



NWTTA NEWS

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Welcome to the 2025-2026 School Year!

The NWTTA is excited to welcome you for the 2025-2026 school year.

The NWTTA is here to serve you, our membership. If you have questions or need assistance, please reach out through email, phone, or drop by our office in Yellowknife. Mobile phone numbers for after-hours urgent 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 2025-2026 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 2025-2026 Membership Card.



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President's Update

Rita Mueller, President



Dear NWTTA Members,

On behalf of the NWTTA I want to welcome you to the 2025-2026 school year! As we embark on a new academic school year I want to thank you for your dedication, fresh ideas, commitment to the students you serve, and the energy and enthusiasm you bring to your school community. You have the privilege of playing a crucial role in shaping your students' lives and learning journeys, and the NWTTA is here to support you in doing so.

As your NWTTA President, I feel strongly that our membership needs to know how I spend my time and where I place my focus and advocacy. I will use this quarterly newsletter to inform members about what I have been doing and how I have been trying to serve you.

Highlights of NWTTA President's Activities between June – September 2025:

Along with assisting Matthew and Sara on supporting members that require assistance and representation, the following is an overview of some of the other activities I have been involved in since the beginning of June 2025. This includes:



Newly elected CTF Executive 2025-2027
l-r **Cassandra Hallett** (Executive Director), **Connie Keating** (Vice-President), **Clint Johnston** (President), **Lillian Klausen** (Vice-President), **Tesa Fidler** (Vice-President), **Rita Mueller** (Vice-President), **Trent Langdon** (Vice-President)

Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF)

- Board of Directors' Meeting: July 7-9, 2025 in Ottawa
- Annual General Meeting: July 9-11, 2025 in Ottawa

NWTTA Central Executive Meetings:

- Wednesday June 18, 2025 (virtual)
- Friday August 29, 2025 (virtual)

NWTTA Regional Executive Committee and LRO Orientations:

- Sahtu, Tlicho and CSFTNO in Yellowknife: Saturday September 6, 2025
- Beaufort Delta: Saturday September 20, 2025
- YCS and YK1: Monday September 22, 2025
- South Slave, Fort Smith, Dehcho and CSFTNO: Saturday September 27, 2025

Education Authorities' Beginning of the Year Orientations:

- Tlicho Community Services Agency (in Behchoko): Thursday August 21, 2025
- Commission Scolaire Francophone (in Yellowknife): Monday August 25, 2025

- South Slave Region (in Hay River): Tuesday August 26, 2025
- Beaufort Delta (virtually): Wednesday September 3, 2025

Meetings with GNWT Department of Education Culture and Employment (ECE)

- ECE Assistant Deputy Minister (ADM): Tuesday June 3, 2025
- ECE ADM: Wednesday June 25, 2025
- ECE Directors: Friday August 22, 2025
- ECE Deputy Minister: Friday August 22, 2025
- ECE ADM: Tuesday August 27, 2025

Meetings with other GNWT Departments:

- Premier's Chief of Staff: Tuesday August 12, 2025
- ECE Minister's Presentation to GNWT Social Development Committee on Jordan's Principle: Thursday August 14, 2025
- Senior Joint Consultation Meeting: Monday September 15, 2025

Meetings with Federal Government:

- NWT Member of Parliament (MP): Minister Rebecca Alty: Tuesday August 12, 2025

Meetings with the NWT Superintendents of Education Association (NWTSA)

- NWTSA Chairperson: Friday June 12, 2025
- NWTSA Chairperson: Friday June 25, 2025

In Person School Visits and/or Staff Presentations:

- St. Pat's in Yellowknife: YCS New Staff Orientation and Welcome BBQ: Thursday August 14, 2025
- Chief Jimmy Bruneau School in Behchoko: Thursday August 21, 2025
- Allain St. Cyr School in Yellowknife: Monday August 25, 2025
- Kaw Tay Whee School: Monday August 25, 2025
- St. Pat's in Yellowknife: Thursday September 4, 2025
- St. Joe's in Yellowknife: Thursday September 4, 2025

- Range Lake School North in Yellowknife: Thursday September 4, 2025
- East Three School in Inuvik: Wednesday September 17, 2025

- Mangilaluk School in Tuktoyaktuk: Thursday September 18, 2025

- Chief Paul Niditchie School in Tsiigehtchic: Friday September 19, 2025

- Chief Julius School in Fort McPherson: Friday September 19, 2025

Regional Executive Scheduled Meetings Attended (Virtually)

- Sahtu Regional Meeting: Monday June 2, 2025
- Tlicho Regional Meeting: Tuesday June 10, 2025
- Beaufort Delta Regional Meeting: Wednesday June 11, 2025
- YK1 Regional Meeting: Tuesday June 17, 2025
- YK1 Regional Meeting: Friday August 22, 2025

Other Meetings/Events:

- NWT Education Leadership Program (ELP) in Yellowknife: Thursday July 3-Saturday July 5, 2025
- Meeting with Union of Northern Workers President: Wed August 20, 2025
- Lunch meeting with evacuated Whati Teachers: Wednesday September 3, 2025
- Northern Teacher Association President's (Nunavut, Yukon and NWT) Meeting in Yellowknife: September 9 -11, 2025

Please note I was on summer holidays for 4 weeks from Mon July 14- Friday August 8, 2025

As always, please do not hesitate to reach out to me with your concerns or suggestions for improvement. I really want to hear from you and to serve you to the best of my ability.

Rita

Dean MacInnis

President of the Canadian Association of Principals 2025-2027



Dean MacInnis is honoured to serve as the new President of the Canadian Association of Principals (CAP) for the next two years beginning this 2025-2026 school year, bringing more than 30 years of experience in education—and over two decades in school leadership—to this national role.

Currently Dean is the Principal of École Sir John Franklin High School (ESJFHS), located on Treaty 8 Chief Drygeese Territory in the Akaitcho region, the traditional territory of the Yellowknives Dene First Nation in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories. He has spent his entire educational career with Yellowknife Education District No. 1, shaping a deep commitment to community and public education in the North.

Dean holds a Bachelor of Education from St. Francis Xavier University and a Master’s Degree in Educational Leadership from the University of New Brunswick. His contributions to Northern education were recognized in 2015 when he was inducted into the NWT Education Hall of Fame.

