



NWTTA NEWS

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DECEMBER 2018

Executive Leadership & Planning Meetings 2018-2019

On October 25-27, 2018, Central Executive, Regional Presidents and Central Office staff participated in our annual Executive Leadership & Planning Meetings.

During the meetings the group met with staff from the Department of Education, Culture & Employment to discuss Early Years education, the new "Our Language" curriculum and teacher certification issues, reviewed NWTTA Member Issues, Concerns and Celebrations survey results from June 2018 to provide direction on how we're doing and what 2018-2019 priorities need to be.

Regional Presidents Back Row (left to right): Patricia Oliver (YCS), Val Gendron (Dehcho), Éienne Brière (CSFTNO), Robin Dhanoa (South Slave), JP Bernard (Sahtu), Stephen Offredi (YK1), Wendy Tulk (Tlicho)

Central Executive Front Row (left to right): Gwen Young (Member-at-Large), Todd Sturgeon (Secretary-Treasurer/Fort Smith Regional President), Fraser Oliver (President), Marnie Villeneuve (Vice-President), Matthew Miller (Regional Presidents Representative/Beaufort-Delta Regional President)



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Yellowknife to
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Fraser Oliver, President

The NWTTA held its regional orientations this September and in early October in all regional centers across the NWT. Photos from these regional orientations are featured throughout this issue of the newsletter. Regional orientations allow regional executives and school LROs to come together to deliberate on many topics relative to NWTTA members. Some of the key topics examined at these meetings included the following:

1. Roles and responsibilities of regional executives including LROs
2. Examining NWTTA member surveys from June 2018
3. Legalization of Cannabis and what this means for NWTTA members
4. Social Media attacks on teachers
5. Member Engagement
6. Member Wellness
7. Preparing for Negotiations in the spring of 2020.

I, along with Executive Director David Murphy, spent several weeks on the road hosting meetings, visiting schools and meeting with Superintendents. When all was done we had traveled a distance of over 5,200km, the same distance it would take a person to drive from Yellowknife to Baton Rouge, Louisiana. There was one region represented at our meetings for the first time: Commission Scolaire Francophone. In the past École Allain St. Cyr and École Boréal staff members have been placed into larger English regions like the Tlicho and South Slave. Now the two schools have banded together to form their own unique region.

These meeting are important for the NWTTA, as they are used to help give direction to Central Office staff and to Central Executive. Information/data from member surveys is used by Regional Executives, Central Executive and Executive Directors to develop actions to address our member concerns/issues.

A special thank you to all regional executives and LROs who volunteer to serve our membership. The work you do for our members is invaluable. See page 22 of this newsletter for photos from the meetings.

To all 820 educators in the NWTTA, thank you.

Fraser

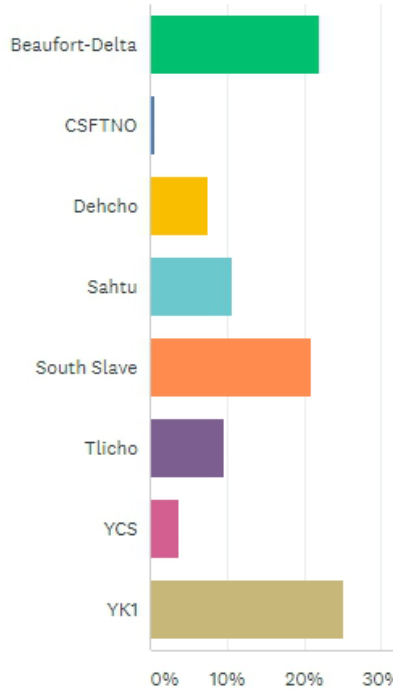


Who
Are We?

In October 2018 NWTTA members completed a short demographic survey to discover who we are. Who Are We results are spread throughout this newsletter.

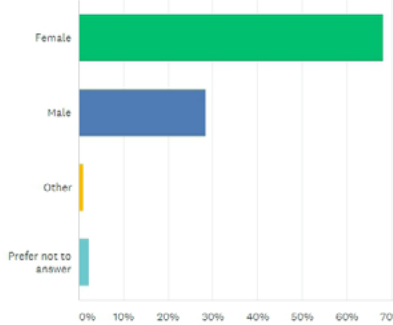
Response rate for the survey was about 23%, spread out by the below percentages by region:

Who is your employer?



What is your gender?

68% of respondents were female, consistent with our working estimate that 70% of our members are female.



President Fraser Oliver, Executive Director David Murphy and Professional Development Coordinator Christina Steen visited the Arctic Ocean while in Tuktoyaktuk as part of the Regional Orientation meetings in September.



School Profile



Photo credit: Sean Daly

School Staff

Back Row (left to right)

Evica Kennedy, Karen Faulkner, Jennifer Therrien - Yellowknife, NT, **Andrew Gilmour, Meghan Simms, Marilyn Moran** - Pine Point, NT, **Terri Snyder, Natalie Kelln, Jonelle Atagan-Okpalugo** - Calgary, AB, **Kim McKnight** - Oyster Bed Bridge, PE, **Betty Kennedy, Randy Caines** - Halifax, NS, **Maureen Hans** - Calgary, AB

Middle Row (left to right)

Sean Daly - Winnipeg, MB, **Heather Jelinski** - Prince Albert, SK, **Steve Elms** - Bay Roberts, NL, **Natalie Culbert** - Elliot Lake, ON, **Laura Eby, Christal Doherty** - Deline, NT, **Victoria Budgell** - St. John's, NL, **Jen Kravitz, Kristin Elliott** - Yellowknife, NT, **Raegan Delisle** - Toronto, ON, **Sharon Oldford** - Paradise, NL, **Helen Wong**

Front Row (left to right)

Monica Peters - Summerside, PE, **Shirley Zouboules** - Fort Smith, NT, **Casey Canning**

Not pictured

Christianne Bezanson - Keswick, ON, **Paula Campbell - Rogers, Becky Johnson** - Long Sault, ON, **Hayley Mercredi** - Saskatoon, SK, **Madison Phillips** - Yellowknife, NT, **Erin Zacharias** - Conception Bay South, NL

N.J. Macpherson School

Community: Yellowknife
Governed by: Yellowknife Education District No. 1
NWTTA Region: YK1
Grade Range: JK to 5
Student Population: 331
Staff: 30

N.J. Macpherson has lots to offer...

- Strong academic focus: literacy and numeracy
- Montessori program options
- Enhanced fine arts - drama, music and visual arts with a designated teacher
- Indigenous language and culture-based education (ILC): classroom integration and camp experiences
- Specialized physical education teacher and extra-curricular sports and clubs
- Athletic Excellence Academy for students in grades 4-5
- PBIS - *Positive Behavioural Interventions & Support* supports, celebrates and recognizes student success by identifying and acknowledging positive behaviour.

