



NWTTA NEWS

VOLUME 23 • ISSUE 4
MAY 2022

Teacher Mental Health

Assessment

Middle School Science

Literacy

Technology and Online Safety

Indigenizing Physical
Education

Social Emotional Learning

Intimate Partner Violence

Pensions

Math

Music
Kodaly

Literacy
Through Play

Bush Kids

NWT

Stepped Care

Google
Classroom

Culturally Responsive
Classrooms

Aboriginal Coaches Modules

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Indigenizing Education
Dene Kede 7-12

Intergenerational Effects
of Residential School

Supporting LGBTQ2S+ and GSAs

Leadership and Administration

Linking Literacy and
Numeracy

Interactive Resources to Enhance Lessons on
Canadian Government and Democracy

Tips on Organizing
International Student
Trips

Classroom Management
The Foundation of
Learning

British Columbia
Curriculum

Arts Programming

NWT EDUCATORS' CONFERENCE AND WOMEN'S SYMPOSIUM

October 19-21, 2022 | YELLOWKNIFE, NT



Registrations open June 15 for current NWTTA members

Link to register will be emailed to members

Trade Show

Sports First
Aid

Trauma
Informed
Practice

WSSC

Skills Canada

Yoga

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President's Update

Matthew Miller, President

As the 2021-2022 school year is coming to an end, we are now in a phase of easing restrictions and moving towards a system that resembles some normalcy. I want to again recognize our members' hard work and sacrifices since the Spring of 2020 to ensure education continued throughout the Northwest Territories during the COVID-19 global pandemic.

With so much information and disinformation, I am thankful for the conversations facilitated through the Canadian Teachers' Federation, the inclusion of the NWTTA during COVID-19 Touchpoints with the Department of Education Culture and Employment (ECE) and Superintendents, our responsive legal counsel, and the work of regional and central executives to provide guidance and support.

There is trepidation about what will be required to ensure our students are prepared for their educational journey moving forward. I have heard people ask, how will we ensure students are caught up to where they should be? My response is to recruit and retain good, quality teachers. We need a properly funded educational system with the tools and resources teachers require. We need to build and repair relationships with our families and communities as we welcome them back into schools. Most importantly, we need to improve student attendance rates which have been a topic of concern before the pandemic. This is no small task and will take time.

During the weekend of April 29-30, 2022, the NWTTA hosted our Annual Meeting of Central Council (AMCC) in-person for the first time since 2019. It was a surreal experience to be sitting in a room with teachers from across the Northwest Territories again. Over two days, we provided committee updates, met with the Minister and Deputy Minister of ECE, reviewed and passed the budget, and debated changes to the NWTTA Bylaws and Policies. It was a pleasure to be joined by the Canadian Teachers' Federation President Sam Hammond, who chaired the meeting.

During AMCC, we recognized qualifying individuals who are resigning or retiring by awarding Honorary and Distinguished Lifetime Memberships, including Adrien Amirault. This was Adrien's final AMCC as he will retire in July 2022 after ten years working for the NWTTA. I want to thank Adrien for his dedicated service to the NWTTA as the Assistant Executive Director, Executive Director, and most recently, Professional Development Coordinator.

As Adrien gets ready for retirement, he is still working hard to organize the Territorial Educator's Conference for October 2022. Adrien will be handing the reins over to Trent Waterhouse, who will join our staff in August 2022 as the Professional Development Coordinator/Member Services and will be tasked with seeing the conference through. We are looking forward to Trent joining the team and seeing everyone in



Yellowknife for the conference.

We are already planning for the 2022-2023 school year and finally being able to engage with members face-to-face again. Virtual meetings have allowed us to share information and facilitate discussions, but they cannot replace in-person meetings for all situations.

With regional executive elections currently taking place across all nine NWTTA regions, I am looking forward to working with those members who are taking on a leadership role with the NWTTA. Regional orientations for Executives and Local Receiving Officers (LROs) are being scheduled for September, and school visits where possible.

Ending my first term as President, going through all things COVID-19, six collective agreement negotiations, ECE's Curriculum Renewal, and Education Act Modernization, I can only reflect on how two years seemed so long and short at the same time. I am looking forward to my second term with the other members of Central Executive 2022-2024 Gwen Young, Wendy Tulk, Colin Pybus, and the yet-to-be-chosen Regional Presidents' Representative. I want to thank the outgoing Central Executive members Lorelea Wark, Todd Sturgeon, and Val Gendron. I appreciate the time and energy you have dedicated to the NWTTA over the last two years and know that you will continue to support the membership.

Although this is the last newsletter of the year, we will continue to update members through mass emails. I encourage you to reach out to your Regional Executives, Central Executive, and the NWTTA Office if you have any questions, concerns, or celebrations. Wherever you find yourself this summer, I hope you find time to relax.

