

Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association



Priorities for 2023-25

Joint Council

March 7-8, 2025

Priority #1: Workload Concerns

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

- Programs and Services are continuing to receive and respond to a high volume of calls/emails from members about workload concerns (teaching assignments, classes “over cap”, duty schedules, etc.) throughout the fall and winter of the 2024-25 school year. Staff are assisting and, in many cases, subsequent contacts are being made with employer officials to advocate on behalf of the members involved.
- During the 2024-25 school year and continuing into 2024-25, 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. While some matters have been resolved to teachers’ satisfaction, several such refusals are still ongoing and new cases have arisen.
- A policy grievance (failure to consult) was filed regarding changes to Department of Education policy which required NLTA members (lead assessors) to administer student hearing and vision screeners prior to comprehensive assessments. This matter was referred for arbitration with hearing dates confirmed for November 2024. The RNUNL was notified of the arbitration dates as this matter raised work of the bargaining unit (public health nurses) concerns for them, which they are pursuing as well with the Department of Health & Community Services through their own dispute resolution processes. Several meetings were held by the parties during the Spring/Summer 2024, continuing into the Fall of 2024. This grievance was settled in November 2024, resulting in a reversal of the policy changes. As a result, NLTA members are no longer required to complete hearing and vision screeners prior to comprehensive assessments. A memo from NLSchools was sent to the system regarding these changes in early January 2025.
- The 2022-2026 Collective Agreement contains a provision requiring the establishment of an Advisory Committee within 120 days of the signing of this Agreement for the purpose of considering the appropriateness and feasibility of implementing recommendations from the TARC report. Association staff initiated discussions with the Department of Education (March-May 2024) to commence the work of this committee. Due to staffing changes at the Department of Education/NLSchools and CSFP, the initial meeting of this committee was delayed, but the first meeting took place on October 8, 2024. Subsequent meetings have occurred on December 9, 2024 and January 15, 2025, with several other meetings scheduled through to the end of the 2024-25 school year.
- The School Board-Teacher Liaison Committee for NLSchools met on December 12, 2024. Topics discussed included absenteeism, technology and tech support for schools, student

assistant shortages, school maintenance concerns, teacher retention and recruitment, and the cell phone policy.

- The President had a telephone meeting with Premier Furey in mid-May 2024 to discuss teacher shortages and ideas to address teacher workload and retention/recruitment challenges. This was followed up with correspondence from the President to the Premier on May 29, 2024. Subsequent discussions with NLSchools officials in July 2024 led to a response from the Minister of Education on August 12, 2024, confirming a commitment for some additional resources in several regional “pilot” schools, including some small increases in student assistant time and the introduction of a new student services TLA support position in 6 schools for the 2024-25 school year. Recent (early December 2024) discussions with Department officials indicate that feedback from school administrators at pilot schools has been mainly positive and the employer intends to add additional TLA units for the remainder of 2024-25. Input from NLTA has been sought and provided regarding suggestions for additional pilot schools. A total of 21 additional full-time SS TLA positions were allocated to schools across the province as of January 2025 for the remainder of the school year.
- The committee established to review the RTL model has now met 5 times, most recently on January 23, 2025. The Committee has selected MQO Research to conduct the survey with the goal of distributing surveys prior to March 1, 2025.
- Programs & Services staff have developed and are sharing (since Fall 2024) an explanation with teachers regarding the possibility of a grievance under Article 30 (Class Size) of the Collective Agreement. Integration of the former NLESD with the Department of Education may make grievances around class size/under resourcing more likely to succeed, depending on the facts of each particular case. Several such cases that were being explored during the Fall of 2024 did not proceed to grievance as initial efforts/inquiries led to additional resources being allocated.
- The Association worked with M5 to review the most recent comments received from parents after the latest Not Okay campaign, which was launched online in May 2024. These comments were packaged for use in future public awareness campaigns and in correspondence with government officials to advocate for increased resourcing in classrooms. Some quotes were used in the NLTA pre-budget submission in January 2025.
- The next installment of the Not Okay campaign was launched on October 29, 2024, and incorporates comments received from parents as well as a statement regarding the increase in incidents of school violence as disclosed by updated ATIPP request data received in August 2024. The campaign includes social media assets, an online video and a television commercial. The timing of the campaign was determined strategically to coincide with the reopening of the House of Assembly for the Fall sitting on November 4, 2024. General feedback from members on the campaign has been positive and there has

been significant engagement with the posts and videos. The “still” not okay tagline and some parent comments were used in the NLTA pre-budget submission in January 2025.

- The Association sent a message to all members on October 9, 2024, strongly encouraging participation in an Education Accord survey. Reminders were sent periodically until the survey closed in December 2024.
- On November 6, 2024, Association staff were made aware of a communication from NLSchools senior staff indicating that clerical work related to the intake of newcomer students would now be the responsibility of individual schools (administrators). This work had previously been the responsibility of one administrative support person at NLESD/NLSchools who is no longer working with NLSchools. Association staff were quick to gather information from affected school administrators and followed up with a communication to the Deputy Minister on November 7, 2024. Shortly thereafter, Association staff were made aware that a memo was sent to school administrators (from NLSchools) indicating that the November 6 communication had been rescinded and apologized for any confusion.
- Administrative Officers worked with Special Interest Councils and the NLCU on measures to improve the efficiency of banking procedures for all Councils. A new process has now been established as of February 2025 for those councils who requested changes to their banking processes.
- Programs and Services staff collected survey data from Administrators on increases to workload. Data was presented to the Professional Issues Committee in late Fall 2024; at the direction of the Committee staff identified key themes and takeaways which have been sent to ADM Terry Hall and Mike Tobin, Senior Management Official for School Systems, with a request for action to address the increases. Mike Tobin’s office has management of Directors of Schools who work with Administrators.
- Programs and Services staff attended the PEITF Annual Conference sessions on strategies for building resiliency in schools in November 2024.
- Programs and Services staff are working with and advocating for schools to establish boundaries on the types/nature of student medical interventions that can be required of NLTA members. Follow up with DOE Student Services staff is ongoing as of January 2025. The Executive Director has also raised this concern with the Deputy Minister in December 2024, reminding of the Department’s obligation to consult with the Association on any contemplated changes to employer policy on this issue.
- The TPP Joint Sponsor Body met on December 11, 2024 and, in response to the continuing shortage of substitute teachers, a motion was carried to continue the lifting of limits on retiree substitute work for the 2024-25 school year.
- On January 3, 2025, the Association submitted its Pre-Budget Submission to the Provincial Government for the 2025 Budget. The submission, entitled Our Education System is STILL Not Ok, articulates the Association’s position that significant and strategic funding must

be allocated in Budget 2025 for K-12 public education in this province. The submission highlights quotes from parents and links the importance of education funding to our society, health care system and future. The submission was also shared with members and posted online.