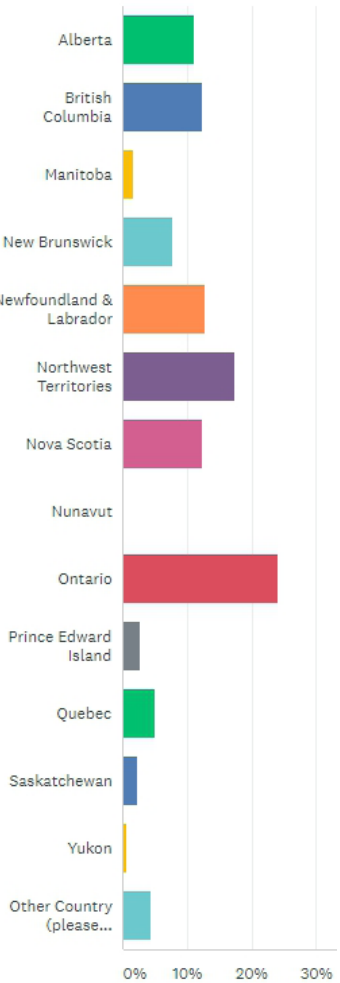
Who Are We?

In October 2018 NWTTA members completed a short demographic survey to discover who we are. Who Are We results are spread throughout this newsletter. Response rate was 23%.

Where did you grow up?

The Atlantic provinces (New Brunswick, Newfoundland & Labrador, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island) represent 34.2% of our membership. Members also grew up in:

- Barbados
- Bolivia
- Costa Rica
- Denmark
- Ethiopia
- Germany
- United States of America



Northern Lights

Meet Amanda Delaurier from Yellowknife (YCS region)



Q. Where did you grow up?
I grew up in Sudbury, Ontario.

Q. What made you decide to become a teacher?
I have always thought about teaching, but after I graduated I worked for the federal government. Eventually, I became restless, and ended up moving to Halifax and found a job traveling around the East Coast with the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation. Meeting new people every day and getting to share information with them reminded me that teaching was what I was should be doing.

Q. What do you teach?
I currently teach Grade 7 French Immersion, and am also a tech leader for my school. It is a pretty fun position to have, as I get to work with students from different classrooms. I like getting to know them outside of running around on the playground.

Q. What do you enjoy most about teaching?
My favourite thing would have to be getting students to enjoy learning. To be fair, I love a lot of things about teaching - building relationships, watching them understand something for the first time - but changing their minds about how they think about math is fun! Students sometimes arrive in September already worried about math, and let me know that they are not good at it/don't like it. I let everyone know immediately that it is my favourite subject, and that there is nothing to fear.

Q. How do you engage your students?
Creating relationships with my students has helped me a lot. Knowing what interests them and what they like to do for fun has helped me to create lessons that they might enjoy - even if only a little!

Appreciating How Special it is to be a Teacher
As teachers, we work really hard all year, creating lesson plans, marking work, writing report cards, coaching, taking part in Professional Development - the list goes on. We rarely have time to be in the moment, and to appreciate just how special it is to have our job. At our school, students graduate after Grade 7 and head to the high school. Our administration has started an amazing tradition of saying goodbye to them at the last bell. The entire school lines the staircase and hall out the front door and they clap as the Grade 7 students leave. I have yet to witness it, however. I get too emotional watching these kids (MY kids!) leave the school for the last time.

Together We Can Grow Our Languages

Ełets'áhthídl T'áh Nahe Zhatie Nezheh Gha

South Slavey

Photo: T.Macintosh

What teachers should know about South Slavey

South Slavey, which is part of the Dene-Athabaskan linguistic language family, is recognized as an official language of the Northwest Territories (NWT) and is also spoken in Yukon, British Columbia, and Alberta. Speakers may refer to South Slavey itself, or one of its dialects/sub-dialects, as Dene Zhatié, Dehcho Dene Zhatié, Łı́ndlı Kų́ę Dene Zhatié, Deh Gáh Got'ıę, Echaot'ı Kų́ę Dene Zhatié, Kat'odeeche Dene Zhatié, or other names.

According to the 2014 NWT Community Survey, there are a total of 1443 territorial resident speakers of South Slavey aged 15 years and over living in the following communities:

| Community | Number of NWT South Slavey speakers (15 years & over) | Proportion of all NWT South Slavey speakers (15 years & over) |
|---|---|---|
| Northwest Territories | 1443 | 100.0% |
| Fort Simpson | 331 | 22.9% |
| Fort Providence | 301 | 20.9% |
| Fort Liard | 229 | 15.9% |
| Hay River Reserve | 106 | 7.3% |
| Wrigley | 92 | 6.4% |
| Hay River | 73 | 5.1% |
| Sambaa K'e | 60 | 4.2% |
| Nahanni Butte | 56 | 3.9% |
| Yellowknife/Ndilo | 56 | 3.9% |
| Jean Marie River | 45 | 3.1% |
| Kakisa | 30 | 2.1% |
| Norman Wells | 12 | 0.8% |
| Other communities* | 52** | 3.6% |
| * Behchoko, Colville Lake, Déline, Dettah, Enterprise, Fort Good Hope, Fort Resolution, Łutsel'K'e, Tsiigehtchic, Tulita, Whati | | |
| ** Low number of respondents | | |

Did you know there are 11 Official Languages in the NWT? Learn more at www.ece.gov.nt.ca and stay tuned for the next newsletter for another NWT official languages feature!



For more information visit: www.ece.gov.nt.ca or email: aboriginallanguages@gov.nt.ca

Government of
Northwest Territories



Aboriginal Sports Circle NWTTA Award 2018

Congratulations to **Kelly Webster** from Hay River (South Slave region) who on Thursday, November 15, 2018 was presented with the Aboriginal Sports Circle NWTTA Award for 2018.

Kelly moved with her family to the NWT in 1969 and has been working as a teacher for 35 years. She grew up heavily involved in sport and represented Team NWT in volleyball at the 1979 Canada Games and 1980 Arctic Winter Games. Kelly was the President of the NWT Soccer Association and of the NWT Track and Field Association, and has also served on the Sport North Board as the Vice President of Programs and the Vice President of Games.

Kelly has been involved in many different sports and roles over the years, and played a pivotal role in organizing the outdoor soccer tournament in Hay River (which now has over 46 teams that attend). She also played a role in the creation of what is now known as the Scott McAdam Badminton Tournament.

Kelly taught in Inuvik for 18 years, and based her lessons around activities the youth were interested in participating. She taught everything from gymnastics to slopitch, and hosted many open gyms for the kids on weekends. She believes that getting out on the land is important and has spent many hours with youth building igloos, on canoe trips, and helping to facilitate opportunities for her students to spend time with Elders while out on the land.