Northern Lights

Meet Jackie Dayman
from Deline (Sahtu region)



Q. Where did you grow up?

I grew up in Beaconsfield, a suburb situated near the west end of the island of Montreal.

Q. What made you decide to become a teacher?

My 10th grade English teacher, Ms Broniszewski was a huge inspiration to me. She is one of the main reasons why I've developed such a love for learning and why I decided to pursue teaching as a career. Her teaching style was humorous and personable. She was very passionate about the subject and had an incredible way of creating relationships and an environment that made us want to be there and want to learn from her. Before acquiring my education degree, I was fortunate to have been able to have worked in a school in a variety of capacities. Having the opportunity to work with those students and alongside some pretty amazing educators solidified my aspiration to become a teacher and provide the same kind of learning environment and opportunities that were given to me.

Q. What do you teach?

I am currently the Program Support Teacher and also teach grades 7/8/9 at ?ehtseo Ayha School in Deline.

Q. What do you enjoy most about teaching?

The thing I like most about teaching is my students. I love those AHA! moments when they first understand a new concept or see how a lesson applies directly to their lives. I get excited when students see improvement or when they are able to persevere through something challenging. Helping students discover their strengths and then develop those strengths into regular habits of mind is extremely rewarding for me.

Q. How do you engage your students?

I engage my students by developing trusting relationships with them and working collaboratively with them to create a learning environment where they feel safe to set goals for themselves and push themselves to succeed, even if mistakes are made along the way. Together, we have created a classroom community where social emotional learning plays a vital role in continuing to build a strong foundation for continued success.

Making a Difference

There are many reasons why teachers love their profession. Although, one of the most valued aspects of teaching is the ability to make a difference in students' lives, I love this profession for the differences they have made in mine. I go to work each day to teach, but what I learn from and about my students continues to shape who I am as an educator. What a privilege!

How to Challenge Negative Thoughts Using Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

Tara Achkar, Customer Success Manager, Starling Minds

The past year has been a challenging one for many of us. The impacts of the pandemic and its variants have created a massive strain on students, educators, and the education community. With constant school shutdowns and remote learning mandates, educators are working to maintain education standards for their students. However, it's leaving little time and energy for educators to care for themselves.

What is Starling Minds and how can it help?

Starling Minds is a confidential, online mental health resource that helps you identify the thoughts that might be making you feel stressed, anxious, or depressed. Starling Minds helps you build the knowledge, skills and tools you need to better manage your mental health through your checkups, exercises, educational videos, guided therapy sessions, and peer community.

Starling Minds is based on Cognitive Behavioral Therapy. The theory of CBT says that **what we do and think affects the way we feel**. It follows that if we can change the way we think, we can feel better about ourselves and about our lives.

How Can We Better Manage Negative Thoughts?

We all have thousands of thoughts every day. Some are helpful and uplifting (e.g. "I'm glad I spoke up", "I really like being here"), and some are more pessimistic and gloomy (e.g. "I'll never be able to do this", "I'm a complete failure"). More importantly, some are accurate (e.g. "I really messed up that time") and others are simply untrue (e.g. "I'm completely useless").

The Starling Thought Balancer tool helps you explore the connection between your thoughts and moods to help you gain the strategies you need to balance distressing thoughts.

Thought balancing is therefore a strategy that helps make sure you are looking at a situation in a balanced, objective, and realistic way. It starts with being aware of your unhelpful thoughts, to find ways you can learn how to balance them.

What are some key things we need to know about our thoughts?

- We all have quick and automatic thoughts that just 'pop' into our minds
- These automatic thoughts are often based on assumptions, not facts
- Automatic thoughts are very believable, but they can be inaccurate

Thought balancing is an important part of cognitive behavioral strategies for many problems. This technique is useful because:

- It helps us become aware of our negative automatic thoughts
- It helps us identify any problems with our thinking
- It can help us make changes to our thinking



How Can You Challenge Your Negative Thoughts?

Challenging our negative thoughts doesn't necessarily come naturally to us. We often believe everything we think. It's only with self-awareness that we are able to start questioning our negative thoughts to see if they are accurate or not.

Here are 4 steps to start balancing your negative thoughts:

Step 1

Identify your thought

Identify the thought you want to work on and write it down. Tip: write down your thoughts one at a time.

Step 2

Identify the facts that support your thought

Make a list of all the reasons why that thought might be true. Some of these reasons might be better than others, but don't censor anything – just write them all down.

Step 3

Identify the facts against your thought

Now make a list of all the reasons why this thought might not be 100% true all of the time. Try to think creatively to make new connections in your brain.