- The Association lobbied NLSchools in late 2024/early 2025 regarding concerns raised by members on the number of days allocated for mid-term and final examinations in semesterized and non-semesterized schools. A commitment was made to collect and assess information in relation to the re-introduction of exams and the concerns raised would be a consideration in future discussions by programs staff on the rollout of examinations for the next school year.
- The Association is currently (February/March 2025) planning the next phase of the Invest in Our Kids public awareness campaign. In collaboration with M5, a jurisdictional scan will be conducted of other provinces, public sector unions and teacher organizations to identify effective advertising strategies and key issues gaining public support. Additionally, an online survey targeting the general public, particularly parents, will be launched to assess perceptions of the education system and identify top concerns.
- In response to Government's proposed changes to the Intermediate Curriculum (Phase 1 scheduled to commence in September, 2025 in 14 schools), the Association assisted/advised a number of individual teachers and Special Interest Councils who had significant concerns about the proposed changes. The Association issued a statement and the President had a number of media interviews on this issue in February 2025. NLTA advised all members to submit their concerns/thoughts to Government via the online "Thought Exchange" survey provided by government. Government has since made the decision to delay the implementation of Phase 1 of this initiative until September, 2026.
- An Administrative Officer is liaising with DOE officials regarding a survey sent to parents/families in Labrador about school food initiatives. There are potential workload concerns and a meeting has been scheduled for March 6, 2025.
- Programs and Services staff advocate with the employer in response to concerns raised by members of COSS regarding the February 12, 2025 deadline to have documents entered in the RTL database. The Association was successful in having this deadline extended to February 20 for entering student information. The deadline for entry of information for Kinderstart students was extended to March 3, 2025.

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 the 2023-24 and 2024-25 school years. More than 1 in 7 teachers under NLSchools are 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. With the addition of a third EAP position, the provision of some workshops have resumed during the 2024-2025 school year.
- 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, March and May of 2024, as well as February 2025.
- Since the Fall of 2023 and continuing into the 2024-25 school year, Administrative Officers have assisted several 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. While some matters have been resolved to teachers' satisfaction, several such refusals are still ongoing, and new cases have arisen.
- The NLTA liaised with the Department of Education to schedule a meeting of the EAP Coordinating Committee in March 2024 to start the process for filling the new EAP Coordinator position negotiated in the new Collective Agreement. The Committee was in support of the NLTA plan to use the \$450,000 grant from government (announced in late February 2024 following the Think Tank) to help stabilize Association funds used to provide members with limited financial support for counselling services. The new (third) EAP coordinator commenced work in July 2024. NLTA staff have are reviewing EAP claim trends from the past and current fiscal year in relation to the status of the Centennial Fund, including the \$450,000 grant, and will present information regarding a potential increase to EAP funding for teachers for consideration by the MBS Committee before the end of the 2024-25 school year.
- 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 was provided to all NL Senators and

Members of Parliament. Prime Minister Trudeau's decision to step down, the resulting Liberal Party leadership race and subsequent federal election expected during spring 2025 means that Bill C-273 will likely not proceed. NLTA continues to monitor this issue and will engage with government officials again should a similar Bill be proposed in the future.

- Association staff continue to assist members with various matters throughout the Fall of 2024 and Winter 2025, including issues related to the calculation and payment of recent negotiated bonuses and retroactive salary increases, the expanded eligibility for the isolation allowance and teachers not paid in the first pay period for 2024-25. A group grievance is filed and dates set for August relating to the failure to pay the recognition bonus to certain disabled teachers. Meetings between Programs & Services staff and Payroll officials have been ongoing to address problems and advocate for systemic improvements, including during July-August 2024 and September, October, November and December 2024. A further meeting with government payroll officials is scheduled for early April 2025.
- The Assistant Executive Director and an Administrative Officer met with Teacher Certification personnel on May 23, 2024, to discuss the issue of School Psychologists not currently having a path to Certificate VII without having a Bachelor of Education degree and proposals to improve the certification process for out of country applicants. Government officials have since confirmed that regulatory changes to address the concerns of School Psychologists and to simplify certification processes for internationally trained teachers are forthcoming and are being drafted by legislative counsel, hopefully to be completed by Spring 2025.
- NLTA staff advocated on behalf of school administrators in an attempt to have NLSchools allow multiple administrators from a school to attend the SAC Provincial Conference in late May 2024. Advocacy on this issue continues during the 2024-25 school year, including through discussions between the Executive Director and Deputy Minister.
- EAP Coordinators prepared an introductory and overview article on EAP supports and services for the September/October 2024 edition of *The Bulletin*.
- The President wrote to the Auditor General on July 31, 2024, regarding systemic Teacher Payroll concerns and seeking a formal review and audit by the AG. The AG responded on August 9, 2024, which led to a telephone meeting between the AG, the President and the Executive Director on August 23, 2024. While the AG confirmed that Teacher Payroll will be considered for an audit, she advised that this could take some time (over a year) as there are already a number of other matters in the queue. In an effort to prioritize this matter with the office of the AG, the President subsequently wrote to MHA Pleaman Forsey, chair of the government Public Accounts Committee, on September 5, 2024, asking that the Committee direct the AG to conduct an audit of Teacher Payroll. MHA Forsey responded, indicating that this matter will be on the agenda for the next Committee in the Fall of 2024, and the Association has asked to be informed when a date for that meeting has been set. The Clerk

for the Committee advised that meetings would take place in November and December, 2025. An update from these meetings has been requested (February 2025) and we are awaiting a response.

- The Association facilitated and attended a meeting with Department of Education officials for representatives of the PIE SIC on June 3, 2024. PIE presented research and suggestions to improve the recruitment and retention of school psychologists. It was confirmed during this meeting that NLTA advocacy has been successful in leading to regulatory changes to create a path to level VII certification for all school psychologists, and to update terminology in regulations to refer to “school”, as opposed to “educational” psychologists. NLTA staff have sought updates on the status of these amendments to regulations coming into force (October, December 2024, January and February 2025) and have been advised that legislative drafting is ongoing. An estimated timeframe has been requested; we are awaiting a definitive response but hoping this will be completed in Spring 2025.
- Programs & Services staff actively (August-November 2024) advocated with government officials for the continuation of the policy to not require medical documentation from teachers for periods of absence (up to 14 days) for COVID-19 and/or related symptoms. Department officials advised that this policy would remain in place until future notice as government was, in general, considering the matter for all public sector employees. Government has since informed all employees that medical notes will, in general, be required as of December 1, 2024, but not as frequently as required under current collective agreement language. Programs and Services staff sought employer clarification on certain aspects of this moving forward. The Employer addressed the Association’s concerns, which dealt with the effect of days without notes pre-December 1, as well as what days were included in the 10 day aggregate. The Employer has confirmed that sick leave days with supporting medical documentation will not be counted towards the calculation of days in the aggregate, and there would be no retroactive activity with respect to sick leave taken prior to December 1, 2024.
- NLTA staff continue efforts to have the employer implement a system that would allow members to have individual, “self-service” access to personal leave accrual and usage information. Letter #12 in the Collective Agreement requires the employer to explore this. Teacher Payroll officials have advised that this functionality has been included in ongoing investigations into a new payroll system to replace TCAS but, in the interim the possibility of other options is being explored (for example SmartFind, monthly balance updates ...). The Association has also explored whether a complaint regarding privacy concerns to the OIPC could lead to this issue being expedited. In mid-September 2024, the Association was made aware that members are able to access leave accrual information via SmartFind. While some concerns have come in regarding the accuracy of these numbers, the overall sense is that the majority of this information is correct. In a meeting with the Minister of Finance and

Treasury Board Secretariat officials on November 26, 2024, the President and NLTA staff in attendance were advised that work on instituting a self-service portal is ongoing. This matter was also raised at the SBTLC meeting on December 12, 2024, and the next meeting with payroll officials is scheduled for early April 2025.

