

Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association



Priorities for 2023-25

Provincial Executive

April 26-27, 2024

Priority #1: Workload Concerns

Goal: To improve the working conditions of teachers generally and to address individual teacher workload concerns

- Programs and Services staff continue to assist numerous teachers during Winter/Spring 2023-24 in drafting correspondence re: class size and composition and inadequate resources that prevent them from effectively delivering curriculum and ensuring a safe and effective teaching and learning environment despite their best efforts as caring and competent professionals. In at least one case, additional allocations have followed.
- Since the Fall of 2023-24, Administrative Officers have assisted teachers with exercising the right to refuse unsafe work under OHS legislation. Members have been provided with advice and support regarding violence in the classroom, rights, responsibilities and options. Several such refusals are still ongoing in April 2024.
- On November 20, 2023, the Association was made aware of significant changes that had been made to the NLESD Assessment and Evaluation Regulations, with the new Guidelines to take effect “immediately”. The nature and timing of the changes would have significant impact on workload for teachers. This was also done without consultation or input from teachers. NLTA staff intervened immediately and, after several conversations with Department of Education officials, implementation of the guidelines was repealed/postponed via a communication from District staff to principals on November 21, 2023. The Association continues to monitor this issue post-integration and will advocate for members on any proposed changes moving forward.
- In December 2023, an arbitration challenging an employer hiring decision was concluded. A synopsis of this arbitration will be published in *The Bulletin* once a ruling is made.
- Programs & Services prepared an article on reporting workplace violence for the January/February 2024 edition of *The Bulletin*.
- An Administrative Officer and Executive Member, Sean Weir, met virtually with Speech Language Pathologists from across the province in February 2024 to address workload concerns and concerns with a lack of clear guidelines and expectations for the work of SLPs. The Administrative Officer will pursue recommendations with Denise King, SS Manager – a meeting has been scheduled for Friday April 19, 2024.
- An appeal has been filed (February 2024) with the Office of the Privacy Commissioner in response to an ATIPP request filed with the Department of Health in relation to changes impacting comprehensive assessments (vision/hearing screening).
- A policy grievance (failure to consult) was filed regarding changes to policy which require NLTA members to administer hearing and vision screeners prior to comprehensive

assessments. This matter has now been referred for arbitration. Three meetings have been held by the parties in an effort to settle the matter and work on this matter continues in Spring 2024.

- On February 9, 2024, the NLTA submitted a pre-Budget submission to the Provincial Government in advance of Budget 2024. The submission, entitled “It’s Not Business as Usual in our Classrooms – and That’s Not OK”, highlights the concerns and struggles members are facing every day and links investment in education to improvements in health care, the economy and justice issues. The submission was provided to all members and was shared with the media and general public via social media.
- On February 23, 2024, the Teachers Think Tank event was held virtually. More than 2200 NLTA members completed the questionnaire made available in advance of the virtual event. Over 70 individuals took part and discussed concerns and issues in the public education system and work on solutions to address those issues. Following the event, the President and Minister of Education held a media availability and government announced some initial initiatives in response to feedback received, including additional student assistant time, PL time for teacher wellness and a financial grant to assist efforts to support teacher mental health/well-being. A ‘What We Heard’ document should be available from the Office of Public Engagement in the coming weeks and Association have requested (April 2024) updates from the Department as to when this will be provided. The NLTA will be actively involved in the next steps of actioning the items discussed during the Think Tank.
- In March 2024, an administrative officer met with DOE/NLSchools officials and also engaged in a hands-on demonstration of data entry with DOE Program Development Specialists responsible for the RTL database to discuss workload concerns caused by data entry tasks required by the re-entry of previously existing data. These meetings resulted in changes to the tasks that were required for the last reporting period. Discussions continue on work expectations required moving forward.
- The recently ratified Collective Agreement (2022-2026) contains a provision requiring the establishment of a committee within 120 days of the signing of this Agreement for the purpose of conducting a review of the RTL model. Discussions with the Department of Education have been initiated (March-April 2024) to commence the work of this committee.
- An administrative officer worked with and advocated on behalf of the School Administrator’s Council to secure leave for members to attend the National CAP Conference and Provincial SAC Conference taking place in Spring 2024.