Step 4

Write a balanced position including the facts for and against your thought

Given all the evidence, is there a better way of summing up this situation? Write down a new balanced position that is more aligned with your value. Is there a more helpful way of thinking about myself or this situation? Have I been judging myself harshly? Is there a fairer, more balanced way of summing this up?

Put your learnings into practice. Start balancing your thoughts with Starlings' [Thought Balancing Tool](#) by logging into your Starling Minds account.

The Starling Minds program also includes an [assessment](#) and [check-ups](#) to help you understand where your stress, anxiety, depression, and energy levels are at. Based on your results, the program will then provide you with training sessions to help you better manage your mental health.

STARLING MINDS

Delivering digital mental health support to you and your family.

NWTTA + Starling Minds

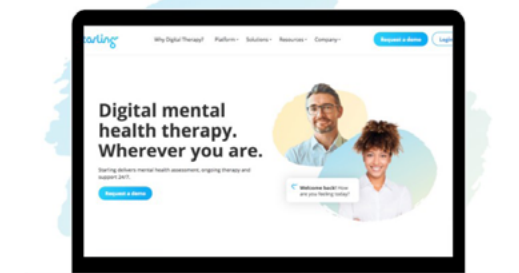
Register at member.starlingminds.com

Access Code: **NWTMEMBER**

Family Access Code: **NWTFAMILY**



Starling



Working for Our Members A Glimpse of What We Do

David Murphy, Executive Director

Usually during the arrival of spring and longer sunny days I feel a bit more energetic and more able to take on any task. But with the onset of COVID-19 during the last two springs the feeling that this energy brought didn't seem to help as much. With the lifting of many COVID-19 restrictions this spring is different and that energetic feeling is creeping back. Routines are slowly returning to the way things were.

One routine that I welcomed was being able to attend the Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF/FCE) Board of Directors meetings in person with directors from other Member Organizations. These meetings provide directors from Member Organizations an opportunity to network and discuss items that are more conducive to in-person meetings than a virtual format as Zoom.

Our Association and its members have been directly involved with CTF/FCE through its membership on Advisory Committees, Status of Women, Gwen Young (YK1) and French as a First Language, Katrine Lavoie (CSFTNO). As well Richard Létourneau (CSFTNO), represents the NWTTA on the Francophone Liaison Network and Catherine Son (YCS), represents the NWTTA on the Social Justice program partnership. Sara McCrea, Assistant Executive Director, is also a member of the Teacher Bargaining Network and Adrien Amirault, PD Coordinator, is a member of the Research Network.

Each year the NWTTA has sponsored one (1) teacher to participate in Project Overseas. For the last two years this program was postponed as a result of COVID-19. Upon a request from CTF/FCE the NWTTA allowed the funding for Project Overseas to be used to support other CTF/FCE projects and initiatives.

The CTF/FCE is a strong advocate for and a defender of publicly funded education, labour rights and social

justice. If you would like more information about the work CTF/FCE does on behalf of all Canadian teachers please visit their website at <https://www.ctf-fce.ca/>.

From April 29-30, 2022 the NWTTA held its Annual Meeting of Central Council (AMCC) where twenty-two (22) delegates from NWTTA regions and Central Executive met to discuss the business of the Association. This business includes debating resolutions, presentation of reports from Central Executive and Regional Presidents, accepting the audit and the budget, awarding bursaries and courtesy resolutions for Honorary Membership and Distinguished Lifetime Membership.

Sam Hammond, CTF/FCE President, represented CTF/FCE at the AMCC and offered greetings and remarks on behalf the CTF/FCE. Afterwards, President Hammond served as Chairperson of our meeting. Thank you, Sam for volunteering to do this for us. It was quite evident you are a very experienced Chairperson and that did not go unnoticed by our delegates as your professional style made all in attendance very welcome when they joined the discussion and the debate.

There were several notable changes affecting our bylaws moving forward. One is the

election of the Regional Presidents' Representative in June rather than at the Regional Orientation and Planning meeting in October. This change enables the Regional Presidents' Representative to serve on Central Executive immediately on July 1 when all other Central Executive positions take office. Several changes were made to the GNWT Central Professional Development section in the Bylaws and Policies Handbook to reflect current policy. Two committees were added, one is Housing Concerns and the other is Human Rights and Diversity. One resolution was to designate additional funding of \$250,000 to the Member Protection Fund.



Central Executive Pre-AMCC Meeting
l-r Sara McCrea (Assistant Executive Director), David Murphy (Executive Director), Matthew Miller (President), Sam Hammond (CTF/FCE President), Lorelea Wark (Vice-President), Todd Sturgeon (Secretary-Treasurer), Wendy Tulk (Member-at-Large), Val Gendron (Regional Presidents' Representative)

R.J. Simpson, Minister of Education, Culture and Employment and John MacDonald, Deputy Minister, Education, Culture and Employment, addressed the delegates and answered questions for over an hour. The delegates were very appreciative that Minister Simpson was able to attend. President Hammond did comment to Minister Simpson this is a rarity in Canada where the Minister of Education would spend as much time meeting with teacher association delegates.