- Two Beginning Teachers' Conferences have been held in Happy Valley-Goose Bay on November 30-December 1, 2024 and January 11-12 in St. John's. Feedback from participants was extremely positive. A conference scheduled in Deer Lake was cancelled due to numerous participants having to cancel.
- NLTA commissioned Thinkwell Research to gather feedback from members on potential changes to the Group Insurance Health Plan to ensure long-term financial sustainability of the Plan. A survey was conducted for two weeks beginning October 21, 2024. The results will be shared with and discussed by Group Insurance Managers at their December 2024 meeting. Further, the NLTA offered several virtual information/Q&A sessions for members in January 2025, which were well attended by both active members and retirees. Further member communication on this matter will go out in early March 2025.
- Three Group Insurance Managers completed the Foundations of Trust Management Standards (FTMS) course in November 2024 as required for their fiduciary responsibilities.
- The next installment of the Not Okay campaign was launched on October 29, 2024, and incorporates comments received from parents as well as a statement regarding the increase in incidents of school violence as disclosed by updated ATIPP request data received in August 2024. The campaign includes social media assets, an online video and a television commercial. The timing of the campaign was determined strategically to coincide with the reopening of the House of Assembly for the Fall sitting on November 4, 2024. General feedback from members on the campaign has been positive and there has been significant engagement with the posts and videos. The "still" not okay tagline and some parent comments were used in the NLTA pre-budget submission in January 2025.
- An Administrative Officer engaged in sessions from Lancaster on Protecting Public-facing Workers from Harassment in November 2024.
- The President and Executive Director met with government representatives on September 5, 2024, to review and discuss proposed changes to employer policy regarding the prevention and response to workplace harassment. As part of the consultation process, the Association was provided with the draft policy language and provided detailed feedback. As of late January 2025, the policy is still under review but government has committed to meet again to review NLTA feedback and a draft policy.
- Programs and Services staff assisted members in two schools with the Conseil scolaire francophone provincial (CSFP) regarding employer expectations during Fall 2024 of travel outside work hours to attend mandatory PL. The employer adjusted school hours and travel itineraries in response to NLTA advocacy.

- Programs and Services staff assisted members (several separate schools) in exercising their right to refuse unsafe work resulting from threats and violent incidents during Fall 2024. While some matters have been resolved to teachers' satisfaction, several such refusals are still ongoing and new cases have arisen.
- An Administrative Officer prepared an article for the January/ February 2025 edition of *The Bulletin* on "Accommodation: The Basics".
- The Assistant Executive Director and an Administrative Officer met with the SAC Provincial Executive and Regional Presidents on November 20, 2024, to gather information and discuss the treatment of Administrators on social media.
- EAP Coordinator prepared an article entitled Teacher Wellness: Prioritizing Self-Care for New Teachers for the November/December 2024 edition of *The Bulletin*.
- EAP Coordinators offered the following wellness workshops:
 - Corner Brook – in person presentations – "Understanding your Employee Assistance Program" and "Coping with Stress and Critical Incidents" - Offered November 1, 2024.
 - Fortune – virtual presentation – "Understanding your Employee Assistance Program"- Offered November 1, 2024.
 - Marystown – virtual presentation – "Understanding your Employee Assistance Program". Offered November 1, 2024.
 - St. John's (Centre for Distance Learning (CDLI) - in person presentation – "Understanding your Employee Assistance Program". Offered November 20, 2024.
 - St. John's (Faculty of Education, Memorial) – in person presentation – "Teacher Wellness: Prioritizing Self-Care for New Teachers". Offered November 29, 2024.
 - Gander – in person presentation – "Compassion Fatigue and Burnout". Scheduled for December 6, 2024.
- An administrative officer provided a PL session on November 8, 2024, to the staff of Pearson Academy in Wesleyville on Work-Life Balance.
- On November 17-18, 2024, an administrative officer attended the National Conference on Restorative Justice in Ottawa.
- An administrative officer provided a PL session on November 22, 2024, to the staff of Waterford Valley High School on Work-Life Balance.

- On November 26, 2024, the President, Executive Director and an administrative officer attended meetings with senior government officials regarding payroll issues. This meeting was also attended by the Minister of Finance and senior Treasury Board Secretariat officials. The next meeting has been scheduled for early April 2025.
- The Assistant Executive Director and an Administrative Officer met with the newly appointed Quality Assurance Manager for government payroll on December 3, 2024.
- On November 25, 2024, the Fall 2024 Teachers Change Lives story was launched. The story features an IRT at Goulds Elementary, Donna Dalton, and her special relationship with her student Lilly. The campaign ran on TV and online for four weeks. Work is ongoing for the Spring 2025 TCL campaign.
- The President and Executive Director participated in a stakeholder engagement session hosted by the SJSWC and the PANOSOW on November 26, 2024, intended to facilitate discussion and strategizing around gender-based violence in the province.
- The NLTA held three virtual Group Insurance information/Q&A sessions for members on January 14, 15 and 16, 2025. The purposes of the sessions were to discuss the Group Insurance Program and any potential changes to the Health Insurance Plan and to elicit feedback from members.
- The President participated in numerous media interviews (from December 18, 2024-January 16, 2025), speaking on the government's cell phone policy, violence in schools, the interim report of the Education Accord NL and the initial findings of the CTF Parachute Survey. He also gave several "year-end" interviews with various media outlets, reviewing the issues of importance for NLTA members in 2024 and the Association's priorities for 2025.
- On January 10, 2025, the Association submitted its Pre-Budget Submission to the Provincial Government for the 2025 Budget. The submission, entitled *Our Education System is STILL Not Ok*, articulates the Association's position that significant and strategic funding must be allocated in Budget 2025 for K-12 public education in this province. The submission highlights quotes from parents and links the importance of education funding to our society, health care system and future. The submission was also shared with members and posted online.
- Education Week 2025 will take place from March 24-29, 2025, with the theme *Adventure in Learning/Apprendre: une aventure!*
- EAP Coordinator prepared an article entitled "New Year's Resolutions: Yay or Nay" for the January/February 2025 edition of *The Bulletin*.
- EAP Coordinators have attended two meetings re: updating the EAP website. Work on this project is ongoing as of February 2025.
- Since December 2024, there have been 7 requests for EAP Wellness Workshops / Resources. Four (4) workshops have been scheduled between February and May of 2025; 3 were declined due to short notice and scheduling conflicts.

