 20:03 days. As a further example, you could be expecting a child on October 1 and you would still be entitled to take three 20:03 days before you begin your leave.

Selina Pellerin

Congratulations to Annual Convention survey draw winners:

*Sally Harper
Amanda Killorn*

Each will receive a one night stay at the Charlottetown Delta.

Thanks to all that provided feedback for the Annual Convention.

Thoughts and Comments from the General Secretary



Shaun MacCormac

As I write this article, I am cognizant that you will likely be reading this before the holiday break. In that light, I am trying so hard to be more like Santa and less like Scrooge, but that is a bit of a challenge these days.

The Economic Welfare Committee continues to struggle to make any headway in negotiations with the ENA on a new collective agreement. We have spent more than twenty-two days at the bargaining table starting in April of this year. There are no new dates set for the two committees to come back together, despite being far apart on many issues. There has been some work done by Jordan Brown, Minister of Education (EL&C), to try and move negotiations forward and we appreciate that effort. There has been no actual communication, however, on what that work has been or what it entails, so we will wait, impatiently, to hear any particulars on that work from the ENA.

What remains particularly distressing is that the Federation has been at the bargaining table for more than fifty days with the MacLauchlan Government with only one arbitrated settlement to show for all of that time. In fact, we had to go back to the Arbitration Board to force the MacLauchlan Government to honour that arbitration award and follow its own Regulations on the process.

For those of you who do not know, for more than thirty years the Federation and previous Governments have used an expedited process of bargaining where the two sides bargain for only nine days and then conclude an agreement. In the past thirty years, prior to this Government, there have only been two arbitrated settlements to my knowledge. Both of those were influenced by the 7% rollback of public sector wages, including teachers' wages, by the then Catherine Callbeck Liberal Government. It is looking very likely we will be going to arbitration with this Government for the second straight time.

Going to arbitration is not necessarily a bad thing, sometimes the issues are contentious, and the expectations high. This was not the case, however, the last time. The Federation was merely looking to follow the wage increase pattern set with the other public sector unions. This Government, however, did not want to give teachers that pattern, and thus took teachers to arbitration after a lengthy and arduous process of thirty days of bargaining, conciliation and then arbitration.

This time around, the issues are more contentious for the Federation. The Government, so far, refuses to offer wage

increases that would even meet PEI's cost of living increases, despite a record surplus (which doesn't include cannabis revenue). It will not admit at the bargaining table that there is a teacher and substitute teacher shortage across the country. It does not want to bargain class size caps or guaranteed preparation time.

Most disturbing, however, is it will not bargain other working conditions that seek to limit the limitless work expectations that exist for teachers. The Federation continues to push for daily and yearly limits to the demands put on teachers and their time, so they can have some work-life balance and the ability to spend quality time with their families. Included in that concern is the continued encroachment on the time that teachers as administrators are supposed to have during the summer months.

It has been challenging to figure out what this Government thinks about teachers. Other than the quality of the current Minister, Deputy Minister and Department of Education, there has been little evidence from Cabinet and the Premier's Office that there has been much consideration of teachers, especially when it comes to pay and working conditions and bargaining in general.

Investments into social services and EAL supports for students, although appreciated, are not direct investments for the education of all students and have little direct impact on classroom teachers from across the province who are struggling to meet the diverse and increasing academic (and social) needs of their students. Creating one English school board, and then taking over that board, does not help teachers teach or students learn. Closing schools, opening schools, renovating schools don't do much in that regard either, and whatever happened to the 2015 statement by this Government to "Undertake a review of current programs for students with special needs."?

Oh well, I guess, despite my efforts, Scrooge won out. Hopefully, that leaves more Santa to go around and that he gives you all a restful and joyful holiday break. I am sure he knows that you deserve it.

Be good to yourselves and each other.