Since moving to Hay River in 2002, she has played a major role in coach recruitment and coordinating extracurricular activities, as well as coordinating gym times for community groups. Kelly has played an immense role in the communities that she taught in and continues to value active participation in sport and recreation.



Northern Lights

Meet
Lea Lamoureux
from Dettah (YK1 region)



Q. Where did you grow up?

Dartmouth, Nova Scotia

Q. What made you decide to become a teacher?

I always wanted to be a teacher. I loved everything about school, even though it was hard for me. I wanted to have a meaningful career and have the chance to support and help children, like some of my teachers did for me.

Q. What do you teach?

I'm a teaching principal, so I get to teach all kinds of groups, mostly related to English Language Arts.

Q. What do you enjoy most about teaching?

The energy! Teaching is an exciting and energy inducing career choice. It's fast paced, and you never know what a new day will bring. I love working in our community school; and the opportunity that this gives us to work with many families and to support the whole-child. It's an exciting time in education, and I'm lucky to be part of an outstanding team.

Q. How do you engage your students?

Building relationships is key for me. Creating a climate of high expectations, safety, and fun are important. The most important thing to me is that our students know and feel that the school belongs to them, and that we are there to support them in their education and lives.

I Love Knowing Generations of Families

This is my eleventh year in Dettah and 15th in community schools across the NWT, and I still love going to work everyday. I love knowing generations of families, and watching the children grow up. It's a special honour and responsibility to be trusted enough to get to do that.

Working for Our Members A Glimpse of What We Do

David Murphy, Executive Director

Many members call us at Central Office for assistance and we try to be very prompt in answering their concerns. Recently, members have contacted us to seek assistance with their removal allowance, pension inquiries, health and dental benefits, collective agreement interpretation, registrar concerns, social media posts, interactions with students, EI Records of Employment, discipline, Human Rights and WSCC return to work. Remember, we are here to serve you, our members. Please let us know if there is anything we can do to assist you.

One of the members' concerns we have been spending a lot of time on this year is **pay and benefits**. In one region we were contacted by over one-third of the teachers who reported discrepancies with their pay and asked us to assist them. Teachers were experiencing incorrect experience increment placement, principal allowances, untimely salary assessment from the Registrar for correct placement on the salary grid especially for new teachers and in some incidences several teachers were missing pay cheques or had not received any pay at all. In most cases we were able to work with the government department involved to find a resolution.

Another concern which mainly affects the GNWT teachers is **Medical Travel** where the teacher has to leave their community to go to another community to avail of medical services. We have been contacted numerous times by members seeking assistance and to notify us of concerns they have encountered.

For example, one teacher knew that he was approved for medical travel to see a specialist doctor but did not have a confirmed appointment. While he was teaching his class, a taxi came to the school to take him to his appointment. He had not received prior notice of this and, as he had to go to his appointment, it caused much disruption at the school.

Another teacher had a confirmed appointment in Edmonton to see a specialist doctor in the morning. The teacher was booked to travel to Edmonton in the morning of the same day and the flight would arrive in Edmonton after the scheduled appointment. While the teachers involved in these two examples eventually did get to their appointments, they did feel

stressed as a result of the arrangements.

YCS Wage Re-opener

During the last round of negotiations, Yellowknife Catholic Schools (YCS) and the Northwest Territories Teachers' Association (NWTTA) agreed to a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in which the Employer and the Association agreed to meet for the purpose of re-opening the wage schedule. The wage re-opener is limited to bargaining for an increase of wages in excess of the 1% already agreed to in the collective agreement. Should the parties reach an impasse on a salary increase the issue would be addressed by the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (FMCS) in the form of a recommendation which would be final and binding on both parties.

Both parties could not reach an agreement on the salary and agreed to have the FMCS meet with them to consider a wage increase in the last two years of the collective agreement.

The FMCS mediator met with both parties on October 24, 2018 to assist in the resolution of the outstanding issues related to the wage re-opener. Unfortunately, the parties were unable to agree on a resolution resulting in an impasse despite making considerable effort to achieve a satisfactory settlement. The FMCS mediator's recommendation was that Yellowknife Catholic Schools provide a lump sum payment of seven hundred and fifty dollars (\$750.00) to employees in December 2018 and again in December 2019. The lump sum payments would be pro-rated on Full Time Employee (FTE) status at time of payment.

Teacher Autonomy

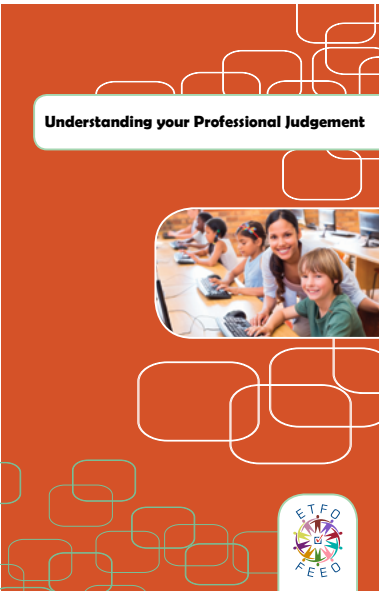
When I attended the Canadian Teachers' Federation National Staff Meeting last year I had the opportunity to participate in a presentation by the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO) focusing on teacher professional judgment. ETFO had been advocating for the recognition of teacher professional judgment especially in the areas of assessment and reporting. ETFO believes it is important for their members to understand what professional judgment means, when it may be exercised and what steps to take if they believe their ability to use professional judgment is being curtailed.

ETFO produced a parent pamphlet, "[Teacher Professional Judgment Matters](#)", in which it explains to parents that teachers using their professional judgment contributes to building better schools. Another ETFO document, "[Understanding your Professional Judgment](#)", is designed to assist teachers understand that professional judgment is an important concept for educators and that it is a right that comes with responsibility.

A document on the British Columbia Teachers' Federation (BCTF) website states that "the professional autonomy of teachers to exercise their judgment and act on it is an important source of strength in a public education system, and as such, should be valued by the broader society as well as by members of the profession. Much of our job satisfaction in teaching comes from exercising our professional judgment in order to meet the diverse needs of our students."

Teachers in the Northwest Territories are beginning to tell us that they sometimes feel they have less creativity and autonomy in their classrooms. Some of these teachers are feeling that not only are they told what to teach, in addition to the prescribed curriculum, but are also being told "how to teach". Some of these "how to teach" directives are often considered best practices from other jurisdictions and may at times conflict with the way teachers would like to teach.