- An EAP Coordinator offered an in-person wellness presentation, “Understanding your Employee Assistance Program” on December 9, 2024, in St. John’s.
- An Administrative Officer participated in learning sessions directed towards improving the delivery of professional learning to teachers as part of the 2024 Learning Forward conference held in December 2024.
- The President and Executive Director discussed the need for greater clarity around TLA roles during a meeting with the Minister and Deputy Minister on January 10, 2025.
- The Executive Director, Assistant Executive Director and two Administrative Officers met with Andrew Hickey (NLSchools) on January 16, 2025, for a preliminary discussion regarding the potential for establishing a comprehensive formal Teacher Induction/Mentoring Program. This is very much at the exploration stage and no specific commitments have been made, but the initial discussion was promising. Mr. Hickey has been tasked with doing a jurisdictional scan of current practices and with speaking to various stakeholders (including NLTA) on this subject. A follow-up meeting has been scheduled for March 20, 2025.
- The TPP Joint Sponsor Body met on December 11, 2024, and, in response to the continuing shortage of substitute teachers, a motion was carried to continue the lifting of limits on retiree substitute work for the 2024-25 school year. During a subsequent meeting on January 13, 2025, the JSB approved the most recent triennial TPP Actuarial Valuation Report – as of August 31, 2024, the TPP has a funding ratio of 122%.
- On February 7, 2025, Programs and Service staff intervened with Management officials at NLSchools when it was reported that Program Specialists should “prepare to offer virtual PL from home in the event of a weather closure of Confederation Building.” Programs and Services staff were quick to contact HR officials and remind them that the Employer does not have the authority to direct individuals to work from home in such circumstances. A follow up communication (from NLSchools Management officials to Program Specialists) rescinded the directive shortly thereafter.
- Through the month of February 2025, Programs and Services staff have spent considerable time and effort assisting/advising staff in a school that has been under a lot of public (social media and traditional media outlets) scrutiny and pressure following an accident that occurred at the school in late December 2024. The media attention has caused significant distress for a number of the school staff who have sought NLTA assistance in this ongoing matter. The President has also had numerous contacts with the school.
- As of mid-February, a virtual presentation “Understanding the Employee Assistance Program” was completed in a school outside of the Metro area; in addition, Employee Assistance resources and program information were sent to 8 schools in Central and the Metro area to aid in Wellness programming and to support staff through critical incidents.
- The President participated in several media interviews (February 11-12, 2025), raising concerns related to the government’s proposed junior high curriculum review. On February

12, the Association issued a media release entitled “NLTA acknowledges Need for Junior High Renewal but Questions Timing and Focus.”

- The Association is currently (February 2025) planning the next phase of the Invest in Our Kids public awareness campaign. In collaboration with M5, a jurisdictional scan will be conducted of other provinces, public sector unions and teacher organizations to identify effective advertising strategies and key issues gaining public support. Additionally, an online survey targeting the general public, particularly parents, will be launched to assess perceptions of the education system and identify top concerns.
- February 9-15, 2025, was Teacher and Staff Appreciation Week in the province, and the Association recognized the week by encouraging schools, teachers and the school community to share positive stories of teachers. Four schools were chosen from the posts and received a prize.
- Group Insurance Managers prepared a memo for members that will be sent out in early March 2025. The purposes of the memo were to communicate the results of the survey conducted in the Fall of 2024, the feedback received in the information sessions held in January 2025 and the decision of Managers at their February 15, 2025 meeting.
- In response to Government’s proposed changes to the Intermediate Curriculum (Phase 1 scheduled to commence in September, 2025 in 14 schools), the Association assisted/advised a number of individual teachers and Special Interest Councils who had significant concerns about the proposed changes. The Association issued a statement and the President had a number of media interviews on this issue in February 2025. NLTA advised all members to submit their concerns/thoughts to Government via the online “Thought Exchange” survey provided by government. Government has since made the decision to delay the implementation of Phase 1 of this initiative until September 2026.
- The School Safety Coalition met on November 20, 2024 and, following this meeting, the Department of Education agreed to assume chairing responsibilities moving forward. The Minister of Education chaired the next meeting, on February 28, 2025 and the Minister of Justice and Public Safety was also in attendance. The group heard from DOE staff who are reviewing policy around addressing school violence and from two school administrators regarding the impact of measures they have put in place, with the assistance of a SS TLA position, to improve safety at their school. The Minister also discussed the ongoing work within government to establish a wholistic child health model to address the need for consistency and continuity of supports, in and outside of school, for children/youth and families both before and during school age years. Initial impressions are that government assuming responsibility for this initiative will make this group more impactful in seeking positive change.
- Programs and Services staff prepared an article on pension income and retirement planning for the January/February edition of *The Bulletin*.

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

- 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 throughout the 2023-24 and 2024-25 school years, including in relation to payment of recognition bonuses and retro pay – Administrative Officers are assisting members as necessary while broader system discussions are ongoing. A grievance was filed in relation to the (non) payment of recognition bonus to certain members on unpaid sick leave as of August 20, 2022. Hearing dates are booked for August 2025.
- Issues around the payment of school counsellor bonuses appear to be largely resolved as of September-October 2024, and payments are generally timely to date. A systemic settlement to the outstanding grievances filed in previous years is being discussed actively, and the parties appear close to reaching a resolution as of February 2025.
- All five Pre-Retirement Seminars were held in Deer Lake, Gander and three in St. John's over the Fall 2023. A pre-retirement seminar was held in Gander on Oct. 7-8, 2024, and in Deer Lake (Oct 17-18), with further sessions in St. John's (Oct. 31/Nov. 1, Nov. 28-29); and Dec. 5-6).
- Programs and Services staff continue to assist numerous teachers during Winter/Spring 2023-24 and again during the 2024-25 school year 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 several cases, additional allocations have followed. This work is ongoing.
- Since early Fall 2023 and continuing during the 2024-25 school year, Programs and Services have assisted and are working with teachers in situations where the right to refuse unsafe work under OHS legislation is being considered or exercised. Staff have provided advice on incidents of violence in the classroom, rights, responsibilities and options. While some matters have been resolved to teachers' satisfaction, several such refusals are still ongoing and new cases have arisen.

