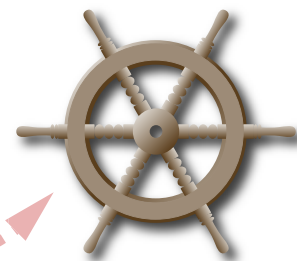


Charting Your Course FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



Our PD, Our Success, Our Future

by Betty-Jean Aucoin, Executive Staff Officer, Professional Development

The Nova Scotia Teachers Union is comprised of 10,000 professional members. According to Wikipedia, a **professional** is someone who has completed formal education and training in one or more **professions**. The term also describes the standards of education and training that prepare members of the profession with the particular knowledge and skills necessary to perform the role of that profession. In addition, most professionals are subject to strict codes of conduct enshrining rigorous **ethical** and **moral obligations**. Professional standards of practice and ethics for a particular field are typically agreed upon and maintained through widely recognized professional associations. Some definitions of professional limit this term to those professions that serve some important aspect of public interest [1] and the general good of society.[2][3]

Noted in the definition above is the importance of professional associations, which support the standards of practice and ethics within our profession. We are fortunate within the NSTU to have 22 associations of volunteer teachers, faculty and professional support staff who will host NSTU members, partners and others in a profound learning opportunity, Annual Conference Day.

The NSTU Professional Associations represent the multitude of professionals who comprise our membership. Topics vary to support our varied roles: speech language pathologists, administrators, guidance counsellors, adult educators and psychologists to name a few. There are also associations who support

the varied curricula we teach: math, science, social studies and many more. There is something for everyone and each association provides workshops on themes that support all classroom teachers.

This is one time within the school year where we as educators direct our own learning having the opportunity to choose to participate at one of 22 conferences in over 560 keynotes and workshops. It is important for our members to support our professional associations in recognizing the importance of participating in Our PD, Our Success, Our Future.

When I travel throughout Canada and the United States, I have the opportunity to speak formally and informally about our Annual Conference Day. Educators from these two countries are amazed at the diversity of sessions, the cost of attendance, the Monday-relevant-classroom-resources and the fact that this is all done by volunteers. The professional associations are an integral part of our union and ensure that we are seen as a professional union who looks after its' members educational needs.

The 22 conferences involve presenters from our schools, campuses, universities, communities and beyond. This year our Social Studies Teachers Association (SSTA) will be celebrating its 50th Anniversary. Since 1963, volunteer educators within SSTA have been supporting the professional development of teachers at all levels and across all curricula. Congratulations to SSTA on reaching this milestone.



Blast from the past. Here's a photo from The Teacher archives circa late 1980s. Past SSTA executive members. Back: Allan King, Max Moulton, and Don Clarke. Front: Bill Fougere, John Stone, Carmon Stone, and Owen Ferguson.

This year we have delivered posters to NSTU representatives. Please check out the information on these posters that outline the varied themes of conferences, locations and deadlines. We then direct you to go online and sign up for one of the conferences participating in your PD, your Success, your Future. I then ask that you encourage a colleague to join you in attending Provincial Professional Development Day.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the many hard working volunteers who take time above and beyond their present jobs to organize Annual Conference 2013. These members ensure we remain true to the definition of professional ensuring we look after our own. I would like to extend my thanks to the many presenters who work not only in preparing their keynotes and presentations, but also

gathering relevant resources to share. Finally, thank you to the many host schools/campuses that provide their facilities and to the sponsors who support the Associations.

Finally, I encourage all participants on Conference Day to attend the Annual Meeting and consider joining the professional association team. This is a great opportunity to engage in our NSTU supporting the professionalism of our union. Also, be sure to thank our volunteers on Friday, October 25. They deserve to be recognized by all of us for their dedication and hard work.

Best wishes to all associations and all members for a successful Provincial Professional Development Day 2013. I look forward to joining you as a presenter and being involved in one of NSTU's finest events.

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