Some teachers feel that their ability to use discretion in carrying out their professional responsibilities to diagnose learner needs and determining appropriate methods of instruction to meet those needs is being eroded. Looking ahead, I believe this is an area that our association may wish to explore.



Northern Lights

Meet Andrew Shedden

from Fort Smith (Fort Smith region)



Q. Where did you grow up?

I grew up in Peterborough, Ontario.

Q. What made you decide to become a teacher?

I had worked as a camp counselor, guitar instructor and an arts specialist before I decided to go to teacher's college. These jobs made me realize that I really wanted to work with youth for my career.

Q. What do you teach?

I teach Grade 9 homeroom at Paul W. Kaeser High School (PWK). This term I am teaching Science, English, Health and Gym, and next term I switch Science for Social Studies.

Q. What do you enjoy most about teaching?

Definitely the students! I also enjoy being able to continuously develop as an educator. This is my fifth year working as a teacher and I feel that every year I'm improving the quality of education I'm able to provide my students.

Q. How do you engage your students?

I try to make sure that my expectations in class are very clear. Whenever possible, I work with my students to co-create rubrics and success criteria in order to involve the students in the assessment process. I encourage curiosity and critical thinking in my classroom.

Having an Impact on My Students

I was really lucky to have several exceptional teachers when I was a student. Their influence and impact helped shape the person I am today. I hope that I'm able to have a similar impact on my students.

Violence Is On the Rise in Schools Across Canada

Fraser Oliver, President

Violence is on the rise in schools across Canada according to the Canadian Teachers' Federation. Many provincial teacher organizations have surveyed their members to collect data on the level of violence teachers are experiencing. Violence in the school is any incident that involve verbal harassment and swearing to physical threats and even physical assaults. Primary teachers often report more violent incidents than other teachers, while high school male teachers are the victims of more physical assaults that other teacher groups.

If you have experienced a violent incident while an educator at your school or in the community, please inform your supervisor (Principal) right away and then fill in an incident report on the NWTTA website. See image of website for where Report an Incident Online button can



be found.

It is also believed that there is a fair amount of under reporting of violent incidents, Educators are often very busy in the course of the day and filling in a form is low on the list of things to do. Some teachers have reported that they did not complete an incident form as to not get the student in trouble and others claimed that they did not report incidents as they did not want to be seen as not having control of the classroom.

Early in 2019, your NWTTA Central Office will be surveying the membership to collect data on the overall level of violence in our schools and the types of violence our teachers are experiencing. Please take the time to complete the survey as the data collected will be used by Central Office and Central Executive to make positive changes, and hopefully one day eliminate violence towards educators.

Conference Corner Upcoming Professional Development Conferences to Consider



Crosscurrents Conference 2019
BC Teachers of Inclusive Education
Richmond, BC
February 21-22, 2019
<http://www.tiebc.com/crosscurrents>



Reading for the Love of It 2019
43rd Annual Language Arts Conference
Toronto, ON
February 21-22, 2019
<http://readingfortheLoveofIt.com>



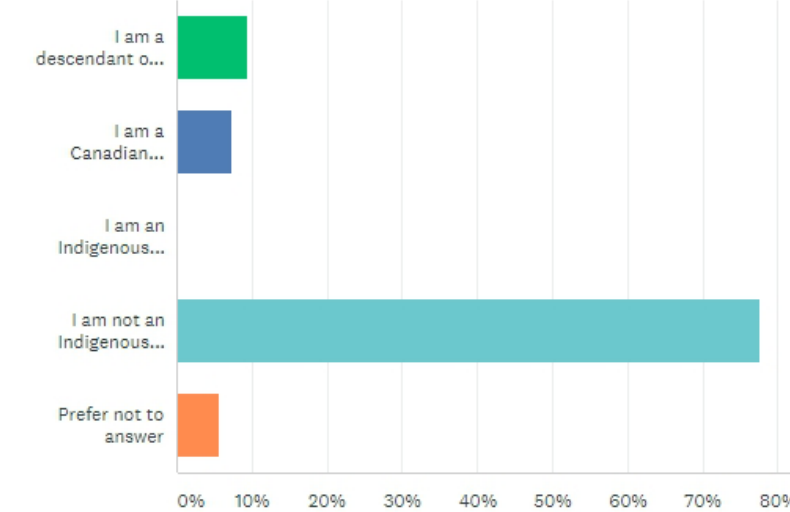
Authentic Equity: Moving Beyond Celebrating Diversity
Manitoba Teachers' Society
Winnipeg, MB
March 11-12, 2019
http://www.mbteach.org/pdfs/pd/PD_2018-19_Workshops.pdf

Who Are We?

In October 2018 NWTTA members completed a short demographic survey to discover who we are. Who Are We results are spread throughout this newsletter. Response rate was 23%.

Are you an Indigenous person?

9.5% of our membership are a descendant of the Dene, Inuit or Metis people, Indigenous to the present boundaries of the Northwest Territories. 7.26% are Canadian Indigenous persons not included in the above for a total of 16.76% of our members being Indigenous.

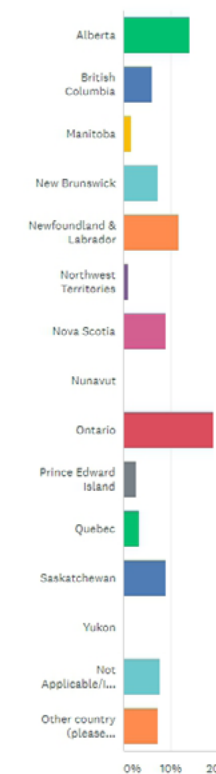


Where did you get your Bachelor of Education?

The Atlantic provinces make up 30.72% of our members' Bachelor of Education locations with Ontario representing 18.99%, Alberta 13.97%, Saskatchewan 8.94%, British Columbia 6.15%, Quebec 3.35%, Manitoba 1.68% and Northwest Territories 1.12%. 7.82% do not have a Bachelor of Education.

7.26% of respondents received their Bachelor of Education from outside of Canada, from:

- Ethiopia
- United States of America
- Wales



Northern Lights

Meet Lily Kelly
from Deline (Sahtu region)



Q. Where did you grow up?
I was born and raised in Fort Good Hope.

Q. What made you decide to become a teacher?
When I was in primary grade, I had an awesome teacher who was young. She made learning fun and easy especially for others that were struggling. Because I caught on quite quickly, I became one of her helpers in her multi grade class.

Q. What do you teach?
I am currently delivering the Literacy Intervention program which is great, as I love the small group reading sessions with students ranging from Grade One to Grade Seven.

Q. What do you enjoy most about teaching?
I love how so many little surprises can arise during our little discussion in relation to the readings. In addition to this, there are the Aha moments that brighten my day.

Q. How do you engage your students?
By being interested in what they do and what they would love to do. Having a good rapport with them produces a great outcome.

