



NWTTA NEWS

VOLUME 23 • ISSUE 1
SEPTEMBER 2021

Welcome to the 2021-2022 School Year!

The NWTTA is excited to welcome you for the 2021-2022 school year.

The NWTTA is here to serve you, our membership. If you have questions or need assistance, please reach out through email, phone, the Online Quick Connect Form on our website, or drop by our office in Yellowknife. Mobile phone numbers for after-hours access are printed on the back of your membership card and on the contact poster in your staff room.

All new members are encouraged to create their NWTTA online membership account as soon as possible. Please visit nwtt.nt.ca, click on "REGISTER" in the top right hand corner and complete both pages of the simple sign-up. Once your status as a NWTTA member is confirmed, your online account will be approved/activated. You will receive automated emails throughout the process.

September 30 is the deadline to register your online membership account to receive a 2021-

2022 Membership Card, which will be printed and delivered to your school/work site in October.

Membership Cards can be used for proof of profession, and that you are eligible for various educator and/or government discounts. Returning members who already have online NWTTA accounts don't have to do anything, but please update your membership profile information if anything has changed.

Below is a preview of the 2021-2022 Membership Card.



INSIDE:

Welcome to the 2021-2022 School Year!	1
President's Update	2
Northern Light Cassidy Filipionek	3
Professional Development Programs for GNWT Indigenous Language Teachers	4
Northern Light Elizabeth Soetan	5
Working for Our Members A Glimpse of What We Do	6
Northern Light Joannie Gourde	7
CyberTips	8
Northern Light Jessica Fortin	9
What the NWTTA Does for Members	10
Free Professional Development Opportunity - Teacher Clarity	11
Distance Credit Courses COVID-19 Can't Stop NWT Teachers	12
Catching Up Members' Life Events	13
Starling Minds Thoughtful Tuesdays	14
NWT Educators' Conference Save the Date	15
Northern Light Chrissy Eld	15
Meet Your Central Office Team	16
Take Notice of your Pay and Benefits	18
Northern Light Kayla Walzak	19
Northern Light Courtney Penny	21
Northern Light Kelsea Donovan	23
Newsletter Trivia	23
2020-2022 Central Executive	24
Central Office Contact	24

President's Update

Matthew Miller, President

Welcome back to the 2021-2022 school year! A special welcome to the approximately 130 new to the North educators. I hope you were able to spend time with your family and friends. With the restricted travel last year, teachers deserved to relax with loved ones over the summer. Although the NWTTA office was closed, we continued to work on your behalf, attending meetings and taking calls.

David Murphy and I met with the Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF) July 13-15. Of note, NWTTA member, Katrine Lavoie (École Boréale), was selected by the Board of Directors to the CTF Advisory Committee on French as a First Language. During the week of August 16-20, 2021, we presented at the New to the North Educators Conference (N2NEC). This is the second year in a row the conference was forced to go virtual like so many other events. N2NEC is an important time for our newest members because it gives them the time to learn about the North and connect to other new educators and the Association.

As the year begins, I am meeting with Education Culture and Employment and Superintendents. These meetings are beneficial as we have a common understanding of the return to school while ensuring the safety of staff and students. Protocols approved by the Chief Public Health Officer were reviewed, distinguishing between those who are fully vaccinated and those who are not. There is an agreement that we will share information and use one contact person for questions to the Chief Public Health Officer to ensure a common understanding for all parties and reduce inquiries that may be repetitive and delay the system. Other topics covered included current cases of COVID-19 across the NWT and the impact on school opening plans, mandatory vaccines, updates on vaccines for those under 12, Living Well Together modules, blended/remote/online learning, and a "National Day for Truth and Reconciliation" held on September 30, 2021.

I have been following other teacher organizations and their approach to mandating vaccines. As the federal government made their announcement on August 13, 2021, the Canadian Teachers' Federation polled member organizations for their positions. Realizing the GNWT, YCS, and YK1 may impose a similar mandate, I contacted our legal counsel and Central Executive to begin discussing how to ensure our members' rights are respected while ensuring your working environments are safe. The Association has supported the vaccine campaign encouraging those who can be vaccinated to do so. I understand that most of our members are vaccinated against COVID-19, but some are not and would require appropriate accommodations protected under the Human Rights Act. We will assist members on a case-by-case basis if they are affected by a vaccine mandate.



As case numbers decreased across the country and vaccination rates across the NWT increased, the NWTTA began to plan regional orientations for regional executives and local receiving officers. During these times, the Association normally visits schools and engage with the membership. The spread of COVID-19 throughout the Sahtu and across the NWT required the Association to err on the side of caution and move our orientations to a virtual format. With the lack of travel last year, I connected with schools and regions through video conferencing. I will repeat that practice if guests in schools and non-essential travel within the NWT continues to be advised against.

During the last ten weeks of the school year, I began an NWTTA Weekly Wellness Challenge. Seeing the submissions from our members posted to social media was a highlight of my year and created an increase in those following our social media accounts. This year you will see similar wellness challenges during different times in the year. I have worked with Kimberly Balsillie from The De Beers Group of Companies, and this year the wellness challenge prizes will be sponsored by De Beers Canada. We will start with a welcome back campaign, followed by a count down to the holidays, and end the year similar to last year.

I have created two new NWTTA Committees for this year, a Housing Committee and the Diversity and Human Rights Committee. To support the Diversity and Human Rights Committee, I have met with the Rainbow Coalition of Yellowknife and the Black Advocacy Coalition (BACupNorth). Both groups welcomed partnerships with the NWTTA, which I believe will offer additional supports for our members.

Negotiations for the GNWT bargaining team resulted in an agreement in principle which will be voted upon on September 21, 2021. We will then be working with YCS and YK1 in preparation for their negotiations.

If you have not done so already, I encourage you to register to the NWTTA website. It remains one of the best sources for member information. Registering also ensures you will receive NWTTA emails with professional development opportunities and updates from the Association. I am still optimistic we will have an opportunity to travel during the 2021-2022 school year, and I look forward to a time when we can meet face-to-face to witness firsthand the positive impact our members have in their schools and communities.

COVID-19 created a challenge in our personal and professional lives. Entering the role of President, I was confident I had prepared for the job. COVID-19 forced me to look for new ways of engaging and supporting members. While I could never have expected the challenges COVID-19 created for the Association, I am grateful for the adaptability and work ethic of the Central Office Staff and our over 860 members.

I look forward to connecting with you over the year.

Northern Lights

Meet Cassidy Filipionek from Yellowknife (YCS region)



Q. Where did you grow up?

I was born and raised in a small town called Strathmore, just east of Calgary, Alberta.

Q. What made you decide to become a teacher?

School was always one of my favourite places to be and I always loved learning, and what better opportunity than to share that passion for learning with my students and helping them shape their own relationship with learning!

Q. What do you teach?

Grade 3 at École St. Joseph School.