- Administrative Officers are assisting and representing a growing number of teachers in discipline investigations over the Summer 2024 and throughout the 2024-25 school year to date.
- 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. On December 4, 2024, a similar request was made. The deadline for response in this matter was extended from the normal 20 business day response time due to the need to consult with other public bodies, to January 27, 2025. After some additional delay, the Association received over 300 pages of disclosure on February 13, 2025. The disclosure is being reviewed.
- Programs & Services assisted members with a number of workplace accommodations throughout the 2023-24 school year and during the 2024 staffing season. This work continues during the 2024-25 school year.
- 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 in the assessment of qualifications. Discussions on this issue were ongoing as of May 2024 and continued during the 2024 staffing season and into the Fall of 2024. Meetings with the Employer on this issue were also held in January and February 2025.
- As of late February 2025, NLTA staff continued 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.). Hiring matters tend to be the main focus during the Spring/Summer staffing season, however.
- Programs and Services staff have assisted members, responding to a high volume of questions/calls/emails related to Recognition Bonus and Retroactive Pay coming out of the 2022-26 Collective Agreement. This required a substantial amount of communication with government and payroll offices. While most issues have been addressed, this work is ongoing as of January 2025. The major systemic issue outstanding relates to eligibility for the recognition bonus for a number of teachers who commenced sick leave prior to August 20, 2022, and who are still on leave. Legal counsel was sought and a group/policy grievance was filed and referred to arbitration. Hearing dates are set for August 2025.
- Association staff continue to assist members with various payroll matters, including issues related to the calculation and payment of recently negotiated bonuses and retroactive salary increases, the expanded eligibility for the isolation allowance and teachers not paid in the first pay period for 2024-25, effective date for application of outside service credit and overpayment miscalculations. Meetings between Programs & Services staff and Payroll officials have been ongoing to address problems and advocate for systemic improvements,

including during July-August 2024 and September, October, November and December 2024. Further meetings with government payroll officials are scheduled for early April 2025.

- The President wrote to the Auditor General on July 31, 2024, regarding systemic Teacher Payroll concerns and seeking a formal review and audit by the AG. The AG responded on August 9, 2024, which led to a telephone meeting between the AG, the President and the Executive Director on August 23, 2024. While the AG confirmed that Teacher Payroll will be considered for an audit, she advised that this could take some time (over a year) as there are already a number of other matters in the queue. In an effort to prioritize this matter with the office of the AG, the President subsequently wrote to MHA Pleaman Forsey, chair of the government Public Accounts Committee, on September 5, 2024, asking that the Committee direct the AG to conduct an audit of Teacher Payroll. MHA Forsey responded, indicating that this matter will be on the agenda for the next Committee in the Fall of 2024, and the Association has asked to be informed when a date for that meeting has been set. The Clerk for the Committee advised that meetings would take place in November and December 2025. An update from these meetings has been requested (February 2025) and we are awaiting a response.
- Programs & Services staff have developed and are sharing an explanation with teachers regarding the possibility of a grievance under Article 30 (Class Size) of the Collective Agreement. Integration of the former NLESD with the Department of Education may make grievances around class size/under resourcing more likely to succeed, depending on the facts of each particular case. Several such cases that were being explored during the Fall of 2024 did not proceed to grievance as initial efforts/inquiries led to additional resources being allocated.
- NLTA staff continue (as of February 2025) efforts to have the employer implement a system that would allow members to have individual, “self-service” access to personal leave accrual and usage information. Letter #12 in the Collective Agreement requires the employer to explore this. Teacher Payroll officials have advised that this functionality has been included in ongoing investigations into a new payroll system to replace TCAS but, in the interim the possibility of other options is being explored (for example SmartFind, monthly balance updates ...). The Association has also explored whether a complaint regarding privacy concerns to the OIPC could lead to this issue being expedited. In mid-September 2024, the Association was made aware that members are able to access leave accrual information via SmartFind. While some concerns have come in regarding the accuracy of these numbers, the overall sense is that the majority of this information is correct. In a meeting with the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board Secretariat officials on November 26, 2024, the President and NLTA staff in attendance were advised that work on instituting a self-service portal is ongoing. This matter was also raised at the SBTLC meeting on December 12, 2024, and the next meeting with payroll officials is scheduled for early April 2025.
- On July 17, 2024, NLTA met with Government Payroll and belairdirect representatives to address issues related to premium deductions and how errors might be reduced. Work on this is ongoing as of February 2025.

- Programs & Services staff actively (August-November 2024) advocated with government officials for the continuation of the policy to not require medical documentation from teachers for periods of absence (up to 14 days) for COVID-19 and/or related symptoms. Department officials advised that this policy would remain in place until future notice as government was, in general, considering the matter for all public sector employees. Government has since informed all employees that medical notes will, in general, be required as of December 1, 2024, but not as frequently as required under current collective agreement language. Programs and Services staff sought employer clarification on certain aspects of this moving forward. The Employer addressed the Association's concerns, which dealt with the effect of days without notes pre-December 1, as well as what days were included in the 10 day aggregate. The Employer has confirmed that sick leave days with supporting medical documentation will not be counted towards the calculation of days in the aggregate and there would be no retroactive activity with respect to sick leave taken prior to December 1, 2024.
- Two Beginning Teachers' Conferences have been held in Happy Valley-Goose Bay on November 30-December 1, 2024 and January 11-12 in St. John's. Feedback from participants was extremely positive. A conference scheduled in Deer Lake was cancelled due to numerous participants having to cancel.
- A policy grievance was filed regarding access to sick leave accrual for substitutes. The employer met with the Association in October 2024 and discussions resulted in settlement of the matter. Substitutes will not have to wait until a new school year begins to access sick leave accrued in the previous school year. Substitutes will have access to their sick leave, as accrued and anticipated, during a school year, as per the collective agreement.
- The Association sent a message to all members on October 9, 2024, strongly encouraging participation in an Education Accord survey. Reminders were sent periodically until the survey closes in December.
- Pre-retirement seminars are complete for the 2024-25 school year and were held in Gander (October 7-8, 2024), in Deer Lake (October 17-18, 2024), and in St. John's (October 31-November 1, November 28-29 and December 5-6, 2024).
- On November 26, 2024, the President, Executive Director and an administrative officer attended meetings with senior government officials regarding payroll issues. This meeting was also attended by the Minister of Finance and senior Treasury Board Secretariat officials. The next meeting has been scheduled for early 2025.
- The Assistant Executive Director and an Administrative Officer met with the newly appointed Quality Assurance Manager for government payroll on December 3, 2024.
- An Administrative Officer attended the annual meeting of la CAFÉ, la Conférence des Associations francophones d'éducation, on November 17-19, 2024. La CAFÉ represents francophone teacher organizations across the country. As part of the session, staff outlined the priorities of the NLTA and presented an overview of French first language education in the province.