He Helped Me with the Local Language
When I first taught Junior High, I had a great group of students. One student left after that year to attend High School in British Columbia. Each summer afterwards, he came back to visit and tell me that he always used some of the strategies I used in class and had always earned Top Honor Roll. He ended up living in Vancouver, but came to visit after 14 years. He was one awesome student because he was one who helped me with the local language, as I was not quite fluent and had to learn a new dialect. He was not from Deline.

GNWT Professional Development Opportunity Education Leave

Christina Steen, Professional Development Coordinator

One of the exciting professional development benefits available to NWTTA members under the GNWT contract is Education Leave. There are two types of education leaves that members may apply for under the GNWT contract - Education Leave with Allowances and Education Leave without Allowances. These leaves allow members to participate in full time studies at or through a recognized institution for a period of one academic year.

Below are further details about eligibility, allowances, applications and repayment of service requirements for those provided Education Leave.

To be considered for Education Leave, applicants must:

- Be an NWTTA member under the GNWT Collective Agreement in good standing with a minimum of four years of continuous service within the NWT
- Have completed four or more years of consecutive employment with the GNWT NWTTA after returning from a previous Education Leave

Education Leave With Allowances (LWA)

On Campus Study

- Where a member chooses to study on campus, the member shall receive an allowance of 60% of their base salary to a maximum of \$74,057
- Up to \$12,000 for tuition and lab fees (books, student fees and other course materials are not eligible for reimbursement)
- Travel and removal expenses to and from the location of the educational institution and their place of employment. These amounts can be found on [page 16 of the Central Professional Development Handbook](#).
- A guarantee to be returned to the former position or such other mutually agreed upon position at the salary not less than that received before leave was taken

Distance/Online Study

- Where a member chooses to study via distance and remain within the geographic jurisdiction of the NWT, the member shall receive an allowance of 75% of their base salary to a maximum of \$93,134
- Up to \$12,000 for tuition and lab fees (books,

student fees and other course materials are not eligible for reimbursement)

- A guarantee to be returned to the former position or such other mutually agreed upon position at the salary not less than that received before leave was taken
- Note: if the member chooses to study via distance they are not eligible for travel or removal expenses

Education Leave Without Allowances (LWOA)

- Up to \$12,000 for tuition and lab fees (books, student fees and other course materials are not eligible for reimbursement)
- Travel and removal expenses to and from the location of the educational institution and their place of employment. These amounts can be found on [page 16 of the Central Professional Development Handbook](#).
- A guarantee to be returned to the former position or such other mutually agreed upon position at the salary not less than that received before leave was taken

Repayment of Service

Members provided Education Leave with Allowances will be obligated to return to employment with the bargaining unit for two years in a GNWT NWTTA position.

Members provided Education Leave without Allowances will be obligated to return to employment with the bargaining unit for one year in a GNWT NWTTA position.

Applications must include:

- Cover letter
- Three written references
- Proof of application or acceptance to chosen program
- Complete Application for Education Leave (LWA or LWOA)

Completed application packages for Education Leaves are due to the NWTTA Professional Development Coordinator by March 1, 2019 at 5pm. Applications can be sent to pd@nwtta.nt.ca or by fax to 867-873-2366.

For more information, consult the NWTTA [Central Professional Development Handbook](#) available on our website under Professional Development or contact Christina Steen at christina.steen@nwtta.nt.ca or 867-873-5759.

Food First Foundation Supporting Nutrition Education in the NWT

Tess Ondrack, Coordinator, Food First Foundation



A student participates in École St. Joseph School's Great Big Crunch event

Food First is a registered charity whose mission is to support nutrition education programs in schools with the goal of encouraging a healthy population of children and youth for future generations.

Recent data indicates that 29% of NWT children live in food-insecure households; the second highest of any province/territory in Canada. Many of these households include children: children who are going to school hungry, children who are going to school undernourished.

Not only is it a matter of quantity of food, but also quality. Studies indicate that nearly 70% of Northern students do not consume enough fruits and vegetables for optimal health. As well, many do not reach the daily dairy servings recommended by the Canada Food Guide, putting them at risk for cancer, diabetes, osteoporosis, and other chronic diseases.

Inadequate nourishment leads to poor concentration, classroom behavioural issues, higher absenteeism, low self-esteem, and reduced scholastic success. Healthy food provides the nutrients children need to be attentive and enthusiastic in school, increasing their ability to concentrate, learn, and develop into outstanding adults.

Education is our primary focus as an organization. "Give a person a fish and you feed them for a day, teach a person to fish and you feed them for a lifetime" is our core philosophy. In the NWT we operate Tastemakers, a cooking program which complements the existing curriculum, and teaches students practical kitchen skills.

Food First also supports snack and breakfast programs in schools and have purchased indoor gardens for many schools in the NWT. As well, for the past few years, Food First has provided funding for schools to participate in the Great Big Crunch, an event intended to promote

healthy snacking and enhance student understanding of where their food comes from.

We distribute the majority of our funding in the fall of every school year; at which time all principals in the NWT receive an email from our Coordinator. The application process and reporting requirements are simple: a reply to the email to apply and a one-page report at the end of the school year with photos. We know how much time and energy teachers and administrators dedicate to their school food programs, and we strive to make things as easy and as flexible as possible.

For more information, please visit www.foodfirst.ca, or email us at coordinator@foodfirst.ca.



Students at Kakisa Territorial School prepare a tasty snack!



In lieu of sending Christmas cards, the NWTTA has made a \$500 donation to the Food First Foundation (Tess Ondrack, Coordinator of Food First Foundation pictured with NWTTA President Fraser Oliver).

Wellness Initiatives

What you need to know...



Messaging for Students:

- Even though cannabis is now legal in Canada, it will still be illegal for children and youth under the age of 19 years.
- It is the law – you can't have, use, sell or buy cigarettes, cannabis or alcohol on school property.
- Your brain will not fully develop until you are around 25 years old! Using cannabis can change how your brain works and your brain controls everything.
- Using cannabis can harm your ability to think, make decisions, and pay attention as well as slowing your reaction time. This can affect how you perform in sports and in school.
- The effects of cannabis can last for more than 24 hours after use.
- Starting to use cannabis as a teenager, and using it daily and over a long time, makes you more likely to become addicted and can harm your mental health.
- People with mental health issues or who have others in their family who have a mental illness, need to be extra careful with cannabis use, as it can trigger a mental health crisis.
- To find out more, visit: kidshelpphone.ca/get-info/cannabis-important-things-know/ or to talk to a counselor call the Kids Help Phone at 1-800-668-6868. It is free, anonymous and is available all the time, every day.