Dean has been an active voice on the national stage for school leadership. From 2019 to 2025, he represented the Northwest Territories School Administrators’ Council (NTSAC) on the CAP Board of Directors and served as CAP’s Western Canadian Vice-President from 2022 to 2024. Over the past year, as CAP President-Elect, Dean has been preparing diligently to lead CAP forward in an era of rapid change and evolving expectations in public education.

Dean is deeply committed to lifelong learning and believes that school leaders must be both learners and change makers—driven by purpose and capable of inspiring the next generation of educators. Dean is grateful to have been supported every step of the way by his wife, Pam who is also a ESJFHS teacher and his two daughters, Ally and Mia, who share in all Dean’s life adventures.

Dean looks forward to working alongside school leaders from across the country over the next two years, fostering leadership that is resilient, inclusive, and future-focused.

For those of you that may be interested in participating, the [Annual Canadian Association of Principals \(CAP\) conference](#) will be taking place May 5-8, 2026 in Regina, Saskatchewan.





Grades 9-12 contact us for
Presentations
Campus Tours
Virtual Sessions
info@auroracollege.ca



Some of the confirmed session organizations for the 2026 NWT Educators’ Conference



Northern Lights

Meet Mitchell MacDonald from Colville Lake (Sahtu region)



Q. Where did you grow up?
I grew up in Ardness, a small community in Nova Scotia located about 30 minutes from New Glasgow and 75 minutes from Halifax. I now live in Pictou Landing, just 10 minutes from New Glasgow.

Q. What made you decide to become a teacher?
Throughout my education, I was fortunate to have inspiring and supportive teachers who made a lasting impact on me. Their encouragement motivated me to pursue a career in education. And, truthfully, the idea of having summers off was an appealing bonus!

Q. What do you teach?
I am currently in my third year as Principal of Colville Lake School. Prior to joining the Sahtu region, I taught math and science for three years at Peter Pitseolak School in Kinngait (Cape Dorset), Nunavut.

Q. What do you enjoy most about teaching?
I enjoy helping youth and young adults recognize their potential. Having worked in isolated communities for the past six years, I’ve seen that many students are unaware of how capable they are and the possibilities available to them beyond their home communities. As educators, we have the privilege and responsibility to guide students in becoming confident, capable citizens who can contribute positively to their communities. I enjoy helping our graduates apply to post-secondary schools and helping and supporting students with extra-curricular opportunities outside of their home community.

Q. How do you engage your students?
I engage students by providing hands-on, experiential learning opportunities both in and beyond the classroom. I emphasize cultural learning, ensuring students take part in on-the-land experiences at our cultural camp and school cabin. I also promote daily attendance so students can access extra-curricular activities and unique learning opportunities outside the community. Additionally, I dedicate time to organizing trips that allow students to participate in sporting events, workshops, and cultural gatherings beyond Colville Lake.

Sharing Rewarding Experiences
In just six years in education, I have had the privilege of sharing many rewarding experiences with students. In Nunavut, I organized and fund raised for a high school basketball team trip to Nova Scotia, where students competed against local teams and participated in extra-curricular activities, an especially meaningful experience, as many had never traveled outside of Nunavut. I have also supported students in attending the 2022 Summer Games in St. Catharines, Ontario, the 2023 Arctic Winter Games in Wood Buffalo, Alberta, and the 2024 Arctic Winter Games in Alaska. Most recently, in 2025, I was proud to help a youth from Colville Lake represent at the Canada Summer Games in St. John’s, Newfoundland. These experiences have been incredibly rewarding, providing students with opportunities for personal growth and cultural exchange that extend well beyond the classroom.

Welcome Back to the 2025-2026 School Year

Matthew Miller, Executive Director

Welcome back to a new school year! A warm and special welcome is extended to our new educators who have chosen to begin their journey in the North. We recognize the unique challenges and rewards of teaching in our communities, and we are grateful you have joined us. We also hope that all members were able to take time over the summer months to rest, recharge, and prepare for the year ahead. Already, the Association has had the privilege of participating in regional in-service sessions and visiting schools to deliver NWTTA presentations, reconnecting with members and listening to your priorities for the year.

Over the summer, we were proud to celebrate an important milestone for our Association. President Rita Mueller was elected as one of five Vice-Presidents of the Canadian Teachers' Federation Executive. This achievement is both a recognition of her leadership and an opportunity for our collective voice to be heard at the national level. We are confident that President Mueller will use this platform to spotlight the successes of Northern educators while also ensuring the unique challenges of teaching in the Northwest Territories are represented in national dialogue.

Advocacy remains a central pillar of our work. During the summer, the Association was actively engaged in highlighting the importance of continued funding through Jordan's Principle at all levels of government. Much of this advocacy has focused on the need to ensure students receive consistent support through Education, Support, and Classroom Assistants. These roles are essential to student success, and the Association is clear that any reduction in funding will have a direct impact on teachers, increasing workload and limiting the time and attention that can be devoted to classroom instruction. We will continue to press for meaningful investment so that both students and staff have the support necessary to thrive.

Another area of significant focus has been the announcement regarding the presence of lead in the water of several schools. This development has raised important concerns for both staff and students, and the Association has been deeply involved in addressing the implications. Our priority has been ensuring that members have accurate information, that health and safety protocols are put in place, and that appropriate remediation steps are taken swiftly. We will continue to advocate for transparent communication, timely testing, and adequate resources to guarantee safe learning and working environments in all schools.

If you have not done so already, please register on the NWTTA website so you can receive important emails from the NWTTA. The 2025–2026 year will bring significant opportunities for engagement within the Association.

Territorial and Regional Elections will provide members with the chance to help shape the future direction of the NWTTA. At the same time, we are preparing for the beginning of GNWT Collective Bargaining and continuing negotiations within YK1. These processes are critical to ensuring fair and equitable working conditions for all members. In addition, planning is already underway for our Territorial Professional Development Conference, scheduled for February 2026 in Yellowknife, which will be an important opportunity for professional growth and collaboration.

Regional Orientations are also well underway across the Northwest Territories. This year, we have taken a new approach by combining orientations in Yellowknife, Hay River, and Inuvik, creating opportunities for members to build connections across regions while still addressing local priorities. These gatherings provide valuable space to share information, strengthen networks, and ensure members feel supported in their roles. I look forward to meeting many of you during these sessions and hearing directly from you about your experiences and perspectives.