- The President and an Administrative Officer will be meeting with Guidance Counsellors in mid-April 2024 to discuss concerns around RTL and changes to the comprehensive assessment guidelines.
- Three Administrative Officers presented several sessions during the IgnitEd professional learning day on March 22, 2024.
- The Association provided feedback in March 2024, in keeping with NLTA policy, on the proposed introduction of provincial high school assessments and modular assessments for former public exam courses. This was submitted via the EngageNL platform.
- On March 21, 2024, the Provincial Government delivered its 2024 Budget. There was very little new spending announced to address any issues in the education system. The Association issued a reaction to the budget, giving it a failing grade and highlighting the lack of government response to the serious concerns and ideas for improvements identified during the Teachers Think Tank process.
- On March 26, 2024, President Langdon held a media availability and outlined the Association's concerns regarding increasing violence in the classroom, the lack of investment in K-12 public education in the Provincial Budget and the increasing issues with retention and recruitment in this province. The information announced regarding increasing violence/aggression in schools was gathered through Access to Information requests the Association submitted in the Fall of 2023.
- On March 26, 2024, the Association launched a public awareness campaign entitled "Not Okay." The campaign was launched during the President's media availability and focuses on issues of violence in the classroom, inadequate resources and teachers' inability to do their jobs as a result. The digital campaign runs for four weeks.
- The President wrote to the Minister of Education on April 9, 2024, detailing the Association's concerns regarding her response to the NLTA media statement re: increasing incidents of violence/aggression in schools and lack of response to the Teachers Think Tank. The letter also detailed specific measures to improve teaching and learning and teacher retention/recruitment.
- NLTA staff are exploring ways to improve the Branch registration process for substitute teachers.

Priority #2: Membership Well-Being and Protection

Goal: To promote and improve supports for teacher health and wellness, including teacher mental health and well-being

(See Appendix for updates on recommendations from the Teacher Mental Health and Well-being Ad Hoc Committee)

- The volume of teachers requiring EAP support and intervention continues to grow during Fall 2023 and early 2024. More than 1 in 7 teachers under NLESD are currently accessing EAP supports. Due to the continued growth of mental health referrals to the EAP for Teachers program, EAP has had to significantly reduce the number of workshops provided in schools. There are ongoing requests and a need for more wellness workshops in schools throughout the province.
- On October 30 and November 2, 2023, two Administrative Officers presented sessions on The Code of Ethics and Legal Issues impacting teachers for Memorial University Faculty of Education students. Legal Issues presentations were also provided at Memorial University in January and March 2024; another is scheduled for May 2024.
- Since the Fall of 2023-24 Administrative Officers have assisted teachers with exercising the right to refuse unsafe work under OHS legislation. Members have been provided with advice and support regarding violence in the classroom, rights, responsibilities and options. Several such refusals are still ongoing in April 2024.
- The second meeting of the School Safety Coalition, initiated by the President, was held at the NLTA office on January 31, 2024. In attendance were: the NLTA President and Executive Director; senior representatives from the departments of Justice and Public Safety, Education and Health and Community Services; the President of the Federation of School Councils; representatives from the RNC and RCMP, Relationships First and the Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development. Outreach is ongoing to schedule the next meeting during Spring 2024.
- The President wrote to all NL senators in Ottawa in Fall 2024 to advocate for support of the CTF proposed amendment to the Criminal Code for language to replace section 43 in the event that the current provision is repealed in response to a recommendation from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission report (Bill C-273). NLTA has also provided CTF with relevant information on NL cases and opinions from our legal counsel in support of these efforts. The President and Executive Director have met with three senators virtually (Senators Ravalia, Wells and Marshal in November 2023, December and February 2024) and in person with Senator White on April 8, 2024.
- On November 20, 2023, the Association was made aware of significant changes that had been made to the NLESD Assessment and Evaluation Regulations, with the new Guidelines to take

effect “immediately”. The nature and timing of the changes would have significant impact on workload for teachers. This was also done without consultation or input from teachers. NLTA staff intervened immediately and, after several conversations with Department of Education officials, implementation of the guidelines was repealed/postponed via a communication from District staff to principals on November 21, 2023. The Association continues to monitor this issue post-integration and will advocate for members on any proposed changes moving forward.

