

**EQUITY**  
**COMMITTEE**  
Nova Scotia Teachers Union



**Liaison**  
**Handbook**





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# Section 1: Introduction

Organizations have the responsibility to ensure that they respect the rights of all of their members. The NSTU has policy and procedures in place to do just that. Part of its structure is the Equity Committee whose mandate includes providing information and supporting Local Equity Committees. One vital component of this has been the creation of Local Equity Liaisons who are responsible for ensuring that relevant NSTU materials and information are brought to the attention of teachers in their respective Locals.

Thank you for having accepted the responsibility of acting as a Local Equity Liaison. It is hoped that this handbook will assist you in your Equity work at the Local level.

## Important Numbers

**NSTU Professional Staff**

**Telephone: 477-5621**

**Toll Free: 1-800-565-6788**

**Fax: 477-3517**

# Section 2: NSTU Governance

## 5. Discrimination

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- (a) The NSTU, in recognition of its support for the Nova Scotia Human Rights Act, lends full support to members who face discrimination with respect to their employment as defined in the Act – Section 5, Subsection (1).
- (b) The NSTU, in its structure and delivery of professional services, is unbiased towards its members.

*Reference: Resolution 99-40; Reaffirmed 2002-19; 2005-19; 2010-11; 2016-16*

## 6. Equity and Affirmative Action

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The NSTU is committed to the promotion of equity and affirmative action. This promotion must take place in the context of all contractual obligations between members, their employer(s) and within the NSTU organization.

*Reference: Resolution 2000-3; Reaffirmed 2002-20; 2005-20; Amended Resolution 2006-D*

Equity for under-represented groups, in compliance with current language in the Nova Scotia Human Rights Act.

*Reference: Resolution 2006-E; Amended 2007-47; 2010-12; 2016-17*

## 19. Anti-homophobia, Anti-Transphobia and Anti-heterosexism (Policy—Governance)

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- (a) The NSTU advocates for an educational system that is safe, welcoming, inclusive and affirming for people of all sexual orientations and gender identities/expressions.
- (b) The NSTU believes:
  - (i) That the role of educators is critical in creating positive societal change to address the realities of sexual minority issues for students, families and members;
  - (ii) That an assumption of heterosexuality as being the only sexual orientation throughout the school system denies sexual minority students and same-gender parented families affirmation and accommodation;
  - (iii) That sexual minority and Transgender students, staff and same-gender-parented families have the right to:
    - a. Be free from harassment, discrimination and violence;
    - b. Be treated fairly, equitably and with dignity;
    - c. Self identification and freedom of expression;
    - d. Have their cultures and communities valued and affirmed.
  - (iv) That efforts must be made to ensure that education prepares young people to develop open, pluralistic and democratic societies, free of discrimination or aggression based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression.

## Section 2: NSTU Governance

continued

- (c) For anti-homophobia, anti-transphobia and anti-heterosexism education to become effective:
  - (i) Educators must accept their responsibility to educate themselves and to reflect upon their own attitudes and behaviours in modeling respect, understanding and affirmation of diversity.
  - (ii) Educators have a responsibility for the elimination of homophobia, transphobia and heterosexism in the working and learning environment.
  - (iii) Curriculum must include positive images and accurate information about history and culture which reflects the accomplishments and contributions of sexual minority and transgender people.
  - (iv) Educators must take actions to make educational sites safe for sexual minority and transgender staff, students and parents, and those who are perceived to be so by:
    - a. Treating everyone with respect and acceptance;
    - b. Using language that affirms all sexual orientations gender identities/expressions and not using disparaging remarks or language that implies one sexual orientation or gender identity is superior to another;
    - c. Challenging staff, students and parents who continue to display prejudice on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity/expression;
    - d. Developing an action plan to use in the event of an incident of discrimination or harassment and/or violence;
    - e. Never making assumptions in the matter of sexual orientation and gender identity expression;
    - f. Making a commitment to confidentiality in the event of a disclosure of sexual orientation or gender identity/expression;
    - g. Not assuming the superiority of heterosexuality or CIS-gender experience.
  - (v) Schools and school systems must adopt anti-homophobia, anti-transphobia and anti-heterosexism policies and recognize that homophobia plays an integral role in bullying and harassment in school.
  - (vi) Sexual minority and transgender students must have the right to counselling that is supportive, affirming and free from efforts on the part of counsellors to change their sexual orientation and/or gender/expression identity through the use of or the referral to aversion, reparative, or conversion therapies.
  - (vii) Member preparation programs must include:
    - a. Knowledge, awareness and affirmation of those who identify as transgender or belonging to a sexual minority;
    - b. Strategies, lesson plans and curriculum that assist members in addressing sexual minority or transgender issues in classrooms and schools.