This was the first AMCC that we have held in-person since AMCC 2019 due to COVID-19. For the last two years the Annual Meeting was held via Zoom. Since we were able to meet in-person we were able to reinstate our AMCC dinner and celebrate a successful meeting. One very important feature of the meal is the extending of invitations to all past presidents of the Association. This year President Al MacDonald (1984-1988) and Amanda Mallon (2004-2008) were able to join us. The Association thanks Al and Amanda for their service and the contributions they made during their terms in office and on Central Executive that helped make the Association a strong advocate for our members today.



Minister of Education, Culture & Employment
R.J. Simpson joined the meeting via Zoom, answering questions from delegates

As we near the end of this school year you are busy completing report cards, student files and as well looking forward to next year. Wherever next year finds you, whether it is in the same school, another in the NWT or another destination please keep safe. While COVID-19 restrictions are being lifted and hopefully things appear to keep getting better, please be vigilant.

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 Rob Hart

from Yellowknife (YCS region)



Q. Where did you grow up?

I grew up in Yellowknife and did the YCS trifecta by going to St. Pat's Elementary (now Weledeh), then on to St. Joe's (the first year it opened) and, finally, to St. Pat's High.

Q. What made you decide to become a teacher?

I always loved school. I enjoyed going and learning but the real reason I wanted to teach was because of the teachers that had taught me. People like Johnny Bowden, Tony Campbell, Russ Connors, Mrs. Castillo, and, yes, even my mother. They just made my life better.

Q. What do you teach?

I teach high school English and Physical Education.

Q. What do you enjoy most about teaching?

I enjoy the dynamics inside a classroom. It is those classes when you have a great idea and the class actually gets into it and you can just see it all coming together. It makes you feel all John 'Hannibal' Smith - "I love it when a plan comes together."

Q. How do you engage your students?

In Phys Ed class I think it is important to jump right into the activity with the students: show them the energy that you want to see. In English class, I think you have to try and get them to relate with the literature which, with some of our literature and the wide range of students, can be really difficult but when you pull it off, you can feel it in the room.

The Most Important Part

When I see former students who are grown up, I am always struck by the memories they have. It rarely is the subject matter or grades or amazing lesson plans that they remember but, instead, a certain class where something surprising happened or a prank I pulled on the class or a moment of real connection. Perhaps it should be humbling for me because I'm supposed to be planning great lessons for my students which make them love novels, Shakespeare, or whatever, but that isn't what sticks with the students. The fact that I also remember those exact moments, but cannot remember what assessment I gave, tells me that maybe the most important part of my class is what happens outside the curriculum.

2022 NWT Educators' Conference Update

Adrien Amirault, Professional Development Coordinator

As I write this the 2022 Territorial Professional Development Conference and Women's Symposium is six months away. It will be so great to be able to meet and talk to colleagues from across the NWT in person. At the moment we have 52 confirmed speakers offering a wide variety of sessions. The trade show has 25 confirmed booths with more coming every day.

Sessions are being offered by teachers in the Northwest Territories Teachers' Association, staff from Education Culture and Employment, other agencies in the Northwest Territories, and finally from jurisdictions outside the NWT. They cover a wide variety of topics (Indigenizing Education, Literacy, Physical Education, Coaching, CTS Courses, Social Emotional Learning, music, teacher clarity, BC Curriculum, Math, Science...)

Details on travel, per diems, and accommodations will be sent to existing NWTTA members in June of this year. The initial registration is planned to occur in June as well. In early September we will allow new hires and NWTTA members that we missed to register for the conference.

All members that must fly into Yellowknife will have their travel arrangements made by the NWTTA office. Members that can drive will have a process in place to claim mileage upon arrival in Yellowknife. For some members, flights will be available, but they may choose to drive. This can also be accommodated with deadlines that will be shared.

It is hoped that all members will have private accommodation unless their spouse/partner is also a member in which case they will share a room. There will be an option for members that want to share a room with a friend to do so. We have more hotel rooms available than ever before, so we are hoping that no one will be forced to share if they don't want to.

We do have many of the flights that will be charters. Unfortunately, no one but NWTTA members will be able to board the charters. If you have a partner or family member that wants to come to Yellowknife at the same time, they will have to travel on a scheduled flight at their own arrangement.

Look for an email in June with the initial conference registration.