Q. What do you enjoy most about teaching?

I love experiencing the little victories with my students. Seeing their minds turning and thinking about new solutions and possibilities, and then the joy when they succeed is my favourite part of teaching.

Q. How do you engage your students?

Building relationships! Students are much more likely to want to listen to you if they know you care about them and you have that foundational relationship built!

Be that inspiration

Growing up, I was blessed to have teachers throughout my education that helped shape who I am today and believed in me constantly, and are the reason I wanted to become a teacher today. Building that positive relationship with your students could impact them for the rest of their lives, and I think that's a pretty cool opportunity to be given.

Professional Development Programs for GNWT Indigenous Language Teachers

Adrien Amirault, Professional Development Coordinator

This is a reminder of the Indigenous Language Acquisition fund offered through Article 16 of the GNWT Collective Agreement. This funding is negotiated for through collective bargaining for GNWT teachers. Both the YCS and YK1 Professional Development funds can be used for Indigenous language programming as well, though they are not set up specifically for that.

Here is an overview of the funding available, click on the links for the application forms:

Language Acquisition and Instruction Courses

A portion of this fund will be made available to NWTTA GNWT members to cover eligible costs incurred in taking courses aimed at improving Indigenous Language instruction. Costs covered (up to a maximum of \$6000) may include:

- course tuition
- travel costs from the place of employment, to and from the site of the course as per Article B4.03 of the NWTTA Collective Agreement
- Accommodation and per diem as per Article B4.04 and B4.05, respectively, of the NWTTA GNWT Collective Agreement
- substitute costs where applicable and warranted

Individual Language Learning Activity

A portion of this fund will be made available to allow NWTTA GNWT Indigenous Language Teachers to improve their Indigenous language skills. This portion of the fund is set up to cover costs (up to a maximum of \$6,000) associated with:

- Indigenous language teachers taking part in activities with Elders and other Indigenous language speakers where they will have the opportunity to hear and speak their Indigenous language and learn more about the language

and traditional ways and beliefs. Participation in activities such as berry picking, hunting or trapping, fur/hide preparation, fish camp, clothing or tool making or artistic activities with Elders can strengthen a teacher's Indigenous language skills as well as provide ideas for program enrichment activities.

- Deadline for application is November 30 each year.
- Indigenous language teachers working with a language 'expert' in the classroom and/or in program planning sessions for the purpose of supporting Indigenous language instruction and program development. Funding under these two categories of Indigenous language related activities may be used for the following:
 - honoraria to Elders / language experts
 - substitute costs where applicable and warranted
 - travel or materials in some situations

Workshop, Seminar or Conference Participation

A portion of this fund is available to enable groups of NWTTA GNWT members to get together for a workshop, seminar or small conference and to bring in language experts or instructional experts as resource persons. Costs covered may include:

- honoraria, travel and per diem costs for experts
- travel costs for teachers as per Article B4.03 of the NWTTA GNWT Collective Agreement
- Accommodation and per diem for teachers as per Article B4.04 and B4.05, respectively, of the NWTTA GNWT Collective Agreement
- material costs in some situations (no hard capital items)
- substitute costs where applicable and warranted



Welcome Back to School

"I am pleased to welcome our students and staff back to school. I hope everyone enjoyed some much-deserved time off this summer, and are ready to start the new school year.

I would like to thank all educational staff and students for doing their part to help keep our communities safe and for their incredible resilience and dedication to learning over the past year and a half. I wish all students, teachers, and staff a safe school year and continued success in learning both within the classroom and beyond."



Honourable. R.J. Simpson
Minister of Education,
Culture and Employment

Remember to follow the guidelines from the NWT Chief Public Health Officer when you return to school.

For more information visit:
www.gov.nt.ca/covid-19/backtoschool

Government of
Northwest Territories


Member Summer 2021 Memories



Trip to Fernie, BC with all my high school pals! I was so grateful travel restrictions eased up so we could plan our annual getaway. -Christopher

Northern Lights

Meet Elizabeth Soetan
from Fort Good Hope (Sahtu region)



Q. Where did you grow up?
I was born and raised in Nigeria, I migrated with my family to Canada in 2007 and lived in Toronto ever since. I recently moved to the North in 2020 as a teacher.

Q. What made you decide to become a teacher?
When I came to Canada, I joined the school system as a grade 10 student, I struggled with my African accent and struggled to understand my teachers, but my math teacher really helped me to blend in and cope with the Canadian school system; he helped with all my courses and encouraged me to do well. He is one of the reasons why I wanted to be that teacher to every student I teach, to help them in every way possible to succeed in life. I have always had my mother as a teacher and mentor too and even though I do not admit it often, she makes being a teacher easy and rewarding and I have always envied her career path.

Q. What do you teach?
I teach mathematics and sciences.

Q. What do you enjoy most about teaching?
I enjoy when I teach a topic and my students REALLY get it. It gives me the most joy to see that students have learned the how, why, where and when of a particular topic. I also enjoy each student's individual growth. When I can teach a student to beat their personal objective and goal, I have helped in the growth of the student.

Q. How do you engage your students?
To engage my students and keep them engaged, I seek their various interests, incorporate it in my teaching and change things up. That way they are not bored easily.

Compassion and Care
To me, being a teacher is a thing of the heart, there has to be compassion and care and that is how I teach each of my students.

Working for Our Members A Glimpse of What We Do

David Murphy, Executive Director

At this time, I would like to welcome all members to a new school year and offer a special welcome to those teachers who are teaching in the NWT for the very first time. From our teacher exit survey in June 2021, we expect there to be over 150 new teachers this year arriving to teach our students. In some of our smaller communities the teaching staff may be completely replaced.

Whichever community you are teaching in I encourage you to get involved in the community events, get to know the people and their customs. This will assist you greatly as you settle in for the year and may be one of the reasons you continue at the school in the years to come.

Since March 2020, COVID-19 has had an impact on teachers' workload and student learning. Schools were closed for a while and teachers and students attended class remotely. While this was not the ideal setup, teachers and students nevertheless were up to the challenge. Looking forward to the 2021-2022 school year it looks like most schools will open for in-person learning as a high majority of citizens 12 and older will have had COVID-19 vaccinations and as a result many restrictions will be lifted. Fingers crossed, we are back to normal, nearly!

One important piece of advice that I can give you, whether you are a returning teacher or new to the NWT beginning your teaching career, is to get involved in your Association. As an employed teacher in the NWT, you will be a member of the Northwest Territories Teachers' Association (NWTTA) and as such will be a member of a region of the NWTTA. Each school will have a NWTTA representative, referred to as a Local Receiving Officer (LRO). I encourage you to seek out your LRO for information about your specific NWTTA region and ask how you can become involved. If you feel you do need assistance you may also call us at the NWTTA Central Office and we can assist you with any question or concern you may have.

As the year starts you will find there is lots to do and some things that you had meant to focus on are often placed on the back burner until you "find time" to do them. From our perspective we suggest that you do "find time" for these things as it may save you some

stress later on. These include teacher certification, pay and benefits, removal, professional development, indeterminate or term status and your collective agreement.