## Section 2: NSTU Governance

continued

- (viii) Educators must have access to professional development programs, which provide assistance in addressing sexual minority and transgender issues in classrooms and schools;
- (ix) Educators must be made aware of sexual minority and transgender policy at the Union, provincial, and school board level.
- (d) The NSTU declares itself to be an anti-homophobia, anti-transphobia and anti-heterosexism organization which:
  - (i) promotes equity and inclusiveness for all individuals in the workplace;
  - (ii) recognizes student and member diversity and the goals of anti-homophobia, anti-transphobia and anti-heterosexism in the selection of its priorities and programs; and
  - (iii) promotes anti-homophobia, anti-transphobia and anti-heterosexism education.
  - (iv) develops and supports regular professional development opportunities for all of its members;
  - (v) supports the development of Gay-Straight Alliance as positive forces in schools; and
  - (vi) actively supports the development of inclusive policy by other educational stakeholders;
  - (vii) protects its members who, by reason of active involvement in sexual minority and transgender educational issues, become vulnerable to institutional backlash.
- (e) The NSTU believes that all educators and students of all gender identities and gender expressions have a right to a safe work/school environment. To that end the NSTU believes that:
  - (i) All staff and students have the right to safe restroom facilities that they are comfortable using and correspond to their gender identify.
  - (ii) Transgender and gender non-conforming staff and students have the right to be addressed by a name and pronoun corresponding to their gender identity.
  - (iii) All staff and students have a right to privacy, that the transgender status of transgender and gender non-conforming staff and students is considered confidential, and that transgender and non-conforming students and staff have the right to share, discuss, and express their gender identity and gender expression as well as the right to decide when, with whom, and how much private and personal information to share.
  - (iv) All staff and student dress codes should be flexible and gender-neutral and that staff and students should not have to choose between 'male' and 'female' clothing.
  - (v) All staff have the right to be addressed without having gender prefixes assigned to their names.

*Reference: Resolution 2004-NB1, Amended 2009-NB1; 2011-11, Amended 2014-50*



# Section 2: NSTU Governance

continued

## 33. Multiculturalism

Schools of Nova Scotia reflect a pluralistic, multi-ethnic society, which influences the teaching/learning styles represented in our schools.

The values and behaviour patterns present and presented in our schools differ among cultural groups.

Citizens in a democratic society need ethnic and cultural literacy (adequate understanding of ethnic groups, ethnicity and culture).

Members, because of their role in society, have a major responsibility to contribute to the development of ethnic and cultural understanding.

The curriculum should:

- (a) provide students with continuous opportunities to develop positive self-identities.
- (b) recognize the ethnic and cultural diversity of students within the school community.
- (c) describe the development of Nova Scotia and Canada as a multi-faceted society.
- (d) explore and clarify ethnic and cultural alternatives and options within Nova Scotian and Canadian society and make maximum use of local community resources.

The Employer should:

- (e) set policies and procedures that foster positive multi-ethnic interactions and understandings among students, teachers, administrative and other support staff.
- (f) provide information to members about the implications of multiculturalism in Nova Scotia and about services, programs, materials and developments relating to multiculturalism.

The NSTU should:

- (g) foster and stimulate a higher level of member awareness and a deeper understanding of the relationships between social behaviour, learning styles and cultural differences and their implications.
- (h) encourage and promote the cooperation of members with organizations, groups and individuals involved with multiculturalism.
- (i) encourage the development of a curriculum that reflects the ethno-cultural similarities and differences within the province.
- (j) promote an anti-homophobic, anti-heterosexist, anti-sexist and anti-racist approach to educational strategies, materials and attitudes within the provincial schools.

Educators should:

- (k) accept their responsibility to educate themselves and to reflect upon their own attitudes and behaviours in modeling respect, understanding and affirmation of diversity.

*Reference: Resolution 2001-46; Amended 2004-110; 2011-24; 2017-24*

# Section 3: Equity Committee

## Provincial Equity Committee

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1. Provide information and resources available on various issues.
2. Act as a coordinator between locals by:
  - a) Making initial contact with liaisons in assigned zones
  - b) Encouraging a regional get-together (or conference call) to discuss status of local Equity committees.
  - c) Organizing events at local/regional level pertinent to Equity concerns (i.e. equity/balancing home and career)
3. Seek information from locals without Equity committees for the purpose of encouraging the establishment of said committees.