Prince of Wales
Northern Heritage Centre

Museum Art Collection Online



Make the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre's art collection a part of your teaching plan

Explore over 1,400 pieces of artwork in the PWNHC art collection, including sculptures, paintings, prints, and textiles created by northern and Canadian artists online at collections.pwnhc.ca.



For a full list of resources:
www.pwnhc.ca/education/educational-programs-and-services

For more information:
Email: pwnhc_education@gov.nt.ca
Website: www.pwnhc.ca

Thank You Adrien Enjoy Your Retirement

Adrien Amirault is retiring in July 2022 after a 37-year career in education including the last ten years working for members at NWTTA Central Office. Thank you Adrien, for your expertise and unflinching dedication to NWTTA members.



Flying to visit members with Gayla Meredith & Dave Roebuck

"My memories of Adrien are of sitting around various negotiating tables talking strategy, and of him reeling us back in when we got off-track or too focused on one thing. His ability to see the big picture, keep cool under pressure, and look for solutions are things I admire about him, and valued in him in all of his roles at the NWTTA. I will miss working with him."



Delivering Christmas chocolates to staff at CSFTNO, ECE, GNWT Human Resources, YCS and YK1 with David Murphy



Making sure things run smoothly at a Territorial Educators' Conference with Edna McFaull



Distributing tobacco for water feeding ceremony at a New to the North Educators Conference with Katharine Brady

"Adrien has always been willing to assist, whether it be a member calling or an employer, regardless of the day or time. He is willing to have a difficult conversation but does so in a manner that few could replicate. He has been referred to as 'The Wizard' for his ability to address concerns and bring a fair resolution to even the most difficult situations. Adrien is respected and held in high esteem by all who know him because he has always worked with people to find a solution."



AMCC dinner with wife Carol Amirault

Northern Lights

Rencontrer

Geneviève Charron de Yellowknife (région du CSFTNO)

English translation on page 14

Q. Où avez-vous grandi?

J'ai grandi à St-André-Avellin, un petit village situé dans la région de l'Outaouais au Québec.

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

J'ai toujours aimé apprendre et partager avec les autres mes découvertes. Après le secondaire, j'ai brièvement bifurqué vers le domaine des sciences, mais l'enseignement s'est imposé comme un choix naturel à mon entrée à l'université. Je ne me sens jamais aussi vivante et dans mon élément que lorsque je mets les pieds dans une école! J'ai aussi eu des modèles positifs d'enseignants dans mon entourage, notamment ma grand-mère qui a été très heureuse dans sa carrière d'enseignante au primaire et mon oncle qui enseignait la robotique à de jeunes adultes. Ils m'ont tous les deux démontré que les enseignants sont des professionnels qui ont un grand impact sur la vie des apprenants avec qui ils travaillent.

Q. Quel est votre rôle?

Je suis accompagnatrice pédagogique à la Commission Scolaire Francophone des TNO. L'essentiel de mon rôle est d'accompagner les enseignants pour qu'ils se sentent le plus efficaces possible dans leur travail au quotidien. Pour y arriver, j'aide à coordonner, organiser et animer des activités de développement professionnel à la commission scolaire, en lien avec les objectifs de la Commission Scolaire et des écoles, mais aussi en fonction des besoins exprimés par les enseignants. Également, j'accompagne de façon individuelle les enseignants qui souhaitent approfondir certains aspects de leur enseignement.

Q. Qu'est-ce qui vous plaît le plus dans votre rôle d'accompagnatrice?

Je suis choyée dans la mesure où mon travail consiste à demander aux enseignants «Qu'est-ce que tu as envie de réaliser? Comment puis-je t'aider?» Ce que j'aime entendre suite à une session de travail, c'est qu'un enseignant se sent davantage confiant et compétent pour travailler avec les apprenants. Dans mon rôle, je suis dans la meilleure position possible pour constater à quel point nous avons une richesse de savoirs et de talents chez nos enseignants. Les enseignants avec qui je travaille sont une mine d'or de connaissances et me partagent régulièrement des idées et des ressources que je peux passer au suivant. C'est incroyable de voir au quotidien à quel point nos enseignants ont à cœur la réussite et le bien-être de leurs élèves!

Q. Comment engagez-vous vos collègues?

J'essaie d'engager les gens en partant autant que possible de leurs intérêts, et en parlant de ce qu'ils vivent réellement au quotidien en salle de classe. À travers les discussions, j'essaie aussi de leur faire nommer leurs réussites et leurs forces, les éléments sur lesquels ils peuvent bâtir pour aller plus loin dans leur compétence professionnelle. J'utilise le questionnaire pour aider les enseignants à préciser ce qu'ils veulent accomplir avec leurs élèves, ou ce qu'ils veulent les voir améliorer. Finalement, je les aide à ramener leurs idées ou leurs projets à des actions concrètes. On termine toujours nos rencontres en déterminant «les prochains pas» qui vont les rapprocher de leurs buts. Il y a beaucoup de partages spontanés aussi : en connaissant bien leurs intérêts et ce qu'ils font en salle de classe, je peux leur partager régulièrement des ressources, des articles, des vidéos ou des balados sur des sujets qui les touchent.