Another area of focus has been a thorough review of our Bylaws and Policies. This important work has resulted in several updates designed to strengthen the Association's governance. Of particular note, there will now be separate elections for the position of President and for the remaining Central Executive positions, providing greater clarity and accountability in leadership roles. Members can expect the Presidential election to take place in December, followed by the Central Executive elections in February.

In early September, the NWTTA had the honour of hosting the Presidents and Executive Directors from Nunavut and Yukon. These meetings are invaluable opportunities to share updates, exchange ideas, and discuss the unique realities of education across Northern Canada. By working together, we strengthen our collective capacity to advocate for our members and to find solutions that reflect the needs of our communities.

Finally, the NWTTA became aware of the passing of current and former members of the Association. Our hearts are filled with sadness as we reflect on the personal relationships we have shared and the profound impact these members have had on our schools and communities. Their contributions extended far beyond the classroom, leaving lasting impressions on colleagues, students, and families alike. We honour their dedication and commitment to education in the North, and we extend our deepest condolences to their families, friends, and loved ones. May their memory continue to inspire us in the important work we do together.

Wishing you all the best in the 2025-2026 School year!

Catching Up Life Events



Mark Minuk and **Amy Ing** (elementary teachers from Inuvik) got engaged at Jack Lake in Apsley, Ontario over the August long weekend! "Our ring is from NWT, representing a place where we met and where we call home. We are excited to spend our future life adventures together!"



Philippe Goguen and **Rayna Hayes** (both Diamond Jenness Secondary School in Hay River) welcomed their first child last December. His name is Luka Hayes Goguen.



Congratulations **Aleda Edjericon** from K'alemi Dene School (YK1 region) who graduated from the University of Alberta, Masters of Education: Curriculum and Pedagogy with focus on Indigenous Education.



In June, big brother Wesley, welcomed his little sister, Kennedy, into the world. **Jennifer Schuett** (East Three Elementary School) and **Justin Guy** (BDDEC Board office) are excited to love and share adventures with their growing family.

Newsletter

Finding Calm in Chaotic Moments with Starling Minds



As we head into a new school year, many of us are returning to classrooms that feel more complex than ever. Unpredictable moments. Students struggling emotionally. More responsibilities—and fewer resources.

If you've found yourself feeling drained after a tough day, unsure how to bounce back, or just wondering how to hold it all together—you're not alone.

The emotional weight we carry as educators is real. And this year, more than ever, we need to make space for our own well-being too.

That's where we can help.

As an NWTTA member, you have access to Starling Minds—a free, confidential digital mental health program built specifically for educators. Whether you're looking for support with stress, anxiety, burnout, or tough emotions, Starling is here for you.

Because your mental health matters. Not just for your students—but for you.

👉 **Register or log back in:** member.starlingminds.com

🔑 **Access code:** NWTMEMBER

👨👩👧👦 **Family access code:** NWTFAMILY

Starling

TIPS

Finding Calm in Chaotic Moments

Name it to tame it.



"I feel tense." Try progressive muscle relaxation—tense and release muscle groups to ease tension.

Breathe easy.

Try box breathing: Inhale 4, hold 4, exhale 4, hold 4. Repeat 2–3 times.

Reframe your perspective.

View challenges as growth opportunities—not threats.



Create a thought record.

Jot down the situation, thoughts, evidence, and a balanced takeaway.

Need to reset and stay resilient?

Sign up at member.starlingminds.com
Access code: NWTMEMBER
Family members: NWTFAMILY



Self-Compassion & Support.

"It's okay to feel anxious—I'm human." Reach out to a colleague or friend.



Remembering Ross A Pillar of Inuvik Education

The teaching community in Inuvik and beyond mourns the passing of Ross, an educator whose career and passion spanned 38 years at Samuel Hearne Secondary and East Three Secondary. Ross was more than a teacher—he was a legend in Inuvik, having taught three generations of its citizens. His dedication, warmth, and approach to learning have left an indelible mark on generations of students and the community as a whole.

Ross shaped the very spirit of the schools he served, fostering a sense of community not only within his own classroom but throughout the entire building. It was natural for Ross to enhance the positive dynamic of the school, always ready to lend a hand, encourage a colleague, or inspire a student. He championed diversity and encouraged the appreciation of cultural differences, reminding all that their little town's strength rested in the dedication and unity of its people.

One of Ross's enduring legacies was his integral role in the evolution of the Northern Distance Learning (NDL) program over a decade. His vision and strategies for developing community—across classrooms, cultures, and virtual spaces—gave every student a sense of belonging. Ross brought energy, understanding, and compassion to the task of introducing the unique cultural tapestry of the territory to every learner he encountered, and his devotion as an NWT teacher remains an inspiration.

As we reflect on Ross's remarkable career and the countless lives he touched, we cherish his example of service, community building, and commitment to education in the North. His legacy will continue to enrich our schools and hearts for many years to come.



NWT Education Hall of Fame

The GNWT is honoured to announce the inductees of the 2024 NWT Education Hall of Fame:

- Dianne Lafferty - Community Outreach Award
- Patricia Davison - Early Childhood Education Award
- Heath Israel - JK-12 Education Award
- David Murphy - Leadership in Education Award
- Denise McDonald - Minister's Choice Award



Learn more about the inductees:



Meet Your Central Office Team

Matthew Miller, 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.

Rita Mueller, your NWTTA President, is the elected official working in the NWTTA office. Her 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. She is available after hours to take urgent issue calls from members.

Travis Maurice, our Member Services Coordinator, will serve as your first point of contact for most day-to-day questions. Travis provides front-line support by helping members interpret the collective agreements, and by addressing routine inquiries related to pay disputes, benefit entitlements, and teacher certification. Travis is able to provide services in French.



Denise Works



Rita Mueller



Travis Maurice

Sara McCrea, Assistant Executive Director, and I, **Matthew Miller**, Executive Director, are here to assist you with general member concerns and are your primary contacts for complex or escalated matters. Our work focuses on addressing challenging situations, including grievances and arbitration, disciplinary processes, job accommodations, and meetings with Employers. We are available after hours to respond to urgent member concerns. Sara is also able to provide services in French.

You may occasionally contact **André Corbeil**, Finance and Communications Officer, with regard to expense 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 **Trent Waterhouse**, 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.