## Local Liaison Responsibilities

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1. To ensure that relevant NSTU print materials are brought to the attention of teachers in your Local.
2. To ensure that information regarding the Equity Conference is brought to the attention of teachers in your Local.
3. To report to the Equity Committee any issues/concerns that fall under its mandate.
4. To bring forth any minutes or reports from Local or Regional Equity Committees.

## Terms of Reference

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1. Recommend in-service training programs designed for consciousness-raising and the development of leadership skills, gender equity education and a curriculum focus on equity for all.
2. Keep up to date on current practices and attitudes regarding diversity, equity and social justice in the global community.
3. Examine trends in teacher employment and part-time jobs in periods of declining enrollment.
4. Review the collective agreement with a view to formulating recommendations dealing with the interests of under-represented groups.
5. Act as liaison with under-represented groups within and outside the education sector in order to utilize research and findings already obtained, thus avoiding duplication of effort, and to recommend to the Provincial Executive support of objectives which would contribute to the benefit of said groups.

# Section 3: Equity Committee

continued

## Tips on Starting Your Own Committee

**Your committee may be one person — you! So how do you get others interested?**

- 1. Identify the issues and interest in your local.** These can range from the need for a social group for professional women (especially in rural areas) to an active political lobby group in areas where there is already an established committee.
- 2. Building support:**
  - make personal contacts
  - you ask a friend, she asks a friend, and so on...
  - advertise in the local newsletter or school mailouts
- 3. Suggestions for the first meeting:**
  - Call an informal meeting; you may want to consider refreshments; meet in a comfortable spot.
  - Hand out a survey to determine local concerns.
  - Ask for volunteers to serve as committee members.
  - Ask for a resolution from the meeting to request recognition of the committee and a budget from the school.
  - Try to get a contact in each school in your district. This person does not have to play an active role in the committee, but just agree to inform staff about upcoming events.
- 4. Set your goals and terms of reference.**
- 5. Make a list of possible meeting topics and guest speakers.** Here are some suggestions:
  - lawyers to discuss wills, property law, divorce, etc.
  - wellness seminars;
  - financial advisors: budgeting, investments, taxes;
  - social workers: family violence, parent burnout, dealing with grief, role of Children's Aid Societies, teenage pregnancy, women's shelters, drug and alcohol dependency;
  - other possibilities: pornography, sexism in language, women in non-traditional jobs, women in the media, communication skills, assertiveness training, networking, job sharing, time management, local and provincial politicians, Central Office Staff;
  - a Housing Authority.
- 6. Plan a special evening to highlight Equity.**
  - honour individuals who have made a special contribution this year in the betterment of the lives of minorities.
  - bring in a "high profile" guest:
    - political figures
    - Equity Chairperson
    - media personalities
    - local "celebrities"
    - university presidents
  - encourage interested members of the community to attend.

# Section 3: Equity Committee

continued

## Zone Responsibilities

Zone 1	Cape Breton/Victoria
Zone 2	Strait
Zone 3	Chignecto Central
Zone 4	Valley
Zone 5	Tri-County & CSANE
Zone 6	Metro & APSEA
Zone 7	South Shore

Members of the Equity Committee will be assigned a zone and will be responsible for communicating directly with the Equity Liaisons within their respective zones. It is hoped that this will facilitate communication between the Equity Committee and NSTU Members from across Nova Scotia.

When Equity Committee members are communicating with the Equity Liaisons in their respective zones they should remember to mention the following:

- Mention the date and theme of the upcoming Equity Conference. Indicate that Locals have the option of sending an additional delegate at their own expense and that the Equity Liaison's expenses are covered by the NSTU.
- Mention the equity posters and pamphlets that exist and that can be ordered by contacting Miguelle Légère at [mlegere@staff.nstu.ca](mailto:mlegere@staff.nstu.ca).
- Mention the equity PD sessions that are offered free of charge by NSTU staff. They are found in the Equity Liaison handbook. They will be receiving an updated issue of the Equity Liaison Handbook in November.

# Section 3: Operational Procedures

continued

## NSTU Operational Procedures

### (iv) Equity Committee

#### A. MANDATE

- i. The Committee shall:
  - A. Explore current practices, attitudes and research regarding diversity, equity and social justice.
  - B. Promote professional development workshops to assist members with equity and diversity issues such as gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation discrimination, racism, sexism, etc.
  - C. Examine trends and issues with regard to equity in the teaching profession.
  - D. Provide information and support to Local Equity Committees or contact persons.
  - E. Formulate recommendations, as appropriate, dealing specifically with equity and diversity interests.
  - F. Consider such resolutions as may be referred by Annual Council and make appropriate recommendations.
  - G. Participate as required in the NSTU Policy Review Process by providing recommendations for the Provincial Executive's consideration.
- ii. The NSTU shall take the following steps to encourage the equitable involvement of all NSTU members in leadership roles within the education system:
  - A. Encourage and support members of equity-seeking groups in the pursuit of leadership positions
  - B. Encourage and support equity-seeking groups to seek positions on the Provincial Executive and professional executive staff.
  - C. Encourage the Minister of Education to continue the practice of supporting and promoting equity-seeking groups in roles of leadership in education.
  - D. Encourage the School Administrators Association to hold in-services on gender stereotyping in education.
  - E. Encourage and support each Professional Association to sponsor a workshop on equity and diversity as it relates to its specialty.