Toujours entretenir le plaisir d'apprendre

On pense souvent à tort que, comme enseignant ou personne œuvrant dans le milieu de l'éducation, nous devons avoir instantanément toutes les réponses. Je pense que ça fait partie de la richesse de notre profession que de vivre dans un monde en constante évolution, et d'avoir l'humilité de dire à nos élèves ou collègues : «À cet instant, je ne sais pas, mais cherchons et trouvons ensemble une réponse!» Nous voulons vivre dans des milieux où les gens se voient comme des apprenants à vie, c'est ce qui donne un sens à notre démarche en éducation. Et c'est un réel plaisir que de se laisser surprendre au quotidien par tout ce que ces apprentissages nous apportent!



Rebuilding Public Education to Build a Better Canada

Sam Hammond, President, Canadian Teachers' Federation



When the pandemic closed schools and forced everyone to mask up and begin living and working remotely nearly two years ago, the biggest concern at the time was the virus itself. Little did we know the larger toll COVID-19 would reap within our communities in the months and perhaps years to follow.

Even as our country begins to emerge from under the COVID-19 cloud -- with the help of vaccines and ongoing safety protocols -- this is certainly a new normal, what I've heard referred to as the pandemic era. As we know all too well, public education has been at the epicentre of COVID-19 upheaval. In an instant, our understanding of teaching and learning was thrown in turmoil. The daily routines of students, parents, teachers, and administrators were thrown by the wayside both in and out of the classroom.

The country was struck by a paradigm shift that pulled back the curtain showing deep cracks in our social systems. Issues ranging from poverty, gender equity, mental health, truth and reconciliation, and racial discrimination, were left exposed for everyone to see, now impossible to ignore. It quickly became clear that the role of publicly funded public education wasn't solely preparing future generations to prepare for the future, but also helping to address serious social challenges.

I know how trying this pandemic has been on teachers, support personnel, students, and their families. In too many parts of the country, the burden, from trying to keep everyone safe to attempting to make distance learning workable, has been placed upon the profession's shoulders, something for which we are all proud and willing to bear, but it isn't reasonable, and it isn't sustainable. Though the truth is, it hasn't been sustainable for a long time.

What we see across the country is an exhausted profession coupled with public education systems teetering like houses of cards as the virus and the scourge of declining mental health have collided head on with chronic underfunding, understaffing, and increasing class sizes. It should not be this way.

Some groups go so far as to say that public education spending is too much. When we see how poorly supported, and overworked teachers and educational staff are, you can't help but ask what these people think public education would look like with less. Publicly funded public education has been neglected for too long by governments, leaving

teachers and school staff to continually apply band-aids to keep the bleeding at bay. The pandemic ripped them off, exposing education and society's cracks for all to see. It was time to act, and that is exactly what the CTF/FCE did.

Before the latest federal election, we knew that we had an opportunity to make public education a ballot issue. We asked Canadians what they thought, and what they told us humbled and invigorated us. Those polled overwhelmingly shared their support for publicly funded public education, including 90 per cent who consider public education as one of our most important public institutions. And an incredible 91 per cent want the federal government to ensure that access is made possible.



With these polling results in-hand, we launched an advocacy campaign to put key federal issues facing teachers, education support workers, students, and their families on the ballot. Now with the election settled, this is the moment to begin fixing the cracks and restrengthen our public education systems, which is why the Federation is calling on the federal government to create a national table for public education to speak with one unified voice.

The teaching profession, academics, and civil society will be seated at that table to work with provinces and territories to tackle key issues, such as:

- Establishing national guidelines for publicly funded public education
- Developing national standards for emergency preparedness
- Implementing legislation to stop the privatization of publicly funded public education
- Protecting and promoting the French language in minority settings
- And coordinating national programs aimed at poverty alleviation, anti-racism, and truth and reconciliation.

With the full weight of CTF/FCE's membership, we can begin to right the ship. And although public education may not be in the federal jurisdiction, it certainly is in the national interest. Together we can make our publicly funded public education systems stronger and more inclusive to create equitable education conditions across the country, and, in doing, so start to rebuild what we lost.

To learn more about the campaign's priorities and more, and to find out how you can encourage your provincial and territorial governments to take action, please visit www.voteeducation.ca.

Central Professional Development News

Adrien Amirault, Professional Development Coordinator

The Central Professional Development Committee (CPDC) met in March of this year and set up the budget for PD spending for next year. There are a few changes that GNWT NWTTA members should be aware of.