- 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 7, 2024. A second meeting is scheduled for February 2024.
- Three Group Insurance Managers completed the Foundations of Trust Management Standards (FTMS) course in late Fall 2024 as part of their required fiduciary training as Managers. The Administrative Officer responsible for Group Insurance completed the Advanced Trust Management Course (ATMS B).
- Programs and Services staff continue to respond to many enquiries from members about the NLTA Group Insurance Program stemming from the October 2024 survey and January 2025 information sessions on potential changes to the Health Plan.
- A detailed overview of the structure of and current challenges facing the NLTA Group Insurance Program was prepared for the November/December 2024 edition of *The Bulletin*.
- Two administrative officers and the Assistant Executive Director attended CTF Staff Officers Meetings in Ottawa November 14-16, 2024.
- Programs and Services staff engaged in a Leadership Round Table with SAC Region 9 in November 2024 to provide support and advice on topics of concern to Administrator members in that region.
- The Opening Proposals for Public Service Unions (of which NLTA is a member) for negotiations for a new Labrador Benefits Agreement were made to Government on November 20, 2024. Date(s) are being explored for receipt of Government's Opening Proposals.
- The Assistant Executive Director attended a National Forum on Artificial Intelligence in Education hosted in Toronto, ON, November 25-26, 2024.
- NLTA staff are preparing for and engaged in (January-February 2025) the collection of data which will include a member survey related to the next round of collective bargaining. Following a call for expressions of interest, the members of the Collective Bargaining Committee were appointed by Provincial Executive in January 2025 and will begin working on drafting the NLTA Opening Proposals for the next round of negotiations.
- The Association is proceeding to arbitration on a grievance over interpretation of Clause 10.06 of the Collective Agreement and the employer practice of suspending teachers without pay pending the outcome of criminal charges. Hearing dates occurred on December 10-11, 2024 and we await the panel's decision.
- Members who were on DSLP in 2022-23 did not initially have their TPP premiums adjusted and deducted to reflect correct pensionable earnings. This error happened following the previous round of bargaining as well and Teacher Payroll were reminded of this when the 2022-26 collective agreement was signed. Following discussions, Teacher Payroll agreed to fix these and staff have been working with those individuals who contacted NLTA. Teacher Payroll has confirmed these are all now completed, and staff checked with TPPC on same and learned 5 members were not fixed. TPPC has notified Teachers' Payroll and are working to get those fixed as of January 2025.

- The Unions' team presented its opening proposals on November 20, 2024, for Labrador Benefits Agreement negotiations. The employer did ask some questions but reserved responding until the next bargaining dates. The Unions' team held a virtual meeting on January 15, 2025, to discuss providing additional information to support its opening proposals. Government presented its first pass (response to Union proposal) on February 12, 2025. Face to face negotiations took place for 3 full days (February 17-19, 2025) in Happy Valley-Goose Bay. While some progress did occur, the decision was made by the unions team to apply for a Conciliator. This application was made on Friday, February 21, 2025.
- NLTA submitted its response to a survey on French minority language and French second language education in the province in December 2024. This survey is part of the annual Official Language in Education Consultations of the Department of Education.
- A policy grievance was filed regarding NLSchools' failure to consider non-discretionary probation waivers under clause 37.03(b) in accordance with provisions of the Collective Agreement and agreed-upon past practice. This matter was referred for arbitration in January 2025.
- Johnson Insurance officials requested a meeting with NLTA staff to advise of ongoing issues with Teacher Payroll including not receiving summer reports for the past 3 summers. NLTA staff addressed the matter with Teacher Payroll and the information is, as of January 2025, now being prepared. The Association facilitated agreement between both parties for a process going forward with specific deadlines to be followed and will monitor this to ensure compliance.
- A Financial Wellness PL was provided at IgnitED at Macdonald Drive JH on December 13, 2024.
- A Financial Wellness PL was provided to Whitbourne Elementary with Holy Family Elementary on January 24, 2025.
- A Financial Wellness PL was provided to Carbonear Branch on January 29, 2025.
- A Financial Wellness PL was provided to Brookside Intermediate on February 7, 2025.
- A Financial Wellness PL was provided to Beaconsfield Junior High on February 14, 2025.
- Policy and group grievances were filed in relation to the recent PowerSchool privacy breach. A grievance meeting was held on February 19, 2025. A detailed memo on this matter was sent to all NLTA members and through the RTANL database on February 7, 2025. The President wrote to the Information and Privacy Commissioner on February 25, 2025, seeking further clarification and assurances of improved security measures moving forward.
- Administrative Officers met with several Special Interest Councils during January/February 2025 to provide assistance with preparations for BGM.
- Administrative Officers assisted Special Interest Councils with the drafting and submission of formal communications to the Department of Education to express concerns with the changes to the Intermediate Program of Studies during February 2025.

- An Administrative Officer facilitated a Q & A PL session on Violence and Harassment for members of SAC Region 6 during February 2025.
- An Administrative Officer attended the CTF/FCE Francophone Symposium with francophone liaison counterparts as part of CTF initiatives in French First Language Education on February 25-27, 2025. As part of the session, staff presented a report about French first language education in the province. A teacher with the CSFP also attended in their role on the CTF/FCE Comité consultatif du français langue première.
- The Assistant Executive Director and an administrative officer attended CAPTTO Economic Welfare meetings (virtually) on February 11, 2025.
- The TARC Committee (pursuant to Letter 13 of the Provincial Collective Agreement) met most recently on February 5, 2025.
- The Teacher Recruitment and Retention Committee (pursuant to Letter 11 of the Provincial Collective Agreement) met most recently on February 13, 2025.
- The Association has recently (as of February 2025) been contacted regarding a series of alleged wrong doings by several teachers in the province (from the same region/school) dating back to the 1970's and 1980's. As per Association Policy, Programs and Services have approved legal assistance for those teachers and have engaged with the Association's regular law firm and two other law firms representing those individuals. The matters are ongoing in the province's court system.

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

- Discussions between NLTA staff and Teacher Certification are ongoing regarding the importance of potential changes to regulations that would improve/enhance certification upgrade options, up to and including a meeting on February 6, 2025, regarding proposed regulatory amendments. Work on regulatory changes remains ongoing. NLTA staff worked with a member who was previously denied approval for a masters program in Social Work and advocated to have the matter reheard by the committee. The member provided a thorough submission and the committee agreed to approve the program for the member and to consider MSW programs going forward.
- The President had a telephone meeting with Premier Furey in mid-May 2024, to discuss teacher shortages and ideas to address teacher workload and retention/recruitment challenges. This was followed up with correspondence from the President to the Premier on May 29, 2024. Subsequent discussions with NLSchools officials in July 2024 led to a response from the Minister of Education on August 12, 2024, confirming a commitment for some additional resources in several regional “pilot” schools, including introducing a new student services TLA support position in 6 schools for the 2024-25 school year. Recent (early December 2024) discussions with Department officials indicate that feedback from school administrators at pilot schools has been mainly positive and the employer intends to add additional TLA units for the remainder of 2024-25. Input from NLTA has been sought regarding suggestions for additional pilot schools. A total of 21 additional full-time SS TLA position were allocated to schools across the province as of January 2025 for the remainder of the school year. The Minister confirmed in a meeting with the President on January 10, 2025, that hiring for these positions is ongoing.
- The most recent Teacher Induction Ceremony for new MUN Faculty of Education graduates, co-hosted by the NLTA, took place on October 17, 2024, with the next event planned for May 30, 2025.
- During a meeting with Department of Education officials for representatives of the PIE SIC on June 3, 2024, it was confirmed that NLTA advocacy has been successful in leading to regulatory changes to create a path to level VII certification for all school psychologists, and to update terminology in regulations to refer to “school”, as opposed to “educational” psychologists. As of February 2025, the DOE advises that drafting and approval of the

required changes to regulatory language is ongoing. We are still awaiting final communication on this matter.