*Reference: Resolution 99-41; Reaffirmed 2002-33; Amended 2004-12; Resolution 2005-34 moved to Operational Procedures; October 2014*

#### B. COMPOSITION

The Equity Committee shall consist of six (6) members plus a Provincial Executive member.

#### C. MEETING FREQUENCY

It is anticipated that the Equity Committee will be able to accomplish the mandated tasks through three meetings per year.

*Reference: Provincial Executive, April, 1981; June, 1983; Oct. 1985; 2002-29; Oct., 2002; June, 2003; May 5, 2005; 2005-37; October 2014, January 2019*

# Section 3: Operational Procedures

continued

## (xiii) Status of Women Committee

### a. MANDATE

- i. The Committee shall:
  - A. Advise the Provincial Executive on ways of enhancing the status of women in the teaching profession and in society.
  - B. Develop policy recommendations for the Provincial Executive to support policies of the employer that are relevant to women's issues.
  - C. Provide advice on the content, delivery, and design of status of women programs.
  - D. Make recommendations to the Provincial Executive for possible action on issues related to the status of women.
  - E. Make recommendations to the Provincial Executive on outreach to community-based women's organizations.
  - F. Advise the Provincial Executive on how to include women members in all aspects of the NSTU organization and programs.
  - G. Advise the Provincial Executive on how to promote opportunities for networking, leadership, and professional development for women members.
  - H. Consider such resolutions as may be referred by Annual Council and make appropriate recommendations.
  - I. Participate as required in the NSTU Policy Review Process by providing recommendations for the Provincial Executive's consideration.

### b. COMPOSITION

The Status of Women Committee shall consist of six (6) members plus a Provincial Executive member.

### c. MEETING FREQUENCY

It is anticipated that the Status of Women Committee will be able to accomplish the mandated tasks through three meetings per year.

*Reference: March 2015, December 2015*

# Section 4: Resources

## Important Days to Recognize

### **International Holocaust Remembrance Day, January 27**

<http://www.ushmm.org/remembrance/dor/>

January 27 marks the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau, the largest Nazi death camp. In 2005, the United Nations General Assembly designated this day as International Holocaust Remembrance Day (IHRD), an annual day of commemoration to honor the victims of the Nazi era. Every member nation of the U.N. has an obligation to honor the memory of Holocaust victims and develop educational programs as part of an international resolve to help prevent future acts of genocide. The U.N. resolution that created IHRD rejects denial of the Holocaust, and condemns discrimination and violence based on religion or ethnicity.

### **International Women's Day, March 8**

[http://www.unac.org/en/news\\_events/un\\_days/women1.asp](http://www.unac.org/en/news_events/un_days/women1.asp)

**The History of International Women's Day**  
— reprinted with permission from Pacific Tribune, March 6, 1986

The emergence of International Women's Day is inseparably linked with the development of the struggle of women workers against the dual exploitation to which they were subjected as workers and as women, for social justice, against militarism and imperialist war, for peace, democracy and social progress, for women's equality.

International Women's Day was born on August 26, 1910, out of the experiences of the first women's struggles, including:

- the first women's demonstration on March 8, 1857, when women of the needle trades in New York demanded better working conditions and the right to vote;
- the participation of tens of thousands of French women fighting on the barricades during the days of the Paris Commune in 1871;
- the first International Women's Conference against war in Den Haag, 1899;
- the growing number of women in the trade unions in Germany (in 1907 there were 120,000 women in the trade unions and 10,000 women were organized in 94 educational societies);
- the participation of tens of thousands of Russian women workers in the strikes against Tsarism in 1905 to 1907.

The Second International Conference of Socialist Women in Copenhagen, on a motion from Clara Zetkin, resolved to "observe an annual women's day as a uniform international action" as a new way of struggling to incorporate masses of working women in the international struggle for fundamental democratic rights, peace, national independence and social progress.

In the spring of 1921, on a motion from Bulgarian women, the International Women's Secretariat of the Communist International chaired by Clara Zetkin resolve to celebrate International Women's Day from then on uniformly on March 8.