- EAP provided intervention and wellness supports to school(s) in relation to stress, grief/loss and trauma during late 2023 and January-March 2024.
- On February 9, 2024, the NLTA submitted a pre-Budget submission to the Provincial Government in advance of Budget 2024. The submission, entitled ‘It’s Not Business as Usual in our Classrooms – and That’s Not OK’, highlights the concerns and struggles members are facing every day and links investment in education to improvements in health care, the economy and justice issues. The submission was provided to all members and was shared with the media and general public via social media.
- On February 23, 2024, the Teachers Think Tank event was held virtually. Over 70 individuals took part and discussed concerns and issues in the public education system and work on generating suggested solutions to address those issues. Following the event, the President and Minister of Education held a media availability and government announced some initial initiatives in response to feedback received, including additional student assistant time, PL time for teacher wellness and a financial grant to assist efforts to support teacher mental health/well-being. A ‘What We Heard’ document should be available from the Office of Public Engagement in the coming weeks and Association have requested (April 2024) updates from the Department as to when this will be provided. The NLTA will be actively involved in the next steps of actioning the items discussed during the Think Tank.
- The NLTA is liaising with the Department of Education via the EAP Coordinating Committee (meetings held on March 19 and April 16, 2024) to start the process for filling the new EAP Coordinator position negotiated in the new collective agreement. The Committee was in supportive of the NLTA plan to use the \$450,000 grant from government (announced in late February following the Think Tank) to help stabilize Association funds used to provide members with limited financial support for counselling services.
- The President and Executive Director participated in the virtual external stakeholder session of the MUN Faculty of Education Academic Unit Planning Review Panel on March 25, 2024.

- EAP wrote a wellness article on secondary traumatic stress/compassion fatigue for the March/April 2024 edition of *The Bulletin* called 'Burning the Candle at Both Ends'.
- In January/ February 2024, an article on the Accommodation process was published in *The Bulletin*.
- In January/ February 2024, an article on the violence in the workplace was published in *The Bulletin*.
- An article on Changes to the Hiring Process was published in the March/April 2024 issue of *The Bulletin*.
- An Administrative Officer is facilitating mediation sessions during Winter/Spring 2024 to assist members in managing professional relations matters.
- On March 26, 2024, President Langdon held a media availability and outlined the Association's concerns regarding increasing violence in the classroom, the lack of focus on education in the Provincial Budget and the increasing issues with retention and recruitment in this province. The information announced regarding violence in the classroom was gathered through Access to Information requests the Association submitted in the Fall of 2023.
- On March 26, 2024, the Association launched a public awareness campaign entitled "Not Okay." The campaign was launched during the President's media availability and focuses on issues of violence in the classroom, inadequate resources and teachers' inability to do their jobs as a result. The digital campaign runs for four weeks.
- The President and Executive Director met with representatives of the Canadian Mental Health Association NL chapter on March 28, 2024, to discuss their proposal for a program to provide supports for student and staff mental health.
- On April 5, 2024, the President, Executive Director and Assistant Executive Director, along with several NLTA members, collaborated with the MUN Faculty of Education to host a min-conference for pre-service teachers in their graduating year. The conference was well-attended and received very positive reviews/feedback. The sessions provided dealt with supporting gender/sexual diversity in schools, the benefits and leadership opportunities of NLTA involvement for new teachers and information on teacher staffing processes.
- The NLTA, in coordination with the CTF, prepared a written brief which was provided to the members of the federal Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights for consideration in their ongoing study of Bill C-273 (repeal of section 43 of the Criminal Code). The Association also requested to appear before the Committee during their hearings on April 15, 2024, but

this was not granted. The NLTA brief has been provided to all NL Senators and Members of Parliament.

- Association staff continue to assist members with various payroll matters, including issues related to the calculation and payment of recent negotiated bonuses and retroactive salary increases.