We are sometimes contacted by members who discover they are not receiving their correct pay or benefits. Occasionally teachers are not placed correctly on the salary grid and then are either underpaid or overpaid. In each of these circumstances a pay adjustment will be made where a member will repay or receive the additional pay. If you notice an error, please let your employer know. Teachers are placed on the salary grid as determined by the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) Registrar. So, check the salary assessment letter you received from the Registrar to confirm its accuracy and then check your grid placement as per the salary grid in your collective agreement.

For GNWT teachers you should login to your PeopleSoft account to ensure you are enrolled properly in SunLife for benefits such as prescription medications, eye glasses, etc. and Green Shield for dental. If you are not setup properly you may have to wait an additional time for your account to become active. YCS and YK1 members will have been enrolled by your personnel officer and you can check with them if you have any concerns.

Members will have been provided a relocation allowance as per your collective agreement. Be sure to follow the guidelines and submit receipts as required to ensure you receive any allowance you may be entitled to other than the relocation paid directly by the employer.

Members are provided with Professional Development (PD) funding as per the collective agreement. Occasionally some teachers are not aware of this and have lost a PD opportunity or have had to wait for the next year. If you are not aware of PD opportunities, I suggest you speak with your LRO about your PD funding and any opportunities your school or district may have planned.

There have been times when members were not sure of their employment status especially if they are hired on a term or if they are indeterminate. If you find yourself in a situation where you believe your status

is not correct you should contact us at Central Office as sometimes a mistake can be made.

I suggest that all members, both new and returning, take time to review their collective agreements. All collective agreements were one-year agreements which expire before the 2021-2022 school year. There is a tentative agreement for the GNWT teachers which will be presented to members through town hall meetings in early September with a ratification vote to be held shortly after. The YCS collective agreement negotiations will commence after the GNWT ratification vote and YK1 collective agreements will be negotiated once the YCS collective agreement negotiations are completed.

I would be remiss if I did not mention the NWTTA Code of Ethics. The Code of Ethics sets out standards of conduct required to be observed by Association members and helps to ensure high standards of professional service. NWTTA members are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner when interacting with students, the public, the Association employers, colleagues and other Association members.

In closing, please remember, if you do encounter any bumps along the way please contact us and we will try our best to level them for you so your journey is more pleasant.



Northern Lights

Meet

Joannie Gourde

from Yellowknife (YK1 region)



Q. Where did you grow up?

I grew up in Saint-Georges de Beauce, in Quebec. It's a small town 45 minutes south of Quebec City.

Q. What made you decide to become a teacher?

I was about three years old when I decided I wanted to be a kindergarten teacher. I totally fell in love with my brother's teacher and was very lucky to have her as a teacher too. That's where it all started!

Q. What do you teach?

A bit of everything I guess... I started my career as a Learning Support teacher, then my biggest dream came true; I was offered a kindergarten class in Alberta and Nova Scotia where I also taught grade 1.

After moving to Comox, British Columbia, I got a position as a Learning Support teacher again combined with some Grade 8 to 12 courses (French, Workplace Math, Life Skills, Socials, Career, etc.) and then back to elementary in a grade 1/2 split class in the immersion program.

This year, I will be one of the two Program Support Teacher at École J.H. Sissons School.

Q. What do you enjoy most about teaching?

Definitely, the connection with the students and their families.

Q. How do you engage your students?

Again, I believe it's all about the connection. I usually spend more time at the start of each school year (or when a new student arrives in my classroom) to focus on my relation/connection with each students. I feel it's absolutely necessary for us to know each other well so we can start our learning journey together.

Kids These Days

Last year, I read Jody Carrington's book called *Kids These Days*. I've read a lot of education books in the last 15 years and this one has been my favorite so far. She talks a lot about the importance of connection and I couldn't agree more.

"Kids are not attention-seeking, they are connection-seeking."

"If people find you likable, if people feel noticed, heard, or more importantly feel a connection to you, they will be significantly more inclined to learn from you."

I can't wait to read her second book coming out soon called *Teachers These Days*.



The use of technology has increased dramatically in recent years, but the standards of professionalism have not changed. Teachers are professionals and expected to model ethical and appropriate cyberconduct. Teachers hold a position of trust with students and will be held accountable if their actions expose students to inappropriate material or communications. Remember, **nothing is truly private when you communicate digitally**. When you use school board equipment and networks, your employer has access to all your messages and any sites you have browsed.

WHEN PRIVATE BECOMES PUBLIC

Nothing posted is ever completely erased from the Internet. Anything can generate unintended consequences far into the future. "Friending" students, posting pictures of partying, or sending overly casual messages or texts to students, parents and others may lead to professional difficulties you did not anticipate. People tend to feel safe when surrounded by "friends". While sitting alone in front of a monitor, it is easy to forget that you are on a public forum. Consequently, the line between our public and private lives becomes blurred, making it easy to mistake a webpage for a diary.

DO'S AND DON'TS OF USING EMAIL

- Do maintain exemplary professional standards when sending email messages to students, parents, colleagues and administrators.
- Don't use your personal email accounts to contact students or parents.
- Do keep copies of all your email messages.
- Don't share your user name and password with colleagues or students.
- Do use a teacher voice when communicating with students via email.
- Don't leave your computer on and unattended when students are around.
- Do use a signature that includes your name, assignment title and school name.
- Don't send unnecessary attachments with your emails.

CLASSROOM RESOURCES

www.mediasmarts.ca

Media Awareness Network and its Web Awareness Program features lesson plans, classroom activities, background articles and Canadian resources for media education. It also offers practical tips for helping parents manage media in the home.

*Excerpt from Canadian Teachers' Federation **CyberTips for Teachers** brochure used with permission. [English](#) and [Français](#) brochures are available online and from NWTTA Central Office.*

Member Summer 2021 Memories



After five years, my boyfriend finally proposed! Pretty great summer for me!
-Victoria



One of my favourite memories was picking raspberries in my backyard at Prelude East with my six-year-old daughter!
-Sarah

Northern Lights

Rencontrer

Jessica Fortin

de Yellowknife (région du CSFTNO)



Q. Où avez-vous grandi?

J'ai grandi à Waterloo et fait mes études dans la ville de Sherbrooke. Ces villes font partie de la région des Cantons-de-l'Est du Québec.

Q. Qu'est-ce qui vous a décidé à devenir enseignante?

Je ne voulais pas être enseignante à la base. Mon intérêt était auprès des jeunes enfants ou adolescents qui avaient besoin de support pour fonctionner dans le cadre rigide de notre système québécois. Finalement, j'ai quitté mon poste d'éducatrice spécialisée afin d'avoir un plus grand impact auprès des jeunes et leur désir d'apprendre.

Q. Qu'est-ce que vous enseignez?

J'enseigne dans une classe multiniveaux (5e et 6e) de l'école Allain St-Cyr.