The goal of Clara Zetkin and the other founders to draw large numbers of women, through intensive day-to-day work, into the struggle for their rights, which is closely linked with the general struggle of their peoples for social progress and world peace, has been achieved.

What started as women's day of struggle in only a few European countries united women from even more countries of Europe as well as Asia, Africa, North, Central and South America and Australia from year to year.

The millions of women and mothers from many countries who had fought against fascism and war, came together in the Women's International Democratic Federation in Paris on December 1, 1945 to work together in an organized manner for the protection of children, for their rights, in defense of peace, for democracy, national independence and social progress have carried on the tradition of International Women's Day and spread its ideal around the earth.

### **International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, March 21**

<http://www.un.org/depts/dhl/racial/>

"The International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination is observed annually on 21 March. On that day, in 1960, police opened fire and killed 69 people at a peaceful demonstration in Sharpeville, South Africa, against the apartheid 'pass laws'. Proclaiming the day in 1966, the General Assembly called on the international community to redouble its efforts to eliminate all forms of racial discrimination."



# Section 4: Resources

continued

## **The International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia, May 17**

<http://www.homophobiaday.org>

A rallying event offering an opportunity for people to get together and reach out to one another. Fondation Émergence promotes, mainly on a pan-Canadian level, the International Day Against Homophobia and encourages organizations and individuals to highlight this event in their environment.

## **National Aboriginal Day History, June 21**

On June 21st, Canadians from all walks of life are invited to participate in the many National Aboriginal Day events that will be taking place from coast to coast to coast.

First proclaimed by the Governor General of Canada on June 13, 1996, June 21st of every year has become a day in the Canadian calendar that presents Aboriginal peoples with a great opportunity to express great pride for their rich diverse cultures with their families, neighbours, friends and visitors.

First Nations, Métis and Inuit people will gather to celebrate and share with spectacular dance, song and theatrical performances both contemporary and traditional that will bring you to your feet!

National Aboriginal Day is a fun filled day for the whole family to enjoy together.

National Aboriginal Day is an opportunity to learn more about Aboriginal people and their contribution to make Canada the great nation that it is become, Share in the Celebration.

## **Stand Up Against Bullying Day Proclaimed, Second Thursday in September**

To help send a strong message against bullying in Nova Scotia's schools, colleges and universities, the province has proclaimed the second Thursday at the start of each school year as Stand Up Against Bullying Day.

The inspiration for the day came from the actions of Central Kings Rural High School Grade 12 students Travis Price and David Shepherd who rallied behind a new student to the school who was being bullied simply for wearing pink.

"The actions of these two young men, along with their fellow students who wore pink to school in support of another student, are showing all Nova Scotians just how much of a difference individuals can make," Premier Rodney MacDonald said. "It is an honour to acknowledge their creative and selfless efforts by proclaiming a day at the outset of each school year to relay such a positive message against bullying."

Premier MacDonald and acting Education Minister Jamie Muir were joined at Province House today, Sept. 25, by Mr. Shepherd and Mr. Price for the proclamation signing.

Mr. Muir said, "The department has been actively working on initiatives to help with bullying, but to have two students come forward with an idea like this is such a boost to the cause as it comes from the students for the students"

## **International Day of Peace, September 21**

<http://www.un.org/events/peaceday/2005/>

"The International Day of Peace was first established in 1981 by a resolution 36/67 of the United Nations General Assembly to coincide with its opening session every September. In 2001 the resolution 55/282 was strengthened to fix the date annually on 21 September and for it to be a day of nonviolence and cease-fire. The resolution was adopted unanimously by the Member States of the General Assembly."

The International Day of Peace "is meant to be a day of global cease-fire, when all countries and all people stop all hostilities for the entire day. And it is a day on which people around the world observe a minute of silence at 12 noon local time..."

— Kofi Annan, *United Nations Secretary-General*,  
21 September 2005

## **Treaty Day, October 1**

In 1985, the Supreme Court of Canada affirmed the Treaty of 1752 was still strong and called upon Her Majesty to honour the Treaty and others made with the Mi'kmaq Nation.

In 1986, the then Grand Chief Donald Marshall Sr. proclaimed every October 1st as Treaty Day.

It commemorates the key role of treaties in the relationship between the Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq and



# Section 4: Resources

continued

the Crown. The annual ceremony reaffirms the historic presence of the Mi'kmaq who have occupied the land for thousands of years. The Mi'kmaq Nation and the Crown also exchange gifts to mark each October 1st.

The celebration provides an important opportunity to recognize outstanding Mi'kmaq leaders who serve as strong role models in their communities – as well as the Mi'kmaq's contribution to the province as a whole.