Priority #3: Collective Bargaining and Services for Members

Goal: To continue to provide exceptional representation and supports to members, including through collective bargaining and other programs and services

- The 2022-26 Provincial Collective Agreement was ratified on December 7, 2023 and signed on February 1, 2024. A total of 5211 members (72% of eligible voters) voted with 76% voting to accept the contract. An update was sent to members in early January 2024 regarding timing of signing and implementation in relation to pay matters. Regular contact was maintained with Government officials in January to April. In March, a letter was sent to the Minister of Finance citing discontent with the process to date and particularly the lack of timely and open communication around the process and timelines for payment of the recognition bonus and retroactive salary increases.
- The 2022-26 Provincial Collective Agreement was signed as of February 1, 2024. A detailed summary of changes was sent to all members on February 12, 2024 and is accessible on the NLTA website. Numerous information updates were provided to members in February, March and April relating to payment and Employment Insurance matters arising from the agreement.
- On August 29, 2023, the President, Executive Director and Assistant Executive Director met with Department and District officials, including the Minister of Finance and Superintendent Terry Hall, to discuss past issues/concerns with payroll and the plan moving forward. It was agreed that a subsequent meeting would be held in January 2024 to debrief how changes made during the Fall have improved things or if further measures might be required. A follow-up meeting was held with the Assistant Executive Director, the Comptroller for Government Payroll and Payroll Liaison Officers at the District and Department to discuss the plan. Information exchanges relating to systemic and payroll matters continue into Spring 2024 and another meeting of the full group is anticipated prior to the end of the school year.
- NLTA staff had further meetings with NLESD and Government officials in November 2023 as part of ongoing discussions related to payroll. NLESD now has a process in place to ensure teachers will be notified when an overpayment occurs and has confirmed that, by default, repayments will be recovered in accordance with the collective agreement (over 12 months) and members will have the opportunity to make alternate arrangements should they wish. Issues arising since which contradict this agreement are being examined by payroll and NLSchools. Retroactive payments were taxed using a “bonus tax method” which will better

reflect normal tax amounts that would have been deducted had monies been received on time over several pay periods rather than all at once. Codes have been developed in the payroll system to address retroactive pay scenarios being paid using the bonus tax method automatically going forward. Any new issues that NLTA has brought forward on this have resulted in updates to payroll coding as well.

- A meeting was held in April 2024 in an attempt to systemically resolve outstanding individual and policy grievances related to the timing of payment and resulting tax issues for guidance counselor allowances.
- Government officials have advised (Fall 2023) that options for a new payroll system to replace TCAS are being explored. In this regard, NLTA continues to stress the importance of including in this project options for members to be able to privately access personal information such as sick leave balances as well as the need for improvements to pay advice information, to make pay statements easier to understand. A letter relating to leave balances is part of the recently ratified agreement, in which the parties acknowledge that the Employer is exploring methods in which employees can access their leave accruals.
- Programs and Services staff assisted members with a number of payroll questions/issues during September 2023, the majority of which have been resolved. However, payroll issues have continued to arise over the Fall 2023 and into 2024, including in relation to payment of recognition bonuses and retro pay – Administrative Officers are assisting members as necessary while broader system discussions are ongoing.
- Programs and Services staff continue to assist numerous teachers during Winter/Spring 2023-24 in drafting correspondence re: class size and composition and inadequate resources that prevent them from effectively delivering curriculum and ensuring a safe and effective teaching and learning environment despite their best efforts as caring and competent professionals. In at least one case, additional allocations have followed.
- Since early Fall 2023, Programs and Services have assisted and are working with teachers in situations where the right to refuse unsafe work is being considered or exercised. Staff have provided advice on incidents of violence in the classroom, rights, responsibilities and options. Several such refusals are still ongoing in April 2024.
- Administrative Officers are assisting and representing a number of teachers in discipline investigations as of April 2024.
- ATIPP requests for information related to violent incidents at two schools were submitted in 2022-23. Some disclosure was received in September 2023, but the NLTA filed for a review by the OIPC in October to ensure that the exemption cited to prevent release of other materials was properly applied. The exemption due to ongoing law enforcement matters was upheld by the OIPC but this file remains active as of March 2024. Further disclosure will be sought once law enforcement matters have concluded.