Government of
Northwest Territories



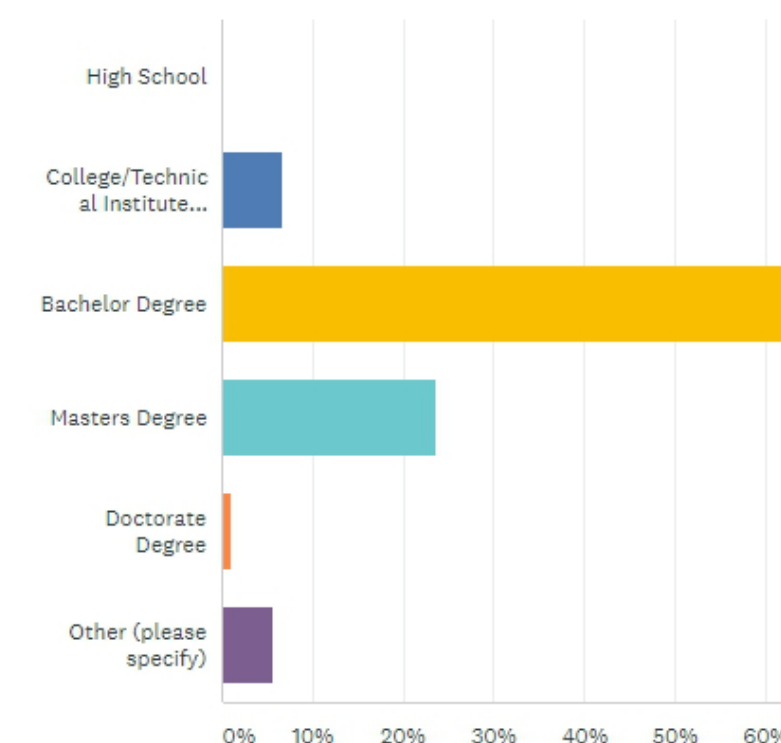
Who Are We?

In October 2018 NWTTA members completed a short demographic survey to discover who we are. Who Are We results are spread through this newsletter. Response rate was 23%.

What is your highest level of education completed?

24.72% of members have a Masters or Doctorate Degree.

Four members responded that they have TWO Bachelors Degrees. One member responded that they are a Registered Psychologist.



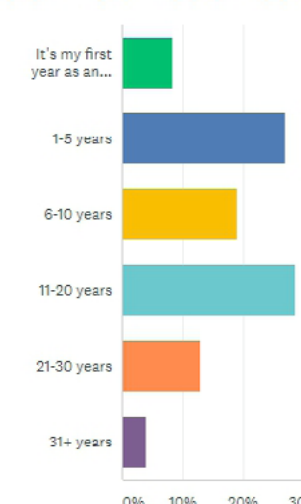
How long have you been an educator in the Northwest Territories?

8.43% of respondents are in their first year as an educator in the NWT.

26.97% for one to five years.

19.1% for six to ten years.

45.5% have been educating in the NWT for more than ten years.



Northern Lights

Meet
Jessica Appleton
from Gameti (Tlicho region)



Q. Where did you grow up?
I grew up in Mississauga, Ontario.

Q. What made you decide to become a teacher?
I always knew I wanted to work with children. I love seeing how children learn in different ways. Being the oldest child in my family, I always observed this in my younger sisters. When I was considering possible career choices, teaching seemed like a natural fit. It has allowed me to observe how students learn and come to their own understandings on a daily basis.

Q. What do you teach?
I teach grades 4 to 6 in a multi-grade classroom in Gameti.

Q. What do you enjoy most about teaching?
It's hard to pick just one thing that I enjoy most about teaching. Simply put, I love everything about teaching. I love talking with my colleagues, and learning how to create the best learning environment for my students. I enjoy growing as a professional. I also love coming to the school each day and interacting with the students and seeing the wonderful smiles on their faces.

Q. How do you engage your students?
I engage my students by getting to know them and using personal examples that relate to their lives when explaining concepts. The students are more likely to remember that concept when I mention their name in an example. It also shows that I am noticing them and am paying attention to their life outside of school. I like to see them smile when they see I have noticed them.

The Reason Why I Love Teaching
In my first few years, I received a plaque that says, "A teacher touches the future many times and in many ways." This is a daily reminder to me about the reason why I love teaching.

Meeting Chief Frank T'Seleie Connecting to History

Gwen MacNeil, Grade 8-9 Teacher, Chief T'Selhye School
(Sahtu region)

When I moved to Fort Good Hope, one of my first items of my check-list was to meet former Chief Frank T'Seleie and thank him for all that he had done for the community. I ended up talking to some local staff at the school, and they worked their magic and asked Chief T'Seleie to come in and speak to my class. Before I describe the learning that went on for two hours this October, let me provide a preamble expressing Chief T'Seleie's importance here in Good Hope (and what led me to discover such a historical gold mine).

My mother worked across Northern Canada most of her life. Lucky for me, I grew up hearing about her adventures and the amazing people she met. I ended up following in her footsteps, writing my Masters thesis on The Berger Inquiry of 1975. Once I graduated from Teachers College, I found my way up to Fort Good Hope, which was a hub for the Inquiry, with hundreds of people turning out to speak about why a pipeline through the Mackenzie Valley would harm the environment, the people, and degrade the cultural practices along the valley. Chief Frank T'Seleie, the Chief of Good Hope at the time of the inquiry, provided a testimony which rocked the entire foundation of the pipeline stakeholders. His words and his candor during the interview are electric, as Chief T'Seleie challenges the lawyers standing in for the pipeline companies.

"Mr. Berger, there will be no pipeline. There will be no pipeline because we have our plans for our land. There will be no pipeline because we no longer intend to allow our land and our future to be taken away from us so that we are destroyed to make someone else rich [...] We want to live our own way on our own land and not be invaded by outsiders coming to take our resources."

Frank T'Seleie, along with other Dene leaders, would change the way the government proceeded with Indigenous communities regarding resource extraction. It was the first time any Indigenous community would be allowed to speak up about their land in the face of southern 'invasion'. Fortunately, it was not the last.

I worked with my students for a week before Chief Frank T'Seleie arrived in our classroom. Surprisingly, none of my students knew who he was, and assumed our school (Chief T'Selhye) was named after him. They were close - it was his grandfather - but a wild discovery nonetheless. The

more I teach my students about Dene history, the more I recognize that somewhere along the lines, students have stopped listening about what makes the Dene Nation...a nation. Their history, which I am blessed to be able to share with them, is rich and Fort Good Hope has been at the centre of significant political achievements for decades.