Sara McCrea



Matthew Miller



André Corbeil



Trent Waterhouse

Nominations Open Soon Central Executive 2026-2028

Are you interested in becoming a leader with the NWTTA? Here's your chance!

NWTTA Central Executive consists of five positions, four of which (President, Vice President, Secretary-Treasurer and Member-at-Large) are elected for two-year terms, and the fifth, a Regional Presidents' Representative who is selected by Regional Presidents. The term of office for the current Central Executive ends June 30, 2026.

Central Executive 2026-2028 nominations open **November 1** for the position of President and **January 5** for the positions of Vice-President, Secretary-Treasurer and Member-at-Large.

The deadline for the receipt of nominations are November 15 at 5:00 pm for the Office of President and January 12 at 5:00 pm for the offices of Vice-President, Secretary-Treasurer, or Member-at-Large.

All nominations must be moved, seconded and approved by Central Executive, a Regional Executive or the Nominations Committee.

To be eligible for nomination to the office of the President, a member must have previous NWTTA Central and Regional Executive experience. There is no previous Central or Regional experience requirement for the positions of Vice-President, Secretary-Treasurer and Member-at-Large.

A summary of Duties of Central Executive Officers:

The **President** shall:

- call meetings of Central Executive and Central Council;
- preside over the above mentioned meetings;
- represent the Association officially;
- serve as Canadian Teachers' Federation Director;
- address and support member concerns;
- consult with the Canadian Teachers' Federation, the Department of Education, Culture and Employment (ECE) and other bodies concerning

legislation which affects the teachers and courses of study;

- have duties and responsibilities as directed by Central Executive in accordance with the Bylaws and Policies.

The **Vice-President** shall:

- assume the duties of the President in the event of a vacancy in that position or the President's inability to perform their duties, or in their absence;
- assist the President by acting for them when requested;

The **Secretary-Treasurer** shall:

- exercise general financial control and supervision over the Association. by ensuring that:
- present a financial report and proposed budget to Central Council at AMCC or such other time as may be designated by Central Council,
- cause to have the financial statements audited at the end of the fiscal year,
- serve as an Executive Member-in-Charge and Chairperson of the Finance Committee,

The **Member-at-Large** shall:

- serve as the representative of all members in all regions;

Have questions?

Email them to nominations@nwtta.nt.ca

Central Executive 2026-2028

Term: July 1, 2026 to June 30, 2028

President Nominations open: November 1, 2025

Voting Day for President: December 8, 2026

Vice-President, Secretary-Treasurer, Member-at-Large Nominations open: January 5, 2026

Voting Day: February 16, 2026

Professional Development

Trent Waterhouse, Professional Development Coordinator

One of the negotiated benefits available to members through the Collective Agreement between the NWTTA and the GNWT is Professional Development (PD).

The fund is administered by the Central Professional Development Committee, comprised of two members that represent the employer and two members that represent the NWTTA to provide direction on PD in the NWT. In Article 16 of the Agreement there are funded opportunities for PD that GNWT NWTTA members can apply for.

GNWT NWTTA members have many options to engage in Professional Development (PD) activities that support personal, professional growth in the teaching profession. Any PD questions or suggestions can be sent to: pd@nwtta.nt.ca

Members may access PD funds from two sources:

1. Central GNWT NWTTA PD funds are processed through the NWTTA Central Office.

Pending approval and successful completion, members are eligible for reimbursement for:

Education Leave with and without allowances for 2026-2027—Application Deadline March 01, 2026 5:00PM [LINK](#)

Short Term Assistance: Online Distance Credit Course or program—Application Deadline before course begins or if a Summer Credit or Non-Credit course or program—Application Deadline May 30, 2026 [LINK](#)

Indigenous Language Acquisition Fund—Application Deadline before course begins or if a summer course or program—Application Deadline May 30, 2026 [LINK](#)

2. Regional GNWT NWTTA PD funds support PD for the NWTTA members in that region. Each region is unique and has their own guidelines and application forms. Generally, these funds are for activities such as attending workshops or conferences, school-based PD, on the land learning, etc. Connect with your Regional PD Committee members for copies of these documents. Pending approval and successful completion, reimbursement is processed through the NWTTA Central Office. Regional PD information is

located in the Members Area on each Regional Page of the NWTTA site.

Important reminders for GNWT PD:

- Start the process early. Be aware of deadlines and use current forms
- Maximum of two distance credit courses approved for reimbursement per semester
- Travel outside of Canada for PD during the school year requires additional approval from your Employer
- Any PD questions or suggestions can be sent to: pd@nwtta.nt.ca

For additional information on Professional Development:

YK1 & YCS Members:

Please contact your School Professional Development representatives for information

Our Students | Our North | Our Success

NWT EDUCATORS' CONFERENCE

February 18-20, 2026 | YELLOWKNIFE, NT



The NWT Territorial Educators' Conference 2026 is coming up February 18-20, 2026. It will be a great time for educators to network, learn and build connections territory wide. There will be sessions from professionals from in an out of the territory as well as a trade show with information, resources and experts to inform and expand your understanding of the organizations and services that can support your school communities. Please follow up with your fellow members to ensure that they are registered on the NWTTA site to receive information and updates about the conference.

The session registration is planned for early January. All GNWT members outside of Yellowknife will have their travel arrangements and accommodations made by the NWTTA Central office. Members that can drive will have a process in place to claim mileage upon arrival in Yellowknife. Only NWTTA members are able

to board the chartered flights. If you have a partner or family member(s) that wants to come to Yellowknife at the same time, they will have to make their own arrangements.

Scheduled Major Presenters:

Richard Van Camp: is an internationally renowned storyteller and best-selling Tłıch'o Dene author, writer and professor. Van Camp is a prolific writer. As of 2023, he wrote 27 books in as many years. He is perhaps best known for his 1996 debut novel The Lesser Blessed, which was adapted into a film of the same name by Anita Doron in 2012. Doing so made him the first Tłıch'o person to ever publish a novel. He is well known for his short stories, of which five collections have been published. A particularly versatile writer, Van Camp has also authored comic books, baby books and children's books.