## International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, November 25

<http://www.unifem.org/campaigns.november25/>

"In 1993, the United Nations General Assembly resolved 'that violence against women constitutes a violation of the rights and freedoms of women... that there is a need for a clear and comprehensive definition of violence against women, a clear statement of the rights to be applied to ensure the elimination of all violence against women in all its forms, a commitment by States... and a commitment by the international community at large to the elimination of violence against women.' (Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women)."

"In December 1999, the 54th session of the United Nations General Assembly... [declared] November 25th the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women."

## International Human Rights Day, December 10

<http://www.ohchr.org/english/events/day2004/hrd2004.htm>

"[In 1948], the United Nations General Assembly recognized the equal and inalienable rights accorded to every human being by adopting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The Declaration calls upon every individual and every institution of society to strive, by teaching and education, to promote respect for human rights and to secure their universal and effective recognition and implementation."

"Human rights are our common heritage and their realization depends on the contributions that each and every one of us is willing to make, individually and collectively, now and in the future."

— Louise Arbour, *United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights*

## ways to recognize these days

- distribute information kit to school
- have a special meeting
- sponsor essay challenges, public speaking events

## People

- RCH Coordinators
- Equity Liaisons

## Groups

- Pier 21
- Multicultural Associations of Nova Scotia
- Black Educators Association
- Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Youth Project
- Planned Parenthood
- Outside the Lines Book Store
- Advisory Council on the Status of Women
- Metro Teachers GSA
- UNICEF
- Capital Health
- Department of Canadian Heritage
- Schizophrenia Society of Nova Scotia
- Dress for Success
- Partners for Human Rights
- YMCA
- Egale Canada
- PFLAG

# Section 4: Resources

continued

## Ten Things You Can Say or Do When You Hear “That’s So Gay!”

### Teacher responses might include:

1. *“How would you feel if your name/identity was instead of ‘gay’ (That’s so Jean!) and it was used repetitively?”*
2. *“What does that mean? Or say, “That’s so what?”*  
*Typical student response: “It’s stupid, weird, ugly, etc.”*  
*Teacher response: “That’s the same as saying, ‘Gay people are stupid, weird or ugly’ and I find that offensive.*
3. *“How can a book, idea or song have a sexual orientation?” if they are referring to an inanimate object when using this slur.*
4. *“You might be surprised to know that what you just said could hurt someone’s feelings.”*
5. *“This is a homophobia-free zone. Homophobic slurs like that are not tolerated here.”*
6. *“What does gay (fag, dyke, etc) mean?” Use this opportunity to discuss the language of oppression.*
7. *Show one of the NFB videos: Sticks and Stones, One of Them or In Other Words.*
8. *Download classroom posters on this topic from the GALE-BC website: [www.galebc.org](http://www.galebc.org) (click on the link to resources).*
9. *“Gay is OK.”*
10. *Make links between homophobic slurs and other forms of discrimination. Use analogies between racism, sexism, ableism, ethnocentrism, etc.*

***Use a strategy that reflects your personal teaching style and is appropriate to the situation at hand.***

# Section 4: Resources

continued

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The Canadian Human Rights Toolkit is available on the Museum's website at [humanrights.ca/learn](http://humanrights.ca/learn) and on the CTF's Imagineaction website at [www.imagine-action.ca/hr-dp](http://www.imagine-action.ca/hr-dp).

# Section 4: Resources

continued

## Learning Activity: “We All Lose”

### Objective

To have students recognize how stereotypes and prejudice have negative effects on everyone concerned.

### Materials

Copies of Situation Cards, one set per group (cut and mounted) paper, pencils, pens; eight 3 x 5 cards per group.

### Implementation

Divide students into heterogeneous groups of three or four. Give each group copies of the Situation Cards and paper and pencils, four 3 x 5 cards and pens. Review definitions of prejudice and stereotypes and go over several cards as a whole class to give students the idea.

Students read cards aloud in their small groups. For each one, they discuss: (1) what stereotype of prejudice it shows; (2) why they think people might have that stereotype; and (3) what harm it causes. Allow enough time for thinking through these questions. The students may need your support, and perhaps some resource books, to seriously consider these questions. After they have worked through their cards, each group picks four cards that especially intrigue them. Members fill out 3 x 5 cards with the following information on them: a. Card Number; b. Stereotype of Prejudice; c. Harm caused by stereotype or prejudice to each person in the situation. Come together as a class for the discussion questions.

After discussion, have a group members take the other four 3 x 5 cards and create new cards describing situations that sometimes happen in their school or lives. In that way they will have to pick a stereotype or a type of prejudice and think it through clearly. Share these with the whole class, perhaps having each group pass its stack on to another group. Finally, as a group, discuss the new cards.