- An Administrative Officer attended a virtual meeting of the CTF Francophone Symposium with francophone liaison counterparts as part of CTF initiatives in French First Language Education on November 16, 2023. A second meeting is scheduled for May 2024.
- Programs and Services staff prepared the annual report (2023-24) on French language education in the province in their role as French liaison officer with the Canadian Teachers' Federation/Fédération canadienne des enseignantes et des enseignants.
- Administrative Officers communicated with CSFP staff in early 2024 to ensure appropriate provision of benefits for substitute and replacement teachers.
- Programs & Services had an article on the DSLP, referencing the newly negotiated option for a 5/6 plan structure, in the January/February 2024 edition of *The Bulletin*.
- In preparation for Labrador Benefits Agreement negotiations, the Association is exploring providers and cost for conducting a cost-of-living analysis for the various regions of Labrador, with the goal of cost-sharing such a project with the other unions covered by this agreement.
- Two Administrative Officers attended CAPTTO Economic Welfare meetings in Halifax in February 2024. Discussion topics included legal updates on issues of teachers harassment, ongoing arbitrations in the region on workplace violence and the impact of AI.
- Programs & Services are assisting members with a number of workplace accommodations as of March 2024.
- Three Beginning Teachers' Conferences have been held, one on December 2-3, 2023, in St. John's, one on January 13-14, 2024, in Deer Lake and a third on February 10-11 in Goose Bay.
- A Mid-Career all day Financial Information Seminar is scheduled for Clarenbridge branch on April 27, 2024.
- A Mid-Career all day Financial Information Seminar is scheduled for Exploits Valley branch on May 11, 2024.
- Programs and Services staff provided a Financial Wellness presentation at St. Peter's Primary on March 1, 2024.
- Programs and Services staff will be providing a Financial Wellness presentation at Riverwood Academy on June 10, 2024.
- After intervention by an Administrative Officer, a standing calculation inconsistency with the 2024 seniority list has been rectified.
- An Administrative Officer engaged with the New Brunswick Teacher's Association in March 2024 to avail of professional learning being delivered by experts in the field of progressive discipline.
- The Assistant Executive Director and an Administrative Officer met with HR officials from NLSchools in January 2024 in an effort to clarify the parameters used by NLSchools in the consideration of equivalency. Discussions on this issue are ongoing as of April 2024.

- An Administrative Officer met with the School Administrators' Council on February 5, 2024, to assist with planning for a provincial conference in April 2024 and to help facilitate attendance at the Canadian Association of Principals conference in May 2024.
- As of the end of April 2024, NLTA staff continue to receive and respond to a high volume of contact from the membership re a wide variety of issues (eg. workload, discipline/allegations investigations, matters leading to potential grievance, etc.).
- March 22, 2024, several Programs and Services staff provided presentations (Financial Wellness, Legal Issues in Education) in person to IgnitED held at Paradise Intermediate.
- The Assistant Executive Director and Administrative Officer responsible for Group Insurance met with Johnson staff to discuss recurring payroll issues. The Association is coordinating a meeting with government payroll, employer payroll and senior employer personnel to identify and attempt to address systemic issues.
- The Administrative Officer responsible for Group Insurance met with their counterparts from the other Atlantic teachers' associations on April 2-3, 2024. Discussion topics included plan structures, changes with Johnson and impact of rising drug costs.
- The Assistant Executive Director and an Administrative Officer met with teachers at École des Grands Vents on March 27, 2024, to discuss teachers' rights with respect to the reconfiguration of two metro area schools of the CSFP.
- A School Board Teacher Liaison meeting with the Conseil francophone scolaire provincial was held on March 26, 2024.
- Education Week 2024 was held March 18-22, 2024, under the theme Planting Positivity/Semer la positivité. The week was well received and saw good participation in the social media contest as well as the Spring Art contest. The Association is planning to survey members about the theme and structure of Education Week to help with the planning of future weeks.
- Programs and Services staff have assisted a high volume of questions/calls/emails related to Recognition Bonus and Retroactive Pay coming out of the new Collective Agreement. This has required a substantial amount of communication with government and payroll offices.
- Labrador Benefits Agreement negotiations – a previously scheduled meeting of union representatives had to be cancelled/rescheduled. The first introductory/planning meeting took place on Friday April 12, 2024. Notice to open negotiations was sent to Government on April 15, 2024. A survey to NLTA members in Labrador was sent out on April 17, 2024, to get membership input for the joint union opening package.