Dr. Shelley Moore: Originally from Edmonton, and now based in Vancouver, British Columbia, Shelley Moore is a highly sought after teacher, researcher, consultant and storyteller and she has worked with school districts and community organizations throughout both Canada and the United States. Her research and

work has been featured at national and international conferences and is constructed based on theory and effective practices of inclusion, special education, curriculum and teacher professional development

Jo Chrona: an educator, traveler, philosopher, spouse, and Two-Spirited woman of Ts'msyen and European heritage. She is a member of the Kitsumkalum First Nation. Jo seeks to continually challenge herself and is forever struggling to live life on her own terms. As a creative, she paints for fun, bakes for others, and writes to breathe.

Niigaan Sinclair: commented in and written for international and national print media. Head of the Department of Native Studies at the University of Manitoba where he holds the Faculty of Arts Professorship in Indigenous Knowledge and Aesthetics. He is Anishinaabe, born and grew up in Treaty One, and joined the Winnipeg Free Press as a columnist in 2018. Author of the National Bestseller and winner of the 2024 Governor General Literary award for Non-Fiction. Wīnipēk: Visions of Canada from an Indigenous Centre. He is also a recovering high school teacher.



NWT Educators: Stay ConnectED!

Check out ConnectED NWT to find new professional learning opportunities specifically catered to NWT Junior Kindergarten to Grade 12 educators.

Explore our catalogue of courses and opportunities, including book clubs, resource repositories and courses on curriculum renewal.

Enrol, explore and stay "connected" to educators across the NWT.

Learning opportunities are added on a regular basis.

Questions?
Email: connectedhelpdesk@gov.nt.ca

Government of Northwest Territories



Teaching Together 2025 The Gambia

Rayna Brands,
École St. Patrick
High School (YCS
region)

Stepping outside of your comfort zone is where the most important and meaningful growth occurs. This past July, I had the privilege of participating in Teaching Together, formerly known as Project Overseas, run by the CTF/FCE. What began as a leap out of my comfort zone, soon became one of the most transformative experiences of my career. Not only did it change me as an educator, but it also opened my eyes to the importance of education for all, and the importance of teacher's unions.

I really had no idea what Teaching Together was about or what to expect. I only read one story and that was from a previous participant of Project Overseas. However, it was not until I arrived in Ottawa for orientation that the message became clear: keep an open mind, embrace the experience, and be ready to learn as much as possible from The Gambian people. Still, nothing could have prepared me for the warmth and generosity I would encounter the moment I stepped off the plane in Banjul.

The people of The Gambia are warm, welcoming, and incredibly hospitable and the representative of the



Sights from Banjul – the capital of The Gambia

Gambia Teachers Union (GTU) exemplified these traits. They welcomed us Canadian Teachers with open arms, endless water bottles, and delicious meals.

The journey began in Banjul, the busy and bustling capital city. We spent our time here getting to know the representatives from the GTU and plan our upcoming conferences. Further, we even got to be the special guests at a high school graduation ceremony, where we got to watch students receive their high school diplomas.

The next day, we travelled for 6 hours into the interior of The Gambia to get to the small town of Janjanbureh. During our time here, we hosted a week-long professional development conference for young educators that had multiple workshops hosted by the representatives from the GTU, local members of government, and even the minister of forestry. The topics were on leadership, unionism, climate change, school-related gender-based violence, classroom management, and communication. Over the course of this week, we really got to build meaningful connections with 40 young teachers. It was really heart warming to hear how much they learned from this opportunity.



Day of the high school graduation ceremony – two teams of Canadian Teachers with the GTU

The week ended with a cultural exchange from the young teachers and the Canadian teachers. We got to witness a mock traditional wedding from the Fulani and Mandinka people, as well as a mock traditional circumcision ceremony from the Jola people.

The next day we got on to a small ferry and crossed the Gambia river to travel to Farafenni, a border town in region three of The Gambia. There, we continued our work and hosted another weeklong

professional development conference with a different group of 40 young teachers. Similar sessions were offered on unionism, gender-based violence,



GTU representative, young teacher participants, and the Canadian Teachers

leadership, communication, climate change, and classroom management.

One of the best experiences was on our day off, we got to go and experience the traditional market (lumo). The absolute best part was that during this time, it was the peak of the mango growing season. I have never seen so many mangoes in my entire life. After the market, we got onto a horse drawn cart, and we crossed into Senegal. It was genuinely an amazing experience.



Me facilitating my workshop on Climate Change Mitigation

Amidst these experiences, the most powerful impact was the role of unions and professional development opportunities in the teaching profession. In Canada, I know that I take these for granted, I just assume that they will always be there. However, in most places around the world, being part of a teacher union is on a voluntary basis. That is, if the teacher can even afford the union dues. In The Gambia, the GTU works hard to keep their union dues very affordable, but it is

not always feasible for some teachers. The wages for teachers in The Gambia are so low, that teachers are unable to get bank loans. Due to this, the GTU began their own co-operative credit union (GTUCCU). They provide teachers with loans to help them afford a computer, a phone, a bike, and even with rice and oil if they are unable to afford food.

Not only does the GTU provide this financial support for the teacher with their credit union, but they also advocate for the teachers and help them fight for better teaching conditions. Including helping provide safe and clean accommodations for the teachers who need to move regions for their jobs.



Crossing back into The Gambia. GTU representatives, Yankuba and Janneh are in the back. The team of four Canadian Teachers in front

Programs like Teaching Together help make these things possible. Without the support of the CTF/FCE and their member unions across Canada, the GTU would not be able to provide professional development opportunities for their young teachers.

As I reflect on my time in The Gambia, I really am starting to realize the importance of education and the role of having safe classrooms and schools to help push students into a brighter future. Education is truly the foundation of equality, resilience, and hope for a better tomorrow. And through these partnerships such as the GTU and the CTF/FCE, it is apparent that education is a global responsibility and participating in projects such as Teaching Together are a step in the right direction.