Q. Qu'aimez-vous le plus dans votre enseignement?

Il y a trop de choses ! Notamment, l'espace privilégié de la classe où je peux vivre des centaines de situations différentes avec mes élèves. Le fait d'avoir une possibilité d'influencer positivement leur sentiment de compétence scolaire est aussi un privilège. Au regard de mes réponses, je crois que c'est en fait le lien que nous pouvons créer avec chaque élève parce qu'il m'apprend autant qu'à eux sur qui je suis et sur mes défis personnels.

Q. Comment engagez-vous vos étudiants?

De par ma passion pour un sujet ou de par leurs intérêts, j'arrive à créer des déclencheurs qui captivent mes élèves et les mobilisent dans un jeu ou une résolution de problème, peu importe le sujet traité. C'est nécessaire puisqu'il n'y a rien de concret pour les élèves dans "cela te servira plus tard".

Privilégiée d'être enseignante

Être enseignant, ce n'est pas facile : il y a de nombreuses choses qui se maîtriseront à travers les expériences et cela peut prendre du temps. D'un autre côté, j'ai l'impression qu'il existe peu de métiers où la compétence "se remettre en question" est la pierre angulaire du développement professionnel. Je me considère privilégiée d'être enseignante, surtout ici, dans le Nord !

What the NWTTA Does for Members

Sara McCrea, Assistant Executive Director

Your NWTTA provides a variety of services for members, including:

- **Negotiates** Collective Agreements with the GNWT and Yellowknife Boards (YK1 and YCS) to provide competitive salaries and benefits, including pensions and professional development funds
- **Interprets** the NWTTA position in the Collective Agreements for members
- **Advocates** for members' rights
- **Advises** members on their rights and responsibilities
- **Provides** legal assistance through the Members' Protection Fund
- **Prepares** and expedites approved grievances and arbitrations
- **Advances** teacher inquiries with government departments and member employers
- **Pursues** resolution to teacher concerns in joint consultation meetings with representatives of YK1, YCS and/or GNWT (Departments of Education Culture and Employment and Human Resources)
- **Represents** members on various education-related committees (e.g. Teacher Education Program Steering Committee; Northern Teachers' Council)
- **Adjudicates** alleged violations of the Bylaws, Code of Ethics, and Policies

- **Administers** the annual GNWT Professional Development fund through the Central and Regional PD Committees
- **Provides**, facilitates and assists with professional development opportunities
- **Affords** members the opportunity to apply for NWTTA bursaries, awards, educational research grants and international programs (Project Overseas)
- **Operates** with a full staff complement of Executive Director, Assistant Executive Director, Professional Development Coordinator, Finance & Communications Officer and Administrative Assistant to meet member needs
- **Provides** urgent after-hours support and advice to members
- **Lobbies** politically with government leaders and relevant organizations
- **Consults** and co-operates with the Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF) and other teacher organizations in Canada
- **Updates** members via regular communication on regional, territorial and national educational issues
- **Provides** leadership opportunities within the association and inservice support
- **Promotes** and advances the cause of Public Education
- **Endeavours** to increase public awareness about the realities in education
- **Facilitates** and welcomes member input



Chief Paul Niditchie School (Beaufort-Delta region)
staff 2021-2022

Free Professional Development Opportunity Teacher Clarity

Adrien Amirault, Professional Development Coordinator

Vince Bustamante is an instructional Coach, Curriculum Content Developer and author who works as a curriculum consultant in Edmonton

Details of the Professional Development are in the flyer at right. Members that would like to participate in the workshops need to email adrien.amirault@nwtta.nt.ca with Teacher Clarity in the subject line. In the body of the email please indicate your mailing address. There is no cost to teachers, but all teachers that indicate interest will be registered for the sessions and mailed a hard copy of the text book. Closer to the event which begins October 27, login information will be forwarded to all registered teachers. This is for all grade levels.

If there is a group of teachers in your school that would like to participate you can log into the sessions as a group, but all participants will get their own textbook.

Supporting Educators with next steps in Teacher Clarity

NWT Teachers' Association in Partnership with Corwin Presents:

Teacher Clarity, Creating Learning Intentions, and Success Criteria for Organized, Effective Instruction

On a clear day, you can learn forever -- that's the adapted lyric you'll be happily humming once you've participated in this workshop, because you will have mastered using learning intentions and success criteria, the twin engines of Teacher Clarity. This series will guide you on how to own it, do it, and live it --and your students will be more successful as a result.

Teacher clarity is both a method and a mindset, and it has an impressive effect size of 0.75 (Hattie, 2009). "It's teaching that is organized and intentional," and "It brings a forthrightness and fairness to the classroom because student learning is based on transparent expectations." And when we are clear, our students can better plan and predict, set goals, and acquire a stronger sense of how to judge their own progress."

Join Corwin Consultant, Vince Bustamante, in this 4 part series. Vince Bustamante, M.Ed. is an instructional coach, curriculum content developer, and author who currently works for Edmonton Catholic Schools as a curriculum consultant. Vince is passionate about teacher clarity, assessment, and creating classroom environments that foster deep learning experiences where teachers understand and evaluate their impact.

OCTOBER 27

- Identifying Concepts and Skills
- Sequencing Learning Progressions

NOVEMBER 3

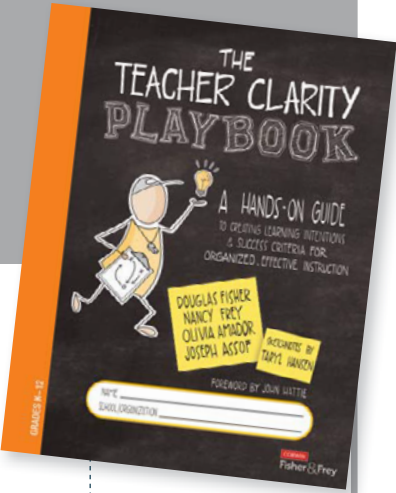
- Elaborating Learning Intentions
- Crafting Success Criteria

NOVEMBER 10

- Modifying Learning Intentions to Include Language Expectations
- Determining the Relevance of learning
- Designing Assessment Opportunities

NOVEMBER 17

- Creating Meaningful Learning Experiences
- Establishing Mastery of Standards



Vince Bustamante



CORWIN

Distance Credit Courses COVID-19 Can't Stop NWT Teachers

Adrien Amirault, Professional Development Coordinator

As we come off of a year that none of us want to ever repeat, there was one aspect of Professional Development that saw an uptake last year, and that was Distance Education. As we start a new year, that looks like it will not be business as usual yet, distance course studies may once again prove to be popular. All three bargaining units have negotiated benefits for professional development. Here is a reminder of what you are entitled to. For those of you that are new to the north this year, you can access these funds right away.

Yellowknife Catholic Schools

Yellowknife Catholic Schools (YCS) teachers can access up to \$1600 to take university courses throughout the year or other courses approved by the Superintendent. Courses must be successfully completed before cost is reimbursed. See your school Principal or LRO for the procedure followed in your school.