### Discussion

1. How did the person stereotyped lose in the situations? Discuss one at a time.
2. How did the person stereotyping lose out?
3. Why do you think people hold some of the stereotypes on the cards?
4. What can you do to unlearn these stereotypes and to help yourself not to learn more?

### Going Further

Use these cards as part of a board game. Just add “lose a turn,” “go back a space,” or “take another turn,” at the end of the card. Students can create a regular pathway game board. The theme should be connected with equality. This stack of cards can form the basis for the “luck” cards.

A wonderful resource which contain many more of these activities is  
**“Open Minds to Equality, A Sourcebook of**  
**Learning Activities to Affirm Diversity and Promote Equity”**  
Published by Allyn and Bacon, [www.abacon.com](http://www.abacon.com)

# Section 4: Resources

continued

## “We All Lose” – Worksheet – Situation Cards

1. Joe gets hit in the eye with a baseball. He starts to cry. The other guys begin to make fun of him. You feel bad for him, but chime in with the other guys and say, “Don’t be a sissy.”
2. You want to build a pen for your dog. The only person around tall enough to help you is Ramona. You say, “I need a boy to help me.” You don’t get help and the dog runs away.
3. Some Latino students ask you to join their group to do a math project. You think they’re not so smart, so you join another group. Their group gets an A, yours doesn’t.
4. You are a fine dancer, and would like to take up ballet. You’re afraid the other guys will make fun of you. You give up your plan, lots of good exercise, and a possible career.
5. You fall and think you’ve broken your ankle. A black woman who is a doctor offers to look at it. You don’t trust her so you refuse. You end up lying there in pain for an hour before someone else comes to help you.
6. Joan’s family doesn’t have much money. They live in a different neighborhood than you. She invites you to her birthday party. You don’t go because you think her house will be messy and dirty. You miss a great time and a clean house.
7. You missed the bus and need a ride to school. Ms Mendez is 82. She offered to drive you. You think she’ll drive off the road. You kill your feet walking the four miles to school.
8. Your younger sister keeps calling her friend a “wild Indian.” She shoots him again and again with a toy gun. You don’t challenge her.
9. You don’t invite Richard to your birthday party because he is blind. You love drama and plan to play a version of charades at your birthday. You figure he can’t play if he can’t see. You miss finding out how creative and funny he is.
10. You think the chess club advisor is a lesbian. You really like playing chess but don’t join the club because you don’t want to travel with her. You lose out on improving your chess game and having the fun of playing with the club.
11. A new family, the Epsteins, moves in near you. They don’t decorate for Christmas or Easter. Your parents tell you that’s because they’re Jewish. Not doing anything for your favorite holidays seems strange to you. You think you have nothing in common with them and don’t include them when you organize the neighborhood talent show. You miss finding out that Mrs. Epstein does jazz dance and Mr. Epstein juggles.
12. A few of the African American kids in your class speak really differently when they talk with each other than when they talk in class. Their out of class talk sounds odd to you and makes you think you can’t be friends with them. You don’t try. You miss out on some possible new friends and on learning about Black English.

# Section 4: Resources

continued

## Quotable Quotes

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"If liberty and equality, as is thought by some are chiefly to be found in democracy, they will be best attained when all persons alike share in the government to the utmost." – Aristotle

"The challenges of change are always hard. It is important that we begin to unpack those challenges that confront this nation and realize that we each have a role that requires us to change and become more responsible for shaping our own future." – Hillary Rodham Clinton

"A sense of humor is part of the art of leadership, of getting along with people, of getting things done." – Dwight D. Eisenhower

"Education's purpose is to replace an empty mind with an open one." – Malcolm Forbes (in Forbes Magazine)

"As a culture we are more comfortable seeing two men holding guns than holding hands." – Ernest Gaines

"Leadership and learning are indispensable to each other." – John F. Kennedy (speech prepared for delivery in Dallas the day of his assassination, November 22, 1963)

"I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character." – Martin Luther King, Jr.