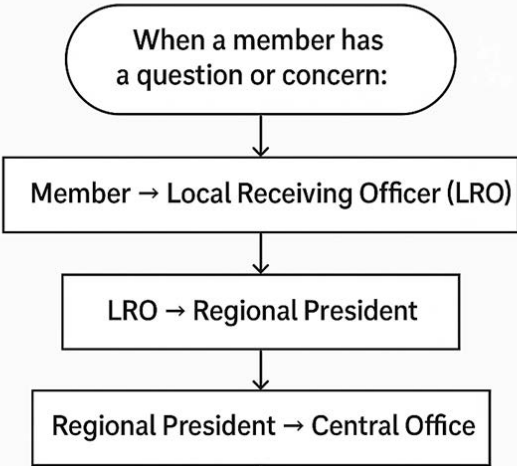
If you are looking for an opportunity to grow as an educator and a person, and to help make meaningful impact on others, and to open your eyes to new experiences, [I strongly encourage you to apply for Teaching Together 2026.](#)

Lines of Communication for Member-Initiated Communication

Sara McCrea, Assistant Executive Director

Did you know the NWTTA has a Lines of Communication to assist with Member-Initiated Communication? The NWTTA Bylaws and Policies Handbook identifies the suggested procedure. Central Office regularly receives telephone calls, emails, and texts from members before they make an attempt to seek advice and assistance from other sources. This serves to create inefficiencies and delayed response times. Before contacting the NWTTA Central Office have you tried the following?

NWTTA Communication Procedure



- 1. Member → Local Receiving Officer (LRO)**
 - Members should first contact their Local Receiving Officer (LRO).
 - In some cases (e.g. privacy concerns, potential discipline concerns), members may contact Central Office directly.
- 2. LRO → Regional President**
 - If the LRO can't resolve the issue, they refer it to the **Regional President (or another Executive Member)**.
- 3. Regional President → Member**
 - The Regional President provides advice or decides to contact Central Office for further assistance.
- 4. Regional President → Central Office**
 - If needed, the Regional President contacts Central Office for support or guidance.

When a member has an urgent after hours question or concern

Central Office frequently receives direct calls from members. Please note that the President, Executive Director, and Assistant Executive Director are available for urgent matters outside of regular office hours (weekdays after 5:00 p.m., as well as weekends and holidays).

In collaboration with the Central Executive and Central Council, we are providing examples to help guide members in assessing what constitutes an urgent matter. While this list is not exhaustive, it is intended to support thoughtful decision-making and to respect the personal time of NWTTA staff.

- You've been suspended or terminated**
- You're involved in a serious incident involving a student or parent**
- You're arrested or charged with a criminal offence related to your employment**
- You're being forced to resign immediately**
- You're told you must meet with an employer/HR without representation the next day**

Is the issue serious but can wait until business hours? Some examples are:

- Professional disagreement**
- Concerns about evaluation**
- Concerns about pay and benefits**
- Student conflict (no physical threat)**
- Anything not time-sensitive**

If you are unsure if your concern needs to be addressed urgently after hours, you may contact the Executive Director, Assistant Executive Director, or the President for advice.

Use the emergency contact numbers provided to members at the back of the Newsletter or Membership Cards.



Are you ready for something more in your personal life?

Are you looking for a larger, more global view of education?

As a teacher, do you feel you have more to offer and more to learn?

Are you ready for a personal and professional adventure?

If yes, Teaching Together might be for you!

Volunteer for Teaching Together with the Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF/FCE)

The CTF/FCE is seeking English- and French-speaking Canadian teachers at the elementary and secondary levels who are interested in volunteering their time and talents to offer professional development in-service programs in partnership with teacher organizations in Africa and the Caribbean. Each year, over 50 Canadian teachers are chosen to volunteer in the program which take place in July.

All candidates must:

- hold a Canadian passport valid until at least 6 months following the volunteer program. (Proof that a passport application has been made will be accepted);
- be a member of a provincial or territorial teacher organization that supports Teaching Together;
- hold a valid teaching certificate;
- have completed at least five years of teaching in Canada by the time of departure for the program;
- be in excellent health and be able to work in potentially challenging conditions;
- have high standards of professionalism and personal conduct;**
- show evidence of flexibility and mature judgment;**
- be willing to put the team and program needs above personal needs.**

Please note:

Teaching Together is a volunteer experience. Administrative, travel, and living expenses are covered by the CTF/FCE and its Member Organizations. No salaries or honoraria are paid to volunteer participants. No family or friends are permitted to accompany participants during pre-departure orientation or overseas programs.

Please contact your provincial or territorial teacher organization for additional information and an application form.

www.ctf-fce.ca

NWTTA Collective Bargaining Update

Sara McCrea, Assistant Executive Director

The Northwest Teachers' Association (NWTTA) proudly represents members working for the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT), Yellowknife Catholic Schools (YCS), and Yellowknife Education District No. 1 (YK1). Through dedicated negotiation teams, we advocate for collective agreements that reflect the priorities and best interests of our members.

To keep you informed, the NWTTA Central Office shares important bargaining updates through mass emails. If you haven't registered on the NWTTA website yet, don't miss out **register today** so you receive the latest news directly in your inbox: [Register Here](#)

Yellowknife Catholic Schools (YCS)

On **June 18, 2025**, the NWTTA and YCS ratified a new **three-year collective agreement** running until **August 31, 2028**.

Highlights of the agreement include:

- **4% salary increase** effective September 1, 2025.
- **Year 2 & 3 increases** tied to the GNWT/NWTTA agreement, with a guaranteed minimum of **2.75% each year. A minimum compound salary increase of 9.8%** over the three years.
- Lieu days for participation in extra-curricular activities
- Increases to administrative allowances
- Enhancements to group benefits and the Health Care Spending Account

The next round of bargaining will begin in **Spring 2028**.

Members are encouraged to review their collective agreement here: [YCS Collective Agreement](#).

Yellowknife Education District No.1 (YK1)

The YK1 collective agreement **expired August 31, 2025**. Notice to commence bargaining was provided in February 2025, and the NWTTA began preparing well in advance.

The **YK1 Regional Negotiation Team**, elected according

to regional bylaws, represents voices from across the system:

- **Elementary:** Randy Caines
- **Middle School:** Jodi Lee-Lewis
- **High School:** Gwen Young
- **Education Assistants:** Stephen Offredi

Between April and June 2025, the team met with the YK1 Employer over **six intensive bargaining sessions**. While no tentative agreement has been reached yet, negotiations will resume in **October 2025**.

Rest assured, the current collective agreement remains in effect until a new one is ratified.

Members are encouraged to review their collective agreement here: [YK1 Collective Agreement](#)

Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT)

The GNWT collective agreement is set to expire July 31, 2026. Bargaining will begin in Spring 2026.