There is an additional \$1000 available for religion courses approved by the Superintendent.

Yellowknife Education District No. 1

Yellowknife Education District No. 1 (YK1) members have \$1500 available through the school year (\$750 per credit course) and an additional \$1500 available in the summer (\$750 per credit course). Application

to the YK1 PD committee is necessary for the courses you take. Deadlines for application are as follows:

There are 2 application deadlines for the winter funding. This ensures equal opportunity to receive funding for winter courses. First application deadline is October 31 of every year. Second application deadline is February 28 of every year. Application Deadline for summer funding: On or before the first Friday in June.

Government of the Northwest Territories

Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) teachers may once again take advantage of a temporary increase in the allowance for Distance Education Courses. The Central Professional Development Committee has approved a limit of \$4000 for university credit courses for the school year. Courses must be applied for before you start them, and no more than two courses will be approved in a semester. This increase is due to the savings the PD Fund has had with no travel being approved last year.

In addition to the above fund an additional fund of \$2500 per GNWT member is available for summer study.

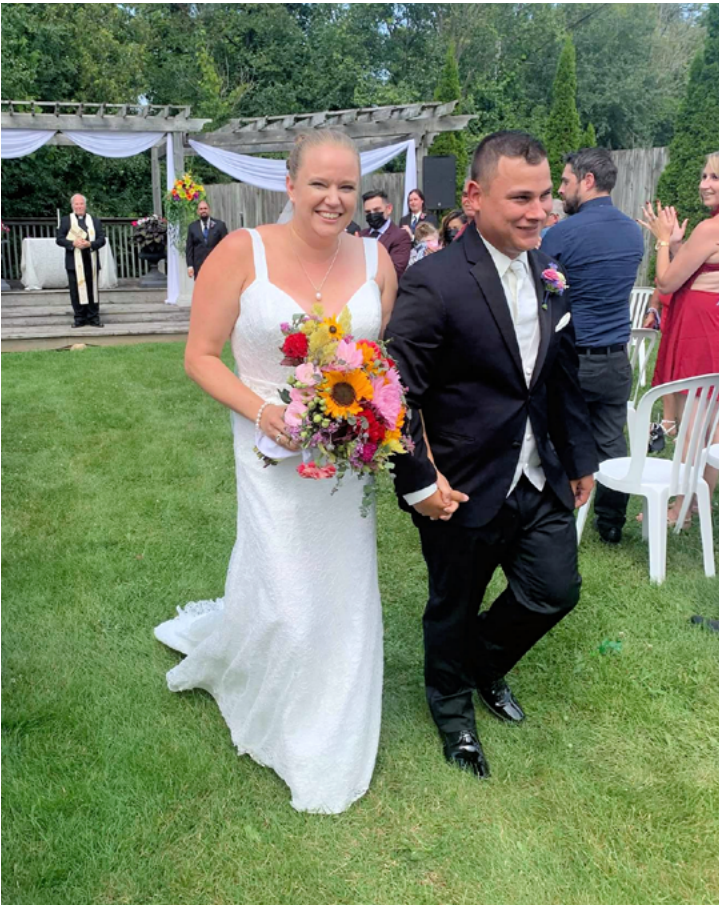
Last year there were approvals for over \$200,000 in funding for university courses in the GNWT. If taking courses is something that you are thinking of doing, we have a lot of support available to you through our negotiated agreements.



École St. Joseph School (YCS) staff 2021-2022

Catching Up Members' Life Events

Congratulations to **Jennifer Schuett** (East Three Elementary School) and **Justin Guy** (Beaufort-Delta DEC) who got married on August 7, 2021 in Kitchener, Ontario!



Pierre Cook (École Boreale) released an EP titled "*Bring You Fire*" on August 28, 2021. You can listen to the EP on his website: <https://www.pcookmusic.ca>



The museum can make your job easier



Edukits

We ship themed kits to schools containing lessons and props in a box ... for free!

Online Resources

Our website has virtual activities, audio, and exhibits – including 'Big River Journey.'



School Programs

Available for a variety of grade levels at the museum in Yellowknife. Programs available in English and French.



Prince of Wales
Northern Heritage Centre

For a full list of programs go to:

www.pwnhc.ca/education
or contact the PWNHC Education staff at
pwnhc_education@gov.nt.ca
(867) 767-9347 ext.71197

Starling Minds Thoughtful Tuesdays

Dear NWTTA members,

Each fall, returning to school brings its mix of challenges and excitement for a teacher, but now it's more than ever before. You are not only returning after a long time away from how things used to be, but you may be returning to a year with a blend of both home and school learning.

You may be given more information about policy changes, new procedures and schedules, and new expectations, leading to more worry and stress. Nonetheless, you've made it this far, and we are here to help you move forward.

In partnership with NWT Teachers' Association, Starling Minds provides you and your family members free digital therapy and live practices to support you in your mental health journey and help you better manage your worry, anxiety and stress levels.

Join us **every first Tuesday of the month** in order to practice mindfulness to help manage stress, worry and anxiety. This new monthly initiative will start **September 7th @ 5 PM MDT**.

Topics Covered:

1. Reduce stress and calm yourself with diaphragmatic breathing. (September 7th)



2. Set SMART achievable goals and celebrate your successes. (October 5th)
3. Practice meditation to feel at peace and at ease with your mind. (November 2nd)
4. Break unhelpful patterns by understanding your common triggers, moods, and reactions. (December 7th)
5. Create balanced positions to manage worrisome and repetitive thoughts. (January 4th)
6. Build your own mental health action plan for success. (February 1st)

By practicing good mental health habits you can be at your best and feel as recharged as possible.

[Click here to Sign up TODAY](#)

Make self-care your priority this year.

Register or log back into Starling Minds by visiting member.starlingminds.com and enter your access code: **NWTMEMBER**

Invite your family members to use Starling Minds with the access code: **NWTFAMILY**



Thoughtful Tuesdays

When: Every First Tuesday of the Month
Starting: September 7th, 2021 @ 5 PM MDT

Topics Covered:

- 1 Reduce stress and calm yourself with breathing exercises, mediation, and thought balancing
- 2 Break unhelpful patterns by understanding your triggers and moods
- 3 Set SMART achievable goals and celebrate your successes



Tara Achkar
Customer Success Manager, Starling Minds

Tara is a mental health advocate, who's passionate about sharing tools and techniques to help people improve their well-being.

Sign up now at:
<https://bit.ly/3yfNIYq>



Our Students | Our North | Our Success

NWT EDUCATORS' CONFERENCE



October 19-21, 2022 | YELLOWKNIFE, NT

Save the Date – October 19, 20, and 21 in 2022

This is the date for next year's Territorial Professional Development Conference and Women's Symposium.

I would like to introduce you to our planned opening keynote speaker – **Monique Gray Smith**.