Students annotated his speech. We looked at the main ideas and the supporting points. We then moved into asking questions, or talking to the text. Students came up with excellent questions within a week, beginning with asking questions like "why does a pipeline even matter" to wanting to know why southern Canadians often find their way up here when it is important only for the economy. Their growth, and their enlightenment on Dene history, continues to inspire me as I teach. They formulated plenty of questions for Chief T'Seleie in preparation for his arrival, based on his speech and in hopes to understand the importance of his speech and the inquiry today.



Chief Frank T'Seleie speaks to the class

We pushed the desks back and sat in a semi circle round Chief T'Seleie who sat at the front. For two hours, the students sat silent and in awe. It is not lost that oral storytelling is strong in the Indigenous traditions.

The students respond extremely well to having someone teach them by being animated and learning through conversation. This encouraged me, following his speech, to continue teaching Social Studies in a way that the students understood best - really taking the 'story' out of history.

Chief T'Seleie spoke about his life growing up in Good Hope, before modern amenities. He talked about traditional hunting and trapping, and sources of income. Many of the students were surprised at how different life was in the 1970s, of course, and it seemed to me that many began to piece together how fortunate they are to be able to be active in a more technological society. Chief T'Seleie explained he was only 25 and had to speak in front of government officials and speak on behalf of the entire community, and while that made him nervous, he knew he had to do it. The students, afterwards, began to make connections between how they are also young and the importance of their voice. In fact, this has led into my class wanting to create a student council to work with the land claims office here.

I could go on for several more pages about the atmosphere and the learning experience Chief T'Seleie brought us. I have it recorded, and I've watched it a few times since -

piecing out ways he has phrased things to the students in hopes that I can rephrase the way I speak to them too. This article, however, is intended to explain the importance of bringing in elders to the classroom. It is not lost on me that I have been taught in a Western way. The beliefs and values I learned in Ontario certainly apply here sometimes, however, rote education, while it has its place, is less effective in my classroom. I believe it is important to centre my topics in a way for the students to discover their own histories, and the issues that are ongoing and new. Inviting an elder in, who truly did change Good Hope and the history of the Mackenzie Valley, gave students an excellent example to understand primary sources and realize that they are the keepers of their own history.

Finding a personal connection to teach out of helps students improve their learning. With Chief T'Seleie coming in, students were able to see themselves in the learning process. The students saw the importance of understanding their culture, and why their histories are Social Studies. Teaching students about other cultures, historically, is great and promotes a global mindset. Teaching students how to honour their own culture and find their place in the world, however, allows them to see their importance and how they contribute to a global culture.

Students being placed in a circle, helped organize the room into a place for narratives and storytelling. Indigenous communities often use talking circles as a place to share traditions and histories. Placing students in their own and comfortable method of learning made their participation genuine and authentic, for them. Having students question Chief Frank T'Seleie allowed students to participate in their own education, decision making, and created an environment for reciprocal learning. Their questions backpacked off of each other, and the more Chief T'Seleie spoke, the more questions students had.

Moreover, inviting in an Elder allowed for students to experience Social Studies through experiential learning.



Gwen MacNeil's students with Chief Frank T'Seleie

the importance of group work for community building, and creating social relationships and the beauty in depending on each other to fulfill responsibilities. Having Chief Frank T'Seleie in for the first time has encouraged me to invite more elders in, and local community members, so that my students' education is well-rounded and applicable to them. Our community is a resource in itself, and it helps my students contextualize their learning and find meaning in the things we do together every day.

Having an elder come in has been a learning experience for my students, and for me. It has created a community and a stronger relationship within the classroom. My students are learning so much about their culture, and more and more I hear them talking about Dene traditions. For me, I'm learning about how I can apply their culture in the classroom and honour the land, the place, and the language I am surrounded by daily.

Fort Good Hope, before I ever stepped foot into this community, helped shape my adult life. Being able to give back, and learn alongside my students has been an experience I cannot place into words. It is an honour to be able to grow with my students every day, and I cannot encourage educators enough to bring in local community members to speak to their class. For a group of pre-teens and young teenagers to sit still, silent, and respect someone so important is truly a sight to behold. It really puts into perspective the purpose behind the Dene Law "Elders must pass down their traditional knowledge". The day Chief T'Seleie walked in the room, he passed down his knowledge and my students are picking it up and using it every day.

Instead of reading a speech or having students write notes on a pipeline and the importance of their land, students were able to engage living history and see themselves through the eyes of a leader who changed their own histories.

I try my best to Indigenize my students learning. I've continued with sharing circles for some of our classes - English, and even Math! I also have learned

Indigenous Languages & Education

Indigenous Languages & Education Handbook

The draft NWT JK-12 Indigenous Languages & Education Handbook: Our People, Our Land, Our Ways, Our Languages is a user friendly teachers' guide to help educators to operationalize the new ILE Policy (formerly Aboriginal Languages and Culture Based Education Directive) for Indigenous languages and education programming in the NWT. The Handbook will remain in draft for the 2018/19 school year, to receive ongoing feedback and input from NWT educators, as they use the Handbook in their classrooms, schools, and communities.

The Handbook provides definitions, research, and promising practices in each of the three areas, creating a Welcoming Environment, Indigenizing Education and Indigenous Language Instruction. The Handbook further explains what educators need to know, and practical steps of what schools can do to create a welcoming environment to Indigenize Education, and to offer Indigenous language instruction.

For those interested, there are Handbook Webinars for all school staff interested in learning more about the ILE policy implementation and Handbook workshops that includes the creation of measurable goals and specific action items for schools to achieve the goals of the overall action plan.

For more information, please contact Rachel Thorne, Indigenous Languages and Education Coordinator at 867-767-9346 Ext. 71043. Mahsi

Students in Fort Resolution take part in a real-time Northern Distance Learning (NDL) lesson.
Photo: B. Braden

NEW TRAVELLING EXHIBIT Special Constables in the NWT

Special Constables were Indigenous people hired to help the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) in remote regions.

Each kit contains:

- Exhibit panels highlight how Special Constables assisted the RCMP (English and French)
- Activity cards, props and puzzle pieces (English, French and Indigenous languages)
- Photo albums profile local Special Constables

Interested in learning how to access a Special Constables travelling exhibit specific to your area?

Please email: RCMP.GCommunityPolicing-GPolicecommunautaire.GRC@rcmp-grc.gc.ca



Suitable for grade 3 and up.
Material is relevant to grade 4 and 5 curriculum including ELA



Royal Canadian Mounted Police
Gendarmerie royale du Canada

Funded by the Government of Canada

Financé par le gouvernement du Canada

Canada

Mackenzie Mountain in Action



Mackenzie Mountain School (Sahtu region) celebrated its Fourth Annual Pride Parade/Walk



Above: Trent Waterhouse (left) and Michael Duclos (right) serve up hot breakfast on "Hot Fridays"

Below: Principal Michael Duclos presents Oakley Duclos with a Grizzly Award of the Month (Oliver Duclos in the background is not happy his older brother won and he didn't)



Northern Lights

Meet Harry Mac Neil

from Fort Good Hope (Sahtu region)



Q. Where did you grow up?

I grew up in a small community called East Bay, Cape Breton, on the Bras'dor Lakes.