Priority #4: Retention, Recruitment and Resourcing

Goal: To address teacher retention and recruitment challenges and proper resourcing of public education through advocating for effective and appropriate Government/employer action and investment, and through promoting the teaching profession and public education

- The Labrador West Recruitment and Retention Committee (as per the Labrador West Collective Agreement) met via Zoom in August 2023. In attendance for the Association were the Executive Director and the Labrador West Branch President. The main focus for discussion was planning for focus groups to be conducted in follow up to the member survey carried out last year. Since then, the Department initiated the idea of a Teachers Think Tank and ongoing work related to NLESD integration has created some challenges in moving this forward. The Association continues to prioritize a Labrador West focus within efforts to address recruitment and retention with a view to moving forward early in 2024. The Committee met most recently on January 23, 2024, with further details on focus groups, etc. expected to be confirmed soon (April 2024).
- Three Beginning Teachers' Conferences have been held, one on December 2-3, 2023, in St. John's, one on January 13-14, 2024, in Deer Lake and a third on February 10-11 in Goose Bay.
- The most recent Teacher Induction Ceremony for new MUN Faculty of Education graduates was held on October 19, 2023. The next one will take place on May 31, 2024.
- Production of the next Teachers Change Lives story is underway for Spring 2024. This campaign continues to be a key component of NLTA efforts to both promote the profession and encourage those who are considering becoming teachers.
- The Teacher Certification Committee met on January 18, 2024, at the NLTA offices. Discussions included the importance of potential changes to regulations that would improve/enhance certification upgrade options. Discussions between staff and Teacher Certification are ongoing.
- On February 23, 2024, the Teachers Think Tank event was held virtually. More than 2200 NLTA members completed the questionnaire made available in advance of the virtual event. Over 70 individuals took part and discussed concerns and issues in the public education system and work on solutions to address those issues. Following the event, the President and Minister of Education held a media availability and government announced some initial

initiatives in response to feedback received, including additional student assistant time, PL time for teacher wellness and a financial grant to assist efforts to support teacher mental health/well-being. A 'What We Heard' document should be available from the Office of Public Engagement in the coming weeks and Association have requested (April 2024) updates from the Department as to when this will be provided. The NLTA will be actively involved in the next steps of actioning the items discussed during the Think Tank.

- On March 26, 2024, President Langdon held a media availability and outlined the Association's concerns regarding increasing violence in the classroom, the lack of focus on education in the Provincial Budget and the increasing issues with retention and recruitment in this province. The information announced regarding violence in the classroom was gathered through Access to Information requests the Association submitted in the Fall of 2023.
- On March 26, 2024, the Association launched a public awareness campaign entitled "Not Okay." The campaign was launched during the President's media availability and focuses on issues of violence in the classroom, inadequate resources and teachers' inability to do their jobs as a result. The digital campaign runs for four weeks.
- On April 5, 2024, NLTA partnered with MUN Faculty of Education for an NLTA/MUN Mini-Conference which was attended by over 40 Memorial Education students who will be graduating this year. Presentations were made by the GSD SIC, a panel of NLTA members/leaders and a session on Acquiring Employment in NL – An NLTA Perspective. The President, Executive Director and Assistant Executive Director were in attendance for the mini-conference which was well received by those who attended.
- The recently ratified Collective Agreement (2022-2026) contains a provision requiring the establishment of a committee within 120 days of the signing of this Agreement for the purpose of investigating issues related to teacher recruitment and retention. Discussions with the Department of Education have been initiated (March-April 2024) to commence the work of this committee.
- The President wrote to the Minister of Education on April 9, 2024, detailing the Association's concerns regarding her response to the NLTA media statement re: increasing incidents of violence/aggression in schools and lack of response to the Teachers Think Tank. The letter also detailed specific measures to improve teaching and learning and teacher retention/recruitment.