Monique Gray Smith is a proud mom of teenage twins, an award-winning, best-selling author and sought after consultant. Monique's most recent novel, Tilly and the Crazy Eights was long listed for Canada Reads 2021.



Monique has had six books published, ranging for readers across the life span. These include Speaking our Truth: A Journey of Reconciliation; My Heart Fills with Happiness, You Hold Me Up, Lucy and Lola, Tilly: A Story of Hope and Resilience and recently released, When We Are Kind.

Monique's books are used to share wisdom, knowledge, hope and the important teaching that love is medicine.

Monique is Cree, Lakota and Scottish and has been sober and involved in her healing journey for over 30 years. She is well known for her storytelling, spirit of generosity and focus on resilience.

More information about Monique can be found [on her website](#).

Monique will also be working in smaller sessions with teachers as an author of books for young children. Monique's books are written for adults and children. We have a small collection of books at the NWTTA office that we would like to share with teachers that are interested. We will be offering them to teachers as a draw prize. Please send an email to adrien.amirault@nwttta.nt.ca with "Book Draw" in the subject line. We will make a draw for the books we have available. Please indicate your preference for a children's book or a book geared towards adults.

As more presenters are booked, we will share them with members. The conference committee will also be sending out a brief survey to make sure we are meeting the needs of teachers in our session planning. Finally, we will also be sending out a call to teachers that are interested in presenting at the conference. If you have a unique program or teaching tool you would like to share with colleagues, we will be looking for teacher presenters as well. Sessions are approximately 75 minutes in length.

Northern Lights

Meet
Chrissy Eld
from Lutselk'e
(South Slave
region)



Q. Where did you grow up?

Medicine Hat, Alberta.

Q. What made you decide to become a teacher?

A friend got me a job as an Education Assistant and I loved it so much I returned to school and got my BEd and MEd.

Q. What do you teach?

I have taught most grades and subjects but my favourites are math and science. Right now I am a numeracy interventionist in Lutselk'e.

Q. What do you enjoy most about teaching?

I absolutely love seeing the moment when a student has been struggling with a skill or concept and they have that A-HA moment and you can see their pride of accomplishment just shining out of them!

Q. How do you engage your students?

I show my students that I really do want the best for them. I go above and beyond the requirements of the job to show them that I will help them anyway that I can and that I really do care about them.

A Force for Change

I truly believe that education is empowering. I entered into the education system so I could help students recognize their value and use their education to build a better life for themselves and a better world for their communities. Education can be a force for change.

Meet Your Central Office Team

David Murphy, Executive Director

If there is ever a time you feel you need support or clarification of an issue, please contact us.

When you contact us through phone, **Denise Works**, our Administrative Assistant, will be the person who will assist you. Denise is very knowledgeable about the general workings of the Association and can assist you with many of the questions you will have. As well, for those questions and concerns you may have that require a more in depth answer, she will direct you to the staff member who is best equipped to assist you.

Matthew Miller, your NWTTA President, is the elected official working in the NWTTA office. His main role is to reach out to the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment (ECE), Deputy Minister, Assistant Deputy Minister, Labour Relations and Superintendents to make them aware of educational issues affecting our members. He is always available, 24/7, to take calls from members and often will contact members to discuss their concern and develop a plan as to how we can best support them.

Sara McCrea, Assistant Executive Director, and myself, **David Murphy**, Executive Director, are the people you will contact regarding the many members' concerns you may have. We are prepared to assist with your questions



Denise Works



Matthew Miller



Sara McCrea

regarding pay and benefits, certification and salary assessment, your evaluations, job accommodation needs, discipline hearings, meetings with the employer and if need be, grievances and arbitration.

You may occasionally contact **André Corbeil**, Finance and Communications Officer, with regard to expenses claims if you encounter expenses involving GNWT Professional Development (PD), or working on NWTTA business. As well you will receive emails from André periodically providing you with information about Association business regarding the newsletter, surveys, negotiations, PD and meetings.

GNWT teachers may contact **Adrien Amirault**, Professional Development Coordinator, to discuss Education Leave applications with or without allowances, short term assistance for summer credit courses, distance credit courses, educational leadership program and Indigenous language courses. Adrien is the lead in organizing the Territorial Professional Development Conference, scheduled for October 2022.

Adrien is also available to meet with Yellowknife Catholic Schools and Yellowknife Education District No. 1 members to offer support with their Professional Development initiatives and discuss PD opportunities that members may wish to avail of.



André Corbeil



Adrien Amirault



David Murphy

Member Summer 2021 Memories

I was able to announce in person the wonderful news of my pregnancy to my family and friends back home. -Céline



My family and I were able to attend a live outdoor concert with COVID-19 protocols in place. - Sherry



My family went camping this summer. - Nathan



Government of Northwest Territories

NWT Junior Kindergarten – Grade 12 Curriculum Renewal Update

The initial engagement and consultation phase of JK-12 Curriculum Renewal is closed — but don't worry — you can still provide feedback. We would like to thank those participants who have shared their questions, concerns, and ideas. We are reviewing your feedback and comments and will provide a summary of our findings and recommendations in a What We Heard Report soon.

To provide feedback or for more information on JK-12 Curriculum Renewal visit: www.gov.nt.ca/engagements/jk-12-curriculum-renewal



Take Notice of your Pay and Benefits

Sara McCrea, Assistant Executive Director

Central Office frequently receives questions and concerns from members about their pay and benefits. We advise members to review their pay stubs and ensure enrollment in their Health and Dental Benefits plans.

Confirm that you are correctly placed on the salary grid for your bargaining unit (Step and Category); if applicable, ensure you are receiving proper allowances.

A significant part of your compensation is the Health and Dental Benefits that you are entitled to. All three bargaining units have similar health and dental benefits, but they are not exactly the same nor provided by the same insurance companies.

It is important to understand your own benefits and best to contact your employer's Human Resources Department for enrollment information, documentation and the plans available to you if you have not been provided with this information as of yet.

Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT)

Teachers employed by the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) are provided Health and Dental Benefits by two different providers. The Public Service Health Care Plan provides health benefits, and members are insured by Sun Life Assurance. Dental Benefits are provided through Green Shield Canada.

For new GNWT members, you will be eligible for Dental coverage on the first day following 3 months of continuous active employment. Your dependent coverage will begin on the same date as your coverage.

Please note that after your Public Service Health Care Plan application is submitted to your Benefits Officer, new plan members must complete Positive Enrollment on the Sun Life



website before any claims are processed and receive a benefit card from Sun Life. If you apply for coverage:

- **Within 60 days** of eligibility, coverage will take effect the 1st of the month following Human Resources receipt of your application in their office.
- **After your initial 60 days** of eligibility, coverage will take effect the 1st of the 4th month following our receipt of your application in our office.

GNWT: [Benefits Summary of GNWT NWTTA Pamphlet](#)

Yellowknife Catholic Schools teachers (YCS) and Yellowknife Education District No. 1 (YK1) members are covered by Manulife Insurance. Though Manulife covers both, the benefits are not exactly the same for each bargaining group.