- The Association worked with M5 to review the most recent comments received from parents after the most recent Not Okay campaign, which was launched online in May 2024. These comments will be packaged and used in future public awareness campaigns and in correspondence with government officials to advocate for increased resourcing in classrooms. Some quotes were used in the NLTA pre-budget submission in January 2025.
- Two Beginning Teachers' Conferences took place in Happy Valley-Goose Bay on November 30-December 1, 2024, and in St. John's on January 11-12, 2025. Feedback from participants was extremely positive. A conference scheduled in Deer Lake was postponed due to numerous participants having to cancel.
- The Association sent a message to all members on October 9, 2024, strongly encouraging participation in an Education Accord survey. Reminders were sent periodically until the survey closed in December 2024.
- The next installment of the Not Okay campaign was launched October 29, 2024, and incorporates comments received from parents. The campaign includes social media assets, an online video and a television commercial. The timing of the campaign is to coincide with the reopening of the House of Assembly for the Fall sitting on November 4, 2024. General feedback from members on the campaign has been positive and there has been significant engagement with the posts and videos. The "still" not okay tagline and some parent comments were used in the NLTA pre-budget submission in January 2025.
- The final report of the Labrador West Teacher Recruitment and Retention Committee has been drafted for approval by the Committee – the Committee met on February 6, 2025, to review the draft. Changes recommended during this meeting have been incorporated and circulated to the group for review. Once finalized, the Labrador West report will be provided to the provincial committee established pursuant to Letter #11 of the 2022-26 Collective Agreement for further consideration.
- The first meeting of the provincial Teacher Recruitment and Retention Committee (Letter #11 of the 2022-26 Collective Agreement) took place on June 19, 2024. Subsequent meetings have taken place on September 18, 2024, November 6, 2024, December 11, 2024, January 16, 2025 and February 13, 2025 with the next meeting scheduled for March 31, 2025. The Dean of the MUN Faculty of Education has formally joined the group which has been a welcome addition.
- On November 29, 2024, the President, Executive Director, Assistant Executive Director, EAP Coordinator and 3 "early career" teachers helped facilitate the NLTA/MUN Mini-Conference for Pre-Service Teachers held at Memorial University.
- The President participated in numerous media interviews (from October 29-November 8, 2024), speaking on the Association's Not Okay public awareness campaign, including a national feature on CTV Your Morning.

- On November 25, 2024, the Fall 2024 Teachers Change Lives story was launched. The story features an IRT at Goulds Elementary, Donna Dalton, and her special relationship with her student Lilly. The campaign ran on TV and online for four weeks. Work has begun on the Spring 2025 TCL campaign.
- The President participated in numerous media interviews (from November 28, 2024-January 3, 2025), speaking on the government's cell phone policy and the interim report of the Education Accord NL. He also gave several "year-end" interviews with various media outlets, reviewing the issues of importance for members in 2024 and the Association's priorities in 2025.
- On January 3, 2025, the Association submitted its Pre-Budget Submission to the Provincial Government for the 2025 Budget. The submission, entitled Our Education System is STILL Not Ok, articulates the Association's position that significant and strategic funding must be allocated in Budget 2025 for K-12 public education in this province. The submission highlights quotes from parents and links the importance of education funding to our society, health care system and future. The submission was also shared with members and posted online.
- The Executive Director, Assistant Executive Director and two Administrative Officers met with Andrew Hickey (NLSchools) on January 16, 2025, for a preliminary discussion regarding the potential for establishing a comprehensive formal Teacher Induction/Mentoring Program. This is very much at the exploration stage and no specific commitments have been made, but the initial discussion was promising. Mr. Hickey has been tasked with doing a jurisdictional scan of current practices and with speaking to various stakeholders (including NLTA) on this subject. A follow-up meeting has been scheduled for March 20, 2025.
- Education Week 2025 will take place from March 24-29, 2025, with the theme Adventure in Learning/Apprendre: une aventure!
- The President participated in several media interviews (February 11-12, 2025), raising concerns related to the government's proposed junior high curriculum review. On February 12, the Association issued a media release entitled "NLTA acknowledges Need for Junior High Renewal but Questions Timing and Focus."
- The Association is currently planning the next phase of the Invest in Our Kids public awareness campaign. In collaboration with M5, a jurisdictional scan will be conducted of other provinces, public sector unions and teacher organizations to identify effective advertising strategies and key issues gaining public support. Additionally, an online survey targeting the general public, particularly parents, will be launched to assess perceptions of the education system and identify top concerns.
- The Association is working with the Department of Education's communications staff and MUN's Faculty of Education to enhance the Teachers Change Lives webpage. The updated site will feature information on Faculty programs, pathways to becoming a teacher and job postings from the DOE. This initiative aims to support teacher recruitment and retention by

showcasing the positive impact of educators, an impact highlighted in each Teachers Change Lives story.

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 2022-2026 Collective Agreement 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 TARC report. Association staff initiated discussions with the Department of Education (March-May 2024) to commence the work of this committee. Due to staffing changes at the Department of Education/NLSchools and CSFP, the initial meeting of this committee was delayed, but the first meeting occurred on October 8, 2024. Subsequent meetings have occurred on December 9, 2024 and January 15, 2025 with several other meetings scheduled between now and June 2025.
- Discussions between NLTA staff and Teacher Certification are ongoing regarding the importance of potential changes to regulations that would improve/enhance certification upgrade options, up to and including a meeting on February 6, 2025, regarding proposed regulatory amendments. Work on regulatory changes remains ongoing. NLTA staff worked with a member who was previously denied approval for a masters program in Social Work and advocated to have the matter reheard by the committee. The member provided a thorough submission and the committee agreed to approve the program for the member and to consider MSW programs going forward.
- A policy grievance (failure to consult) was filed regarding changes to policy which would require NLTA members to administer hearing and vision screeners prior to comprehensive assessments. This matter was referred for arbitration with hearing dates confirmed for November 2024. The RNUNL was notified of the arbitration dates as this matter has raised work of the bargaining unit (public health nurses) concerns for them, which they are pursuing as well with the Department of Health & Community Services through their own dispute resolution processes. Several meetings were held by the parties during the Spring/Summer 2024, continuing into the Fall of 2024. This grievance was settled in November 2024 resulting in a reversal of the changes. As a result, NLTA members are no longer be required to complete hearing and vision screeners prior to comprehensive assessments. This change was communicated to Executive and Joint Council in November

2025 and it was communicated by the DOE to the broader school system in January 2025 after multiple and ongoing requests from the Association.