Q. What made you decide to become a teacher?

I had some pretty amazing teachers as role models growing up and it seemed like a natural thing to do at the time. I was encouraged to take part in different youth travel programs and this also had an impact on my decision.

Q. What do you teach?

I am the Program Support Teacher and teaching CALM 20 at Chief T'Selehye School, Fort Good Hope and have taught many students over the past 45.5 years, mainly at the junior high level.

Q. What do you enjoy most about teaching?

Teaching gives me the opportunity to interact with students, to listen to them, to guide them, to challenge them to be the best they can be. The 'why I do what I do' is because of the personal satisfaction I get when I know I have made a difference and tried my best.

Q. How do you engage your students?

I try to make each and every student feel important, to feel good about themselves. I really try to listen to them. Students need to know they can become capable people. Reaching out to them in a meaningful way is a high priority of mine. I truly value all the lessons I have learned from students over the years.

You Listened to me, Thank You

On my second last day, in Natuatish, Labrador, one of my most difficult grade 9 students gave me an Arctic Char. It was his way of saying, "thanks". Years after I finished teaching in Nova Scotia when I was getting my hair cut the stylist said; "when I was in grade 9, you listened to me, thank-you".

These two incidents show the tremendous impact we as teachers have on the lives of our students. I treasure every day I have spent in public education.



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

CYBERBULLYING

Cyberbullying is the use of information and communication technologies to bully, embarrass, threaten or harass another person. It also includes the use of these technologies to engage in conduct or behaviour that is derogatory, defamatory, degrading, illegal or abusive.

Despite all precautions, if you or one of your students become targeted by cyberbullying:

- Make copies of all questionable messages, web postings, information and other related material and data, including the URL.
- Demand that the sender stop transmitting or posting the material and state that the conduct is unacceptable and inappropriate; do not further engage the person who is targeting you as this may escalate the situation.
- Advise the administration of your school if the situation requires immediate action and/or the inappropriate communication continues.
- Access appropriate support and guidance through the school board or district cyberconduct policy or manual.
- Request that the administration contact the parents of the student who is cyberbullying you or one of your students.
- Inform and involve your school based occupational health and safety committee.
- Contact your teacher organization if the actions taken to address the inappropriate communication are ineffective or if you need further support or advice.

At least two forms of cyberbullying are considered criminal acts—communicating repeatedly with someone if the communication causes a person to fear for his or her health and safety; and publishing defamatory libel—something that is designed to insult a person or likely to hurt a person's reputation by exposing him or her to hatred, contempt or ridicule. Spreading hate or discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, family status or disability may be a violation of the Canadian Human Rights Act and/or provincial or territorial human rights legislation.

CLASSROOM RESOURCES

www.media-awareness.ca

*Excerpt from Canadian Teachers' Federation's **CyberTips for Teachers** brochure used with permission. English and Français brochures are available online at nwttta.nt.ca and from NWTTA Central Office.*

Catching Up Members' Life Events

Send your **Catching Up** life events for future newsletters to news@nwttta.nt.ca

Congratulations to **Sierra Daley** from Chief Julius School in Fort McPherson (Beaufort-Delta region) on the birth of **Calum Luke Daley**, born October 21, 2018 at 8:30 pm weighing 7lbs 2oz. Sierra and Calum are settling in well at home.



Happy birthday Calum Luke Daley



Bompas School Cultural Orientation

On August 30-31, 2018, staff from Bompas School in Fort Simpson (Dehcho region) participated in cultural orientation days. The staff went on a boat tour learning about significant places along the river, enjoying some fishing, traditional food and lunch cooked over an open fire. Thank you Kelley Andrews-Klein for the photos!



Regional Orientation Meetings

Beaufort-Delta
CSFTNO
Dehcho
Sahtu

South Slave
Tlicho
YK1
YCS

Photo missing:
Fort Smith



Northern Lights

Meet Brenda Guest from Lutselk'e (South Slave region)



Q. Where did you grow up?
I spent my childhood in Kitimat, and Squamish BC and moved to Ridgetown, Ontario for middle school and high school. My brother and I were the first in our family to graduate high school and graduated the same day as my mother.

Q. What made you decide to become a teacher?
I was inspired to become a teacher by my second grade teacher Miss. Koyanagi, who transformed a reluctant reader, who struggled with basal texts, to a novel reader in one very intense year. She also published my first poem, "I like the rain." Her relentlessly high expectations and tenacity helped make her a successful teacher and I hope I have a similar effect on my students.

Q. What do you teach?
I have been teaching for just under 18 years. During that time I spent four years in South Korea teaching ESL, four years in Egypt and almost ten years in various communities across Canada. Until this week I was the Literacy Coach at Lutsel k'e Dene School, but I will now be back in the classroom full time teaching a grade 3-6 class for the rest of the year. I'm excited to work with these students.

Q. What do you enjoy most about teaching?
What I love about teaching is being able to inspire students to achieve more than they thought was possible and empowering them to make changes in their own lives or the community.

Q. How do you engage your students?
I engage my students by getting to know their interests and finding ways to incorporate them into lessons and finding the strengths in each child so they have a chance to shine. In several of my previous classes students were able to prepare presentations for band councils about things they felt were important for their community and influence their leaders to change.

Helping them know their own potential
In more than one case students have told me that I helped them know their own potential. There is nothing more important to me than that.

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: **February 1, 2019**



Win a \$50 Starbucks Gift Card!

1. Who are the five members of Central Executive 2018-2020?
2. What total percentage of NWTTA members who responded to the Who Are We survey are Indigenous?
3. What is the deadline for GNWT Education Leave application package to be submitted to the Professional Development Coordinator?
4. What is Cyberbullying?

Denise Hurley from École Sir John Franklin High School in Yellowknife (YK1 region) won the September 2018 Newsletter Trivia!

Newsletter Cover: Members at Bompas School in Fort Simpson (Dehcho region) participating in staff cultural orientation days in August 2018.

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Congratulations **Trent Hamm** from Yellowknife (YCS region) who, along with his grade six class, won the [Samsung Solve for Tomorrow Project](#) for the British Columbia/North region. Weledah Catholic School was awarded \$20,000 in Samsung technology as the prize.

The project was to use STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) to solve a real world problem in the community using technology, cooperating with as many people as possible.

The video hyperlinked below from the image (<https://goo.gl/5AjK79>) summarizes the project.



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