Yellowknife Catholic Schools (YCS)

Benefits include Life Insurance, Accidental Death and Dismemberment, Extended Health Care, Dental Care and Long-Term Disability.

Teachers are eligible for a Health Spending Account of up to \$500 per school year for any health-related expenses for the teacher and their dependents. Any unused amounts in a teacher's Health Spending Account can be carried forward for one school year. Any amounts in a teacher's Health Spending Account that are not used within two (2) School Years shall lapse.

YCS: [Benefits Summary of YCS NWTTA Pamphlet](#)

Yellowknife Education District No. 1 (YK1)

Benefits include Life Insurance, Accidental Death and Dismemberment, Extended Health Care, Dental Care and Long-Term Disability.

YK1 members have access to a Health Spending

Account of up to \$800 per school year. Any unused amounts in a teacher's Health Spending Account can be carried forward for one school year, and within two (2) school years, the funds shall lapse.

Note: You must maximize your Healthcare coverage under your Extended Care Plan and Dental Plans as well as your spouse's plan before you can access the Health Care Spending Account.

YK1: [Benefits Summary of YK1 NWTTA Pamphlet](#)

All NWTTA members: Remember to check your Collective Agreements for other benefits unique to each bargaining group, benefits such as:

- Maternity and Parental Leave
- Medical travel
- Professional Development
- Northern Allowance
- Removal Benefits
- Sick, Special, and other leaves
- Early Resignation bonuses
- Various Allowances (travel, admin, language...)

Not all of the collective agreements have the same benefits, so please check your agreement for information.

As always, please call Central Office if we can be of assistance.

Member Summer 2021 Memories

My favourite part of summer was finally being able to travel home to PEI with my son Theo and spending lots of time with my nieces and nephews! -Chandler



Northern Lights

Meet

Kayla Walzak
from Inuvik
(Beaufort-Delta region)



Q. Where did you grow up?

I'm from Cape Breton Island in the small town of New Waterford, NS.

Q. What made you decide to become a teacher?

I come from a family of teachers (my parents, all of my siblings, aunts, cousins, etc.). I grew up watching my parents (and family members) make a difference in their students' lives and wanted to do the same. I have worked with kids for as long as I can remember and teaching was the natural progression.

Q. What do you teach?

I am teaching Grade 8 Math at East Three Secondary School in Inuvik, NT.

Q. What do you enjoy most about teaching?

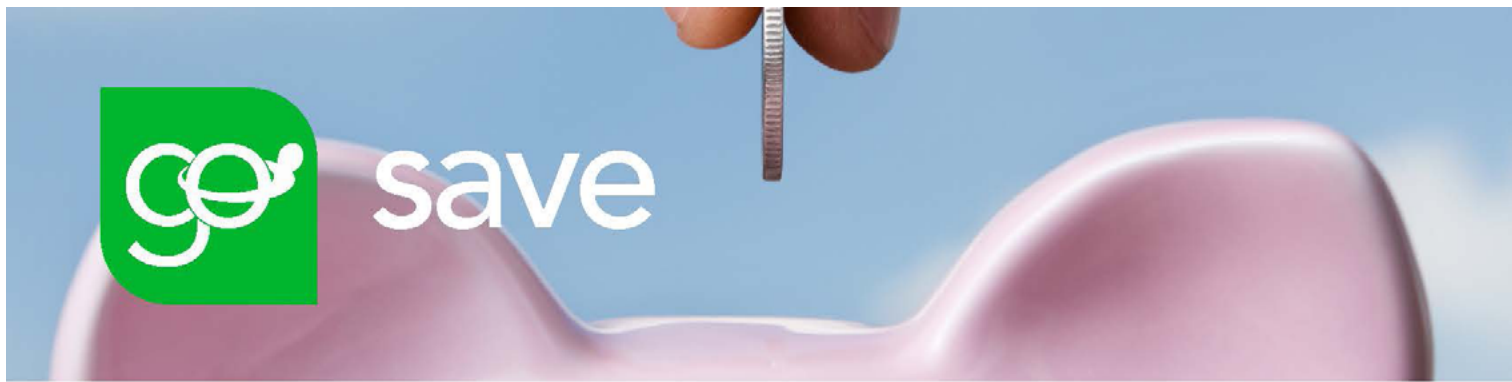
For me, making connections and building relationships with students are the most enjoyable and rewarding aspects of teaching.

Q. How do you engage your students?

It is important to build relationships with students. By getting to know my students' interests and needs, I utilize that information to tailor my approach. When feasible, I like to provide choice for my students so that they are actively involved in their learning.




Teaching Was My Calling

Although teaching was a natural progression for me, it wasn't my first choice. I spent five years studying/working in the healthcare field. I realized there was something missing. I'd gravitate towards pediatric patients whenever the opportunity presented itself. It took one conversation with my family for me to realize that teaching was my calling.














memberperks® for 



create your account today!


-  **1** visit nwtta.venngo.com and click "create account".
-  **2** create a username and password, then enter your email address, and you will receive a link with simple instructions to get you started.
-  **3** download the Venngo mobile app, and start saving today!

save money save time feel good
nwtta.venngo.com

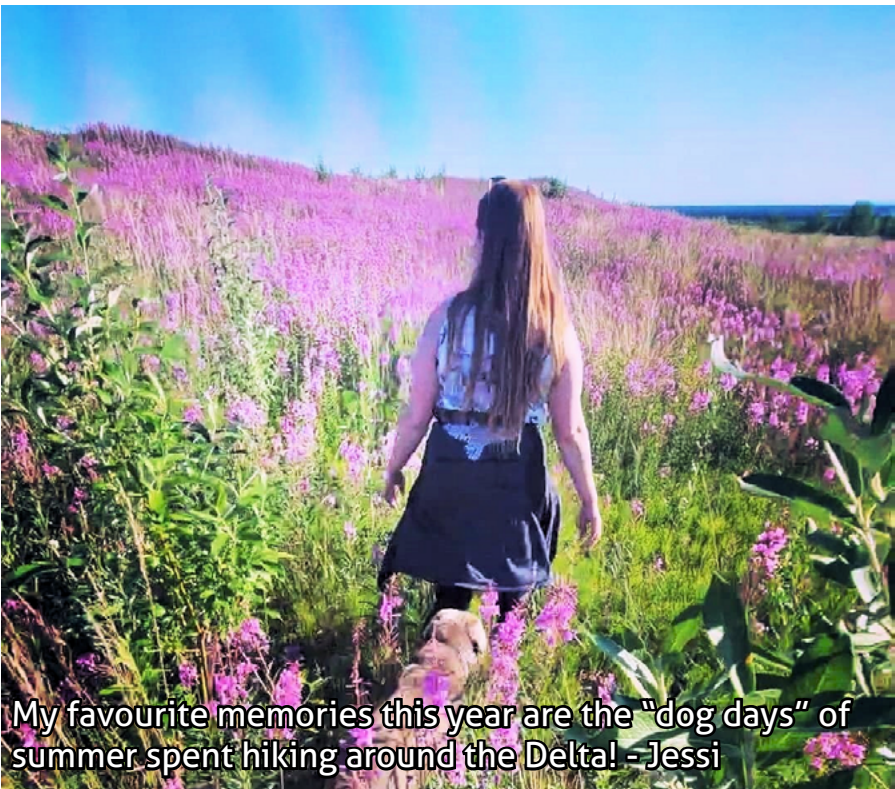





Member Summer 2021 Memories



Our daughter got married this summer. His name is Colin. He's okay. - Todd



My favourite memories this year are the "dog days" of summer spent hiking around the Delta! -Jessi