1. Distance Credit Courses will have an annual limit of \$4000 per person once again. This is usually capped at \$2500, though like current year, due to COVID-19 and the difficulty in spending PD funds as per usual, the cost savings will go towards increased funding eligibility. At the time of writing this article the PD Fund has approved \$156,000 in Distance Credit Courses this school year.
2. The Indigenous Language Fund is again underspent because of the difficulty in getting Elders into the schools this year with COVID-19 restrictions. Though many members had applied for the funding, not many were able to use it. Remember this next year, and apply once again. The fund will allow up to \$6000 per year to get support of Elders in Indigenous Language Classrooms.
3. The CPDC awarded four education leaves for the upcoming school year. They were awarded as follows:

Kristen Machina (Dehcho region) to pursue a MEd in Curriculum and Instruction at Adams State University

Michael Leishman (Dehcho region) to pursue a Bachelor of Education at Vancouver Island University

Dr. Deborah Reid (South Slave region) to pursue a Master of Professional Education in the field of Equity, Diversity, and Social Justice at the University of Western Ontario.

Jill Mulcahy (Tlicho region) to pursue a Master of Arts in Counselling Psychology at Yorkville University

Upcoming GNWT PD Deadlines

A reminder to GNWT teachers that May 30 is the deadline for applying for Summer Credit Funding and Summer Non-Credit Funding. For this year again Summer Credit Funding can be used for online classes or in-person learning. Many universities have still not changed to in-class learning yet.

May 30 is also the deadline for applying to the Education Leadership Program (ELP). This leads to an NWT principal certificate that is necessary to be a principal in an NWT school. [More information on the ELP program can be found at this link](#). This is available to all NWTTA members. GNWT members are supported through the PD Fund, while YCS and YK1 members must contact their Superintendent for funding. For Yellowknife teachers it is being held in Yellowknife this year which is a rare event, and makes the cost very reasonable compared to other years.

AMCC 2022

Sara McCrea, Assistant Executive Director

On April 29 and 30, 2022, the Annual Meeting of Central Council (AMCC) was held in person for the first time since 2019. Central Council is the governing body of the NWTTA making decisions on budget, policies and bylaws and providing direction to the President, Central Executive and Executive Director. Central Council is comprised of Central Executive, Regional Presidents and delegates based on the number of NWTTA members in a region.

Resolutions/business that was passed at this year's Annual Meeting of Central Council include:

- Passed the 2022-2023 NWTTA Budget.
- Member Protection investment fund be increased by \$250,000.
- A motion was passed for the NWTTA to create a Building Contingency Plan for Central Office.

- A motion was passed to form a working group with representation from each region towards encouraging more members to participate in the Association in order to building capacity in leadership positions.
- **B.C. Gillie Bursary** awarded to **Elizabeth Brace**. There were seven applications for this bursary.
- **McCowan Bursary** awarded to **Hillie Stewart**. There was one application for this bursary.
- **Alice Bolduc Bursary** awarded to **Courtney Laroque**. There was one application for this bursary.
- **Ernie Comerford Bursary** awarded to **Shayla Snowshoe**. There was one application for this bursary.
- **Lawrie Hobart Bursary** awarded to **Katie Hart** and **Victoria Pitre-Tweedie**. There were ten applications for this bursary.
- No applications were received for the **Ed Jeske Bursary**.

PLAYSAFE: Don't Let It Happen to You



The War Amps "kids-to-kids" safety video, featuring stories from young amputees who have lost limbs in accidents, delivers the hard-hitting but positive message: "Spot the danger before you play!"

Visit waramps.ca/playsafe for the video and safety resources.



The War Amps

Math Puzzle!

Esther is collecting marbles to give her friends.

She collects 31 marbles.

She gives all her marbles to three of her friends named Matrix, Rachel and Sheeneez.

- Matrix gets 3 more marbles than Rachel.
- Rachel gets 7 fewer marbles than Sheeneez

How many do her friends each get?

By Mr. Sushil Jasper M.Sc., B.Ed.,
Mathematics and Science Teacher
Liidlii Kue Regional High School (Dehcho region)



Answer on page 15

Northern Lights

Meet **Meagan Wowk** from Yellowknife (YK1 region)



Q. Where did you grow up?
Yellowknife, NT

Q. What made you decide to become a teacher?

Growing up, I had some really amazing teachers who influenced my decision to become a teacher.

Q. What do you teach?

Principal of K'alemi Dene School.

Q. What do you enjoy most about teaching?

The relationships - I love making connections with students and being able to help them and their families. I am extremely fortunate to have spent most of my teaching career at the same school so I have known my kiddos for a LONG time. I can usually share memories about students of when they were little or even about when their parents were little! I also believe these relationships are the foundation to learning, students learn when they feel that sense of belonging.