Preparation has already started:

- On September 8, 2025, the NWTTA Executive Director sent a call for applications to join the GNWT Teacher Welfare Committee (Negotiation Team)
- Interested members should submit a one-page letter of interest outlining their experience and reasons for applying by September 26, 2025 to: nominations@nwttanw.ca.

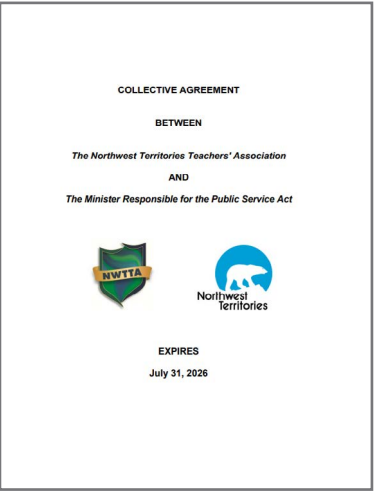
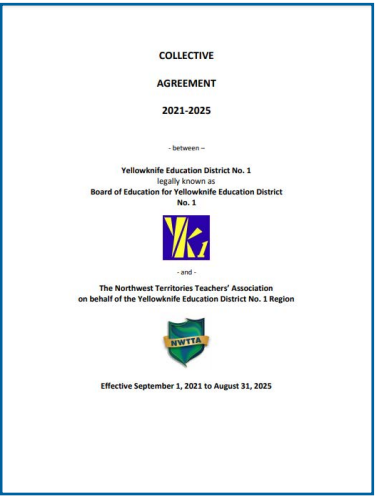
NWTTA Central Office is currently working to schedule bargaining sessions between March and June 2026.

Members are encouraged to review their collective agreement here: [GNWT Collective Agreement](#)

Stay Connected!

Your voice matters at the bargaining table. Stay engaged, know your agreement, and watch for updates in your inbox as negotiations continue for both YK1 and GNWT members.

Together, we're stronger.



Northern Lights

Meet
Denise Hurley
from Yellowknife (YK1 region)



Q. Where did you grow up?

I am originally from Pine Point, NWT and started school there. After the mine in Pine Point shut down, I lived in northern Saskatchewan and Northern BC before moving to Yellowknife for Grade five, and I have been here ever since! I feel fortunate to live and work in the North on the traditional territory of the Yellowknives Dene!

Q. What made you decide to become a teacher?

I originally started working on a degree in Psychology with the hope of working in schools; however I quickly realized that I really wanted to be in the classroom. I have wanted to work in schools with children from an early age, and as a child I was always forcing (encouraging?) my younger sisters to play "library" or "school" with me (and I was always the librarian or the teacher). I was also an avid reader and wanted to share my love of language, literature and learning with others.

Q. What do you teach?

I taught English Language Arts at the Secondary level for twelve years and then moved into my current role as a Program Support Teacher. I have taught grades seven through twelve, and have been a PST at both École Sir John Franklin High School and Mildred Hall School where I am currently.

Q. What do you enjoy most about teaching?

I enjoy seeing students grow in confidence and ability while sharing their talents and strengths. Watching students feel confident and comfortable enough to take risks and try new things is exciting to witness! I especially appreciate opportunities to connect with students outside of the classroom through extra-curricular activities, coaching, mental health workshops, retreats, and chaperoning.

Q. How do you engage your students?

When students feel supported, they're more likely to engage in learning. I work on fostering positive relationships and connections with students and creating safe spaces for learning. I've also found that humour can help too!

Promoting Mental Health Awareness

Some of my most rewarding memories as an educator have been from outside the classroom. As the teacher supervisor for a student-led mental health advocacy group, MAGMA (Magnanimous Advocates Generating Mental Health Awareness), I have watched youth use the skills they developed through MAGMA to become leaders and make significant contributions in the area of mental health in their own communities and beyond! MAGMA members promote mental health awareness through a variety of educational events and activities ranging from workshops to kiosks to Marches for Mental Health to a huge annual Music for Mental Health night held on the NACC stage! I am so impressed with the work they have done and continue to do to end the stigma and promote mental health!

Welcome Travis Maurice



Travis Maurice,
Member Services
Coordinator

For those of you who may not me a little about me, I was born and raised on the North Shore of Quebec and returned there to work as well as spent time working in Inuvik, Yellowknife and Montreal, I have had the opportunity to learn and grow from each of these regions and their diverse cultures. My personal experience growing up in a small fly in community as a Métis has instilled in me a profound appreciation of the importance of culture and how it shapes who we are regardless of where we go or work. Furthermore, having lived, worked and gone to school in Montreal gives me a valuable perspective on the complexities of diversity

in a large urban setting, broadening my Northern and Southern experiences.

This unique background has cultivated within me a strong appreciation for inclusivity and the importance of diverse perspectives and as shaped my commitment to representing every member regardless of their background.

It certainly has been an amazing start to the year, roughly one month in I have learned so much in my short time here at the association. I am benefiting from some exceptional mentors here at the association and most interestingly getting to know members from across the region. Each member is as unique as the region they represent and provides me with an opportunity to learn both about them as members as well as the region they serve.

As mentioned, I will be working closely with members to provide guidance on contract interpretation, support with benefits and certification inquiries, and advocacy on behalf of teachers across the territory.

Looking forward to continuing to help all members of our territory.

Remembering Joshua Roberts

Deninu School teacher, Joshua Roberts, left this world too soon, but his spirit and his profound love for life will forever be with us. He was a fiancé, a best friend; to his children he was a caring stepfather, to others a beloved son and a dear friend. But to all who knew him, he was first and foremost a teacher – someone who genuinely wanted to make a difference in people’s lives.

He was a man of many worlds. While he dedicated himself to the classroom and his family, he also found joy in the intricate narratives of Dungeons and Dragons and the vivid artistry of anime. He saw life as a grand quest, full of challenges and opportunities for growth. It wasn’t just a game to him, it was a way to connect with people, to build a story together and to understand that even the smallest character can have the greatest impact. He approached his teaching with the same spirit, viewing each student not just as a learner but as a hero in their own story.

Joshua’s passion was making a positive mark on the world. He simply wanted to ensure that the people around him-whether they were family, friends, co-workers, or students – felt seen and valued. His legacy is not measured in monuments, but in the countless lives he touched with his kindness, his wisdom and his unwavering belief in the good in all of us.