Northern Lights

Meet
Courtney Penny
from Behchoko (Tlicho region)



Q. Where did you grow up?

I grew up in a small town called Drayton Valley in Alberta, then moved to Edmonton for university and lived there for 5 years.

Q. What made you decide to become a teacher?

I decided to become a teacher because my teachers were so amazing! I loved that they cared about me and they made me feel welcome, and so I wanted to do the same in my own classroom.

Q. What do you teach?

I teach grade 5/6!

Q. What do you enjoy most about teaching?

I enjoy building relationships the most. I love getting to know my students and finding out who they really are.

Q. How do you engage your students?

I engage my students by using their real life interests! That's part of why I love relationship building so much, once we know who our kids are and what they enjoy, we can tailor our classrooms to bring them in and make learning fun.

I Am Always Learning

One of the most interesting things about being a teacher is that even though I'm the adult in the room and I'm the teacher, I am always learning in the classroom! My students teach me so much every single day & it is such a privilege to learn from them.



Government of
Northwest Territories

REMINDER: Check the expiry date on your teacher certification

If your teacher certification needs to be updated, download our Teacher Re-Certification Package at www.ece.gov.nt.ca/teacher-certification or email teacherqualificationsupport@gov.nt.ca.



Northern Lights

Meet

Kelsea Donovan
from Fort Smith (Fort Smith region)



Q. Where did you grow up?
I grew up in Fort Smith, NWT.

Q. What made you decide to become a teacher?

I was fortunate to grow up in a family of teachers and educational assistants who inspired me to pursue a career in education. It is important to me as an Indigenous educator to be able to teach in my home community. I hope to inspire other kids from the North to further their education and maybe become the next generation of teachers in the NWT.

Q. What do you teach?
I teach 9th grade English, grade 9 Phys. Ed, Northern Studies and World Geography.

Q. What do you enjoy most about teaching?
Working with the students is by far my favorite part of teaching. It is rewarding to see the "aha!" moment when concepts stick and when students feel confident and engaged in the topics we are learning. Every single day is different and that keeps my job interesting.

Q. How do you engage your students?
Community connections are everything for me, knowing my students' backgrounds and being able to create a classroom community from that information allows me to engage students in topics that are relevant to their lives. I try to bring in as many NWT examples as possible when teaching any subject.

Learning Alongside the Students

I teach a variety of subjects, so I believe that it is important to always be learning alongside the students. Everyone in the classroom is a content expert on something. I believe it is important for students to know that teachers do not always know everything and that the student's knowledge on topics is valued, welcomed and should be shared in the classroom.

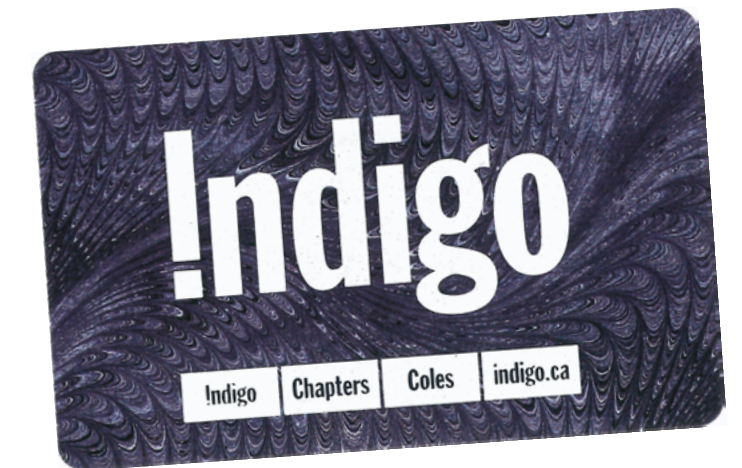
Newsletter Trivia

Send your answers to the trivia questions below to news@nwttta.nt.ca with subject *Trivia*.

Trivia answers are contained within this edition of the newsletter. Newsletter Trivia contests are open to active NWTTA members.

Deadline for entries: **November 8, 2021**

Win a \$50 Chapters-Indigo Gift Card!



1. When is the GNWT collective agreement in principle voting day?
2. What is one important piece of advice from David Murphy?
3. Should you use your personal email accounts to contact students or parents?
4. What day of the week are Starling Minds' "Thoughtful Tuesdays" sessions held?

Sherry Langland from Deh Gah Elementary & Secondary School (Dehcho region) is the winner of the May 2021 Newsletter Trivia.

Cover: **École Boreale** (CSFTNO region) staff 2021-2022



2020-2022 Central Executive

Matthew Miller

President

matthew.miller@nwttta.nt.ca

Loralea Wark

Vice President

loralea.wark@yics.nt.ca

Todd Sturgeon

Secretary-Treasurer

tsturgeon@ssdec.nt.ca

Wendy Tulk

Member-at-Large

wendy_tulk@edutlicho.net

Valerie Gendron

Regional Presidents' Representative

vgendron@ddec.ca

Member Summer 2021 Memories

My favourite summer memory was
visiting Virginia Falls National Park Reserve
- Stephanie



Central Office Contact

P.O. Box 2340, 5018-48 Street,
Yellowknife, NT X1A 2P7

Phone: 867-873-8501

Fax: 867-873-2366

Email: nwttta@nwttta.nt.ca

www.nwttta.nt.ca

OFFICE HOURS

Monday – Thursday: 8:30 am – 5:00 pm

Friday: 8:30 am – 4:30 pm

NWTTA PERSONNEL

Denise Works

Administrative Assistant

denise.works@nwttta.nt.ca

André Corbeil

Finance & Communications Officer

andre.corbeil@nwttta.nt.ca

Adrien Amirault

Professional Development Coordinator

adrien.amirault@nwttta.nt.ca

FOR URGENT MEMBER ASSISTANCE CONTACT:

Matthew Miller

President

matthew.miller@nwttta.nt.ca

Mobile: 867-678-5968

David Murphy

Executive Director

david.murphy@nwttta.nt.ca

Mobile: 867-444-0253

Sara McCrea

Assistant Executive Director

sara.mccrea@nwttta.nt.ca

Mobile: 867-688-7643