Q. How do you engage your students?

I try to approach teaching and learning (and principaling) from a strength based perspective. I want my students to feel confident and capable so we start with their strengths and build from there. Relationships are key to this!

Amazing Team Makes a Huge Difference

In my twenty years, I have been so fortunate to work with some of the best people!! There are definitely hard days (or COVID years), but having such an amazing team makes a huge difference.

Northern Lights

Meet

Geneviève Charron
from Yellowknife (CSFTNO region)

Français original à la page 10

Q. Where did you grow up?

I grew up in St-André-Avellin, a small village located in the Outaouais region of Quebec.

Q. What made you decide to become a teacher?

I have always enjoyed learning and sharing my discoveries with others. After high school, I briefly branched off into science, but teaching was a natural choice when I entered university. I never feel more alive and in my element than when I set foot in a school! I also had positive teacher role models around me, including my grandmother who was very happy in her career as an elementary school teacher and my uncle who taught robotics to young adults. They both showed me that teachers are professionals who have a great impact on the lives of the learners they work with.

Q. What is your role?

I am an instructional coach at the Commission Scolaire Francophone of the Northwest Territories. The main part of my role is to support teachers so that they feel as effective as possible in their daily work. To achieve this, I help coordinate, organize and facilitate professional development activities at the school board, in line with the objectives of the school board and the schools, but also according to the needs expressed by the teachers. Also, I provide individual support to teachers who wish to deepen certain aspects of their teaching.

Q. What do you enjoy most about your role as a guide?

I'm fortunate in that my job is to ask teachers, "What do you want to achieve? How can I help you?" What I like to hear after a work session is that a teacher feels more confident and competent to work with learners. In my role, I am in the best possible position to see how much of a wealth of knowledge and talent we have in our teachers. The teachers I work with are a gold mine of knowledge and regularly share ideas and resources with me that I can pass on to others. It's amazing to see on a daily basis how much our teachers care about the success and well-being of their students!

Q. How do you engage your colleagues?

I try to engage people by starting from their interests as much as possible, and by talking about what they really experience in the classroom on a daily basis. Through the discussions, I also try to get them to name their successes and their strengths, the elements on which they can build to go further in their professional competence. I use questioning to help teachers clarify what they want to accomplish with their students, or what they want to see them improve. Finally, I help them bring their ideas or projects to concrete action. We always end our meetings by determining "the next steps" that will bring them closer to their goals. There is also a lot of spontaneous sharing: by knowing their interests and what they do in the classroom, I can regularly share resources, articles, videos or podcasts on subjects that affect them.

Always maintain the pleasure of learning

We often mistakenly think that, as teachers or people working in education, we must instantly have all the answers. I think it's part of the richness of our profession to live in a constantly changing world, and to have the humility to say to our students or colleagues: "At this moment, I don't know, but let's look and let's find an answer together!" We want to live in environments where people see themselves as lifelong learners, which is what gives meaning to our approach to education. And it is a real pleasure to be surprised every day by all that this learning brings us!!



Catching Up Members' Life Events



Mike Bodnar of East Three Secondary School (Beaufort-Delta region) and partner **Niloofer Akhavan** are pleased to announce the birth of **Roshan Alma Bodnar**, born on February 25, 2022 in Inuvik! Niloofer and Mike thank the caring staff at Inuvik Regional Hospital.



Andrée Amirault of Range Lake North School (YK1 region) and partner **Nicholas Walker** are over the moon to welcome **Ava Jane Walker** to the world, born on May 3, 2022 in Yellowknife!

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: **June 20, 2022**



Win a \$50 Chapters-Indigo Gift Card!

1. When is the NWT Educators' Conference and Women's Symposium?
2. What is the Starling Minds Access Code for NWTTA Members?
3. How many pieces of artwork are in the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre's online art collection?
4. How many applications were there for the Lawrie Hobart Bursary?

Courtney Penny from Elizabeth Mackenzie Elementary School (Tlicho region) is the winner of the March 2022 Newsletter Trivia.

Cover: Twinning Day spirit day at Mildred Hall School (YK1) region was celebrated by this triplets Professional Learning Community! l-r **Annabel Etheridge, Celia Harding-Russell, Tracey MacLean**

Math Puzzle! (page 13) answer:
Matrix = 10; Rachel = 7 and Sheeneez = 14

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*AMCC 2022 was held at the Explorer Hotel in Yellowknife on April 29 & 30, 2022, chaired by Sam Hammond. l-r NWTTA President **Matthew Miller**, Canadian Teachers' Federation President **Sam Hammond***

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