The staff and students in Deninu School in Fort Resolution are heartbroken, but find comfort in knowing that his life was a testament to his values. Joshua taught those around him that the greatest quests are the ones we undertake for others. Everyone will miss his laugh, his insight and his love more than words can say.

Our first day feast at Helen Kalvak Elihakvik School (Beaufort Delta region)



Some of the confirmed session organizations for the
2026 NWT Educators’ Conference



Prince of Wales
Northern Heritage Centre



National Centre for
Truth and Reconciliation
UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA



SPORTNORTH
FEDERATION
"moving sport forward"



ARCTIC RESPONSE CANADA



NORTHERN MOSAIC NETWORK



WVest

OUR POTENTIAL OUR PURPOSE*

Designed for grade 6 to 12 classrooms, the OUR POTENTIAL. OUR PURPOSE. website explores what it means to be a global citizen.

Through interactive activities and real stories from around the world, students will discover how small actions can lead to big change – and how they can play their part.





Learn
more



AGA KHAN FOUNDATION
CANADA



In partnership with
Canada



2025-2026 staff from ?ehtseo Ayha School (Sahtu region).
Photo taken at Russel Bay during the annual staff orientation and culture retreat!



Career and Education Advisors

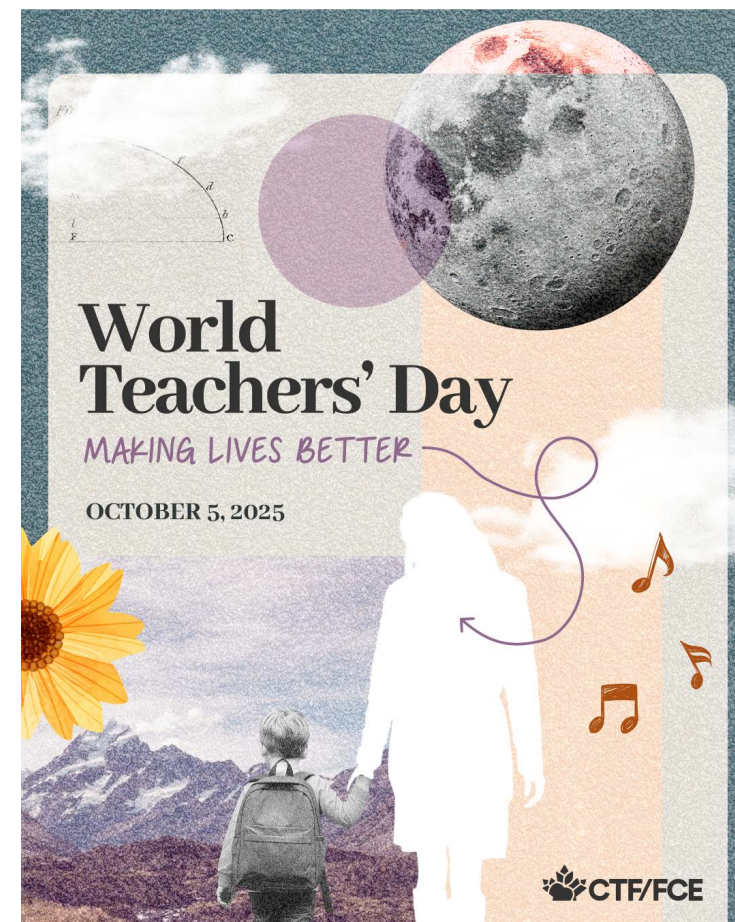
Are your high school students getting the support they need?

Career and Education Advisors provide services to every school and region!

They support Grade 9-12 students in their next steps after high school. They also provide practical support with applications, resumes and cover letters.

Find out more by emailing cea@gov.nt.ca or visit www.ece.gov.nt.ca/CEA

Government of
Northwest Territories



October 5 is a global celebration of the teaching profession. Since its inauguration in 1994, **World Teachers' Day** has highlighted the vital contributions of teachers and the immense value they bring to our lives.

Le 5 octobre, le monde entier célèbre la profession enseignante! Depuis sa création en 1994, la **Journée mondiale des enseignant-es** souligne les contributions essentielles des enseignantes et enseignants et tout ce que nous leur devons.

This year, the CTF/FCE's theme, "**Making Lives Better**", emphasizes the human aspect of teaching. Teachers' influence extends far beyond the classroom—they support students, strengthen families, and enrich our communities. On October 5, we honour the educators who show up every day with care, courage, and creativity, leaving a profoundly positive impact on society.

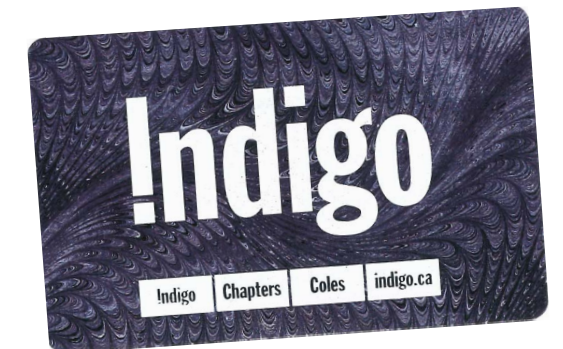
Cette année, la CTF/FCE a choisi le thème « **À l'œuvre pour rendre la vie meilleure** » afin de faire ressortir l'aspect humain de l'enseignement. Les enseignantes et enseignants accompagnent les élèves, soutiennent les familles et enrichissent nos communautés, bref leur influence va bien au-delà de la salle de classe. Le 5 octobre, rendons hommage au personnel enseignant qui fait preuve de bienveillance, de courage et de créativité au quotidien, laissant de profondes empreintes dans notre société.

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 16, 2025**



Win a \$50 Chapters-Indigo Gift Card!

1. Who is one of the newly elected CTF Executive 2025-2027 Vice-Presidents?
2. What are three confirmed session organizations for the 2026 NWT Educators' Conference?
3. What is the Starling Minds Access code?
4. What is the capital of The Gambia?

Jeff Milligan from the Mackenzie Mountain School (Sahtu region) is the winner of the May 2025 Newsletter Trivia.

Cover: Lutsel K'e Dene School (South Slave region) staff started off the year with a staff day at Hide Camp.

2024-2026 Central Executive

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