Priority #5: Advocacy on and Response to Government Initiatives

Goal: To take actions, through meaningful consultation and advocacy efforts, to ensure that the development and implementation of Government policy, reports and decisions that impact public education are informed by and in keeping with NLTA objectives and the interests of members

- The Executive Director met with the Deputy Minister for Education Transformation on November 8, 2023. The DM has a team of three individuals working with him. An advisory committee for transformation has been established and included NLTA representation via the Executive Director.
- The first meeting of the advisory committee for Education Transformation was held on February 1, 2024. During discussions, the Executive Director stressed the importance of adequate human resourcing to the success of current programs and any new initiatives. A call for expressions of interest from teachers to serve on working groups went out in March 2024, with a very good response rate from individuals looking to be involved. Dates are being explored for the next advisory committee meeting in late April 2024.
- In response to changes to the guidelines for comprehensive assessments which now require lead assessors to complete hearing and vision screeners, Programs and Services staff have filed two ATIPP requests. The report from one of these requests has resulted in the filing of a policy grievance (failure to consult).
- A policy grievance (failure to consult) was filed regarding changes to policy which require NLTA members to administer hearing and vision screeners prior to comprehensive assessments. This matter has now been referred for arbitration. Three meetings have been held by the parties in an effort to settle the matter and work on this matter continues in Spring 2024.
- The recently ratified Collective Agreement (2022-2026) contains a provision requiring an Advisory Committee established within 120 days of the signing of this Agreement for the purpose of considering the appropriateness and feasibility of implementing recommendations from the Teacher Allocation Review Committee Report, released October 14, 2022. Discussions with the Department of Education have been initiated (March-April 2024) to commence the work of this committee.
- The Teacher Certification Committee met on January 18, 2024, at the NLTA offices. Discussions included the importance of potential changes to regulations that would

improve/enhance certification upgrade options. Discussions with Department officials are ongoing.

- On February 9, 2024, the NLTA submitted a pre-Budget submission to the Provincial Government in advance of Budget 2024. The submission, entitled 'It's Not Business as Usual in our Classrooms – and That's Not OK, highlights the concerns and struggles members are facing every day and links investment in education to improvements in health care, the economy and justice issues. The submission was provided to all members and was shared with the media and general public via social media.
- During the month of February (leading up to February 23, 2024), a great deal of work was put into preparation for the Teacher Think Tank event. Encouragement of the membership to fill out the online questionnaire associated with the event resulted in over 2200 respondents. On February 23, 2024, the Teachers Think Tank event was held virtually. Over 70 individuals took part and discussed concerns and issues in the public education system and work on solutions to address those issues. Following the event, the President and Minister of Education held a media availability and government announced some initial initiatives in response to feedback received, including additional student assistant time, PL time for teacher wellness and a financial grant to assist efforts to support teacher mental health/well-being. A 'What We Heard' document should be available from the Office of Public Engagement in the coming weeks and Association have requested (April 2024) updates from the Department as to when this will be provided. The NLTA will be actively involved in the next steps of actioning the items discussed during the Think Tank.
- The Association issued a media statement immediately following the announcement by the Department of Education of the Education Accord NL. The President and Executive Director had an initial meeting with the Deputy Minister and one of the chairpersons for the Accord, Dr. Anne Burke, on January 31, 2024. The critical significance of teacher working conditions on teaching and learning in K-12 public education was stressed during the meeting. Copies of previous Association submissions to past reviews were provided, as well as recent data from NLTA members surveys on teacher workload and mental health/well-being.
- A second meeting with the Accord chairpersons, planned for April 4, 2024, had to be postponed and will be rescheduled. The President attended the inaugural meeting of the Accord Advisory Committee on April 16, 2024.
- On March 21, 2024, the Provincial Government delivered its 2024 Budget. There was very little new spending announced to address any issues in the education system. The Association issued a reaction to the budget, giving it a failing grade and highlighting the lack of government response to the serious concerns and ideas for improvements identified during the Teachers Think Tank process.

- The Association provided feedback in March 2024, in keeping with NLTA policy, on the proposed introduction of provincial high school assessments and modular assessments for former public exam courses. This was submitted via the EngageNL platform.
- On March 26, 2024, President Langdon held a media availability and outlined the Association's concerns regarding increasing violence in the classroom, the lack of focus on education in the Provincial Budget and the increasing issues with retention and recruitment in this province. The information announced regarding violence in the classroom was gathered through Access to Information requests the Association submitted in the Fall of 2023.
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