- The President, as a member of the Education Accord Advisory Committee, attended meetings on April 16, May 21, June 18, July 16, August 20, September 17, October 15, November 19, December 17, 2024 and February 24, 2025, as well as the official release event for the Accord Interim Report on January 10, 2025. While it is positive to see reference to issues such as school violence, student absenteeism, workplace safety, teacher/administrator health and well-being, the need to address/support classroom diversity and complexity, investment in quality professional learning for teachers and the importance of K-12 public education to society, the Association continues to closely monitor the Accord process and avail of all opportunities to have input/influence around recommendations/calls to action that will be part of the final Accord report.
- On April 19, 2024, an Administrative Officer met with DOE Student Services staff and were advised that there are changes upcoming to the Safe and Caring Schools Policy. The Association has requested consultation at all stages, including during a meeting between the Deputy Minister and Executive Director on July 3, 2024. At the end of November 2024, the Association was advised that work on policy amendments is ongoing and that the obligation to consult will be respected. This issue was raised again on January 10, 2025, during a meeting between the President, Executive Director, Minister and Deputy Minister, stressing that teachers trying to foster inclusive learning environments and 2SLGBTQAI+ students and school staff need clarity and explicit policy statements around underlying principles, expectations and supports. The Executive Director further raised this matter during the School Safety Coalition meeting on February 28, 2025.
- The DOE Education Transformation project was incorporated as one of the “pillars” of the Education Accord NL – the former advisory committee was replaced with a pillar committee, the members of which include (among others) a number of teachers and the NLTA Executive Director. The Executive Director attended pillar committee meetings on: July 8, September 9 & 23, October 7 & 21, November 4 & 18, December 9 & 16, 2024; February 3 & 17 and March 3, 2025; with one more meeting scheduled for March 24, 2025. The group prepared a pillar “vision statement”, received updates from working groups, reviewed the interim pillar report to the Accord on emerging themes and has provided feedback on potential calls to action. The Executive Director has met separately with the Deputy Minister for Education Transformation on several occasions. Meetings have also included presentations and discussion regarding financial literacy programming, supports for EAL/newcomer students, AI, curriculum transformation, supporting 2SLGBTQAI+ students, indigenous education and staff and skilled trades programming.
- The Association reminded the DOE of the obligation for consultation with NLTA regarding plans during 2024-25 for policy development regarding AI in education and the use of cell phones in schools. The Assistant Executive Director is the main NLTA contact on AI and is

liaising (Fall 2024) with DOE officials re: consultation on draft guidelines. With respect to the cell phone policy, which came into force on January 6, 2025, NLTA was afforded meaningful opportunity for consultation including input prior to and following a draft policy and survey being circulated to parents/guardians, students and school staff. Many of the changes recommended by the Association were included in the final version of the policy.

- The Association worked with M5 to review the most recent comments received from parents after the Not Okay campaign, which was launched online in May 2024. These comments were packaged for use in future public awareness campaigns and in correspondence with government officials to advocate for increased resourcing in classrooms. Some quotes were used in the NLTA pre-budget submission in January 2025.
- The President and Executive Director met with government representatives on September 5, 2024, to review and discuss proposed changes to employer policy regarding the prevention and response to workplace harassment. As part of the consultation process, the Association was provided with the draft policy language and provided detailed feedback. As of late January 2025, the policy is still under review but government has committed to meet again to review NLTA feedback and a draft policy.
- The Association sent a message to all members on October 9, 2024, strongly encouraging participation in an Education Accord survey. Reminders were sent periodically until the survey closed in December 2024. Department officials have indicated that response rates were high.
- The next installment of the Not Okay campaign was launched October 18, 2024 and incorporates comments received from parents. The campaign includes social media assets, an online video and a television commercial. The timing of the campaign is to coincide with the reopening of the House of Assembly for the Fall sitting on November 4, 2024. General feedback from members on the campaign has been positive and there has been significant engagement with the posts and videos. The “still” not okay tagline and some parent comments were used in the NLTA pre-budget submission in January 2025.
- The Assistant Executive Director scheduled a meeting for November 4, 2024, with DOE officials to discuss the upcoming plans for intermediate curriculum renewal. This meeting was subsequently postponed. The Association is still waiting for an official update on this initiative but are aware that meetings have been taking place in January 2025 with administrators from 14 prospective junior high schools from across the province as to how potential changes would be implemented in schools with different grade configurations in terms of student choice, scheduling, PL needs, impact on staffing, etc. Discussions with Government are ongoing on this matter and DOE officials maintain that no final decisions will be made without consultation with NLTA.

- In response to Government’s proposed changes to the Intermediate Curriculum (Phase 1 scheduled to commence in September 2025 in 14 schools), the Association assisted/advised a number of individual teachers and Special Interest Councils who had significant concerns about the proposed changes. The Association issued a statement and the President had a number of media interviews on this issue in February 2025. NLTA advised all members to submit their concerns/thoughts to Government via the online “Thought Exchange” survey provided by government. Government has since made the decision to delay the implementation of Phase 1 of this initiative until September 2026.
- The committee established to review the RTL model has now met 5 times, most recently on January 23, 2025. The Committee has selected MQO Research to conduct the survey with the goal of distributing surveys prior to March 1, 2025.
- Programs and Services staff have met with and are engaged in consultations with the Department of Education on changes to the comprehensive assessment policy (September-November 2024). As of January 2025, NLTA has been advised that work on the policy is ongoing, including discussions with the NL Board of Psychology.
- The first School Board-Teacher Liaison Committee (NLSchools) for 2024-25 took place on December 12, 2024. A date for the second meeting this school year will be determined soon.
- Programs & Services staff actively (August-November 2024) advocated with government officials for the continuation of the policy to not require medical documentation from teachers for periods of absence (up to 14 days) for COVID-19 and/or related symptoms. Department officials advised that this policy would remain in place until future notice as government was, in general, considering the matter for all public sector employees. Government has since informed all employees that medical notes will, in general, be required as of December 1, 2024, but not as frequently as required under current collective agreement language. Programs and Services staff sought employer clarification on certain aspects of this moving forward. The Employer addressed the Association’s concerns, which dealt with the effect of days without notes pre-December 1, as well as what days were included in the 10 day aggregate. The Employer has confirmed that sick leave days with supporting medical documentation will not be counted towards the calculation of days in the aggregate, and there would be no retroactive activity with respect to sick leave taken prior to December 1, 2024.
- Department of Education officials shared drafts of proposed policy on cell phones in schools and an accompanying feedback survey with the President and Executive Director on November 19, 2024. The Association provided detailed feedback, questions and concerns in writing on November 21, which led to changes in both the proposed policy language and the survey prior to these being released to NLSchools staff, students and parents. The NLTA raised particular concern regarding the lack of respect for teacher professionalism, the

apparent poor understanding of the reality of schools as workplaces and potential workload increases. Messages were sent to members to encourage participation in the survey and the Association provided further detailed feedback to the DOE as part of the consultation process. Many of the changes recommended by the Association were included in the final version of the policy, which came into effect on January 6, 2025. Feedback from members to date has been generally positive with no serious concerns/issues being raised.

- On January 3, 2025, the Association submitted its Pre-Budget Submission to the Provincial Government for the 2025 Budget. The submission, entitled Our Education System is STILL Not Ok, articulates the Association's position that significant and strategic funding must be allocated in Budget 2025 for K-12 public education in this province. The submission highlights quotes from parents and links the importance of education funding to our society, health care system and future. The submission was also shared with members and posted online.
- The Association sent a message to all members on February 28, 2025, encouraging participation in an online questionnaire initiated by the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate as part of its ongoing review of mental health services available to children and youth.