"There is nothing like returning to a place that remains unchanged to find the ways in which you yourself have altered." – Nelson Mandela (A Long Walk to Freedom, 1994)

"It has always seemed to me a bit pointless to disapprove of homosexuality. It's like disapproving of rain." – Francis Maude

"If we are to achieve a richer culture, rich in contrasting values, we must recognize the whole gamut of human potentialities. We must weave a social fabric in which each diverse human gift will find a fitting place." – Margaret Mead

"Labels are for filing. Labels are for clothing. Labels are not for people." – Martina Navratilova

"To repeat what others have said, requires education; to challenge it, requires brains." – Mary Pettibone Poole (A Glass Eye at a Keyhole, 1938)

"Be who you are and say what you feel, because those who mind don't matter and those who matter don't mind." – Dr. Seuss

"Things do not change; we change." – Henry David Thoreau (Walden, 1854)

"They always say time changes things, but you actually have to change them yourself." – Andy Warhol

"No one should make the claim of being educated until he or she has learned to live in harmony with people who are different." – A.H. Wilson

# Section 4: Resources

continued

## Workshops

### Teaching to Diversity

Creating classroom environments of safety and respect is the goal of Gérard Cormier's dynamic and interactive Diversity workshop. He addresses the critical need to be sensitive to the diversity of today's classrooms and guides participants through the topics of sexual orientation, gender equity, racial diversity and multiculturalism. Participants of the Diversity workshop are given the tools and resources to identify diverse learners and embrace their differences as enriching, desirable, natural and positive forces.

### Social Justice

How many people have actually ever read the Education Act? Or their NSTU union contract for that matter? How about school board policies? Or the Nova Scotia Human Rights Act? Gérard Cormier's Social Justice workshop takes mass amounts of legislation relating to education...and breaks it down into easily accessible and comprehensive information. This enables workshop participants to gain a new and thorough understanding of the social justice system. Interactive group activities and discussions help take the words "off the page" and make them relevant and meaningful to real-life situations.

### Activity-based Equity Workshop

It is common knowledge that people learn the most by doing. This workshop will allow participants to walk through a series of activities which are intended to fully engage the learner. Depending on the equity issue at hand, the content of the activity can be changed to suit a particular need. If you are tired of death by PowerPoint, this is the workshop for you.

### Battling Homophobia and Transphobia in the Classroom

Did you know that one of the number one complaints made to RCH coordinators and Nova Scotia school boards relates to homophobia/transphobia? In his "Battling Homophobia and Transphobia in the Classroom" workshop, Gérard Cormier addresses popular myths and misconceptions regarding sexual orientation and gender identity, shares personal experiences and helps participants identify the different ways in which homophobia/transphobia manifests itself in schools. Participants leave the workshop with a comprehensive understanding of the problem, and armed with resources, ideas and activities to not only battle, but conquer homophobia/transphobia in the classroom.

### Making NSTU More Invitational

The NSTU provides valuable resources and support to its members. But how do we make sure the membership knows what's available – and feels comfortable coming to NSTU functions? In this workshop, we address reasons for which NSTU members might not feel comfortable, and brainstorm ways to make functions more inviting to and inclusive of all members. From providing daycare to carpooling, let's strategize ways to get more NSTU members interested in attending rewarding and motivating NSTU functions and events.

For information regarding booking an Equity workshop, contact Miguelle Légère, Coordinator, Outreach Programs and Equity Services at [mlegere@staff.nstu.ca](mailto:mlegere@staff.nstu.ca) or at 1-800-565-6788 or 477-5621.

# Appendix A: A History of Name Changes

## *Women in Education Committee Procedures*

Executive Motion, adopted April 1, 1981

Executive Motion to change name from "Status of Women" to "Women in Education" Committee, June 17, 1983

Amendment to Policy Statement, October 4, 1985

**Res. 98-10 BE IT RESOLVED** that the title of the Women in Education Committee as given in Terms of reference 2.1.3.21 be expanded to include a phrase "a voice for diversity, equity and social justice."

**Res. 98-100 BE IT RESOLVED** that the Terms of Reference 2.1.3.21 be amended as follows:

- a. ADD to No. 1 "Gender equity education, and a curriculum focus on equity for all."
  - b. ADD to No. 2 "regarding diversity, equity and social justice in the global community."
- Numbers 3, 4 and 5 remain the same.

## *Provincial Executive Meeting Minutes, May 5, 2005:*

### **9. (d) Women in Education Committee Recommendation**

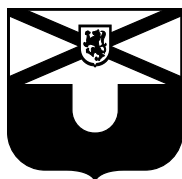
B. Noble/M. Ryan/CARRIED

THAT THE NAME OF THE WOMEN IN EDUCATION COMMITTEE (A VOICE FOR DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND SOCIAL JUSTICE) BE CHANGED TO THE EQUITY COMMITTEE.

G. DeMone/D. McIsaac/CARRIED

THAT OPERATIONAL PROCEDURE SECTION 1, GOVERNANCE, 3, O. (4) BE AMENDED BY ADDING "/EQUITY COMMITTEES" AFTER THE WORDS "EDUCATION COMMITTEES."





Comments on this document are welcomed.  
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