

FNBFA President's Report
May 2018-April 2019

We are pleased to share with you this summary of our activities and projects from May 2018-April 2019.

1. **Government's Select Committee on Public Universities.** At the beginning of June 2018, university administrators appeared before the Select Committee on Public Universities. (A reminder of the motion that was made to appoint the Committee: "Be it therefore resolved that the House appoint a Select Committee on Public Universities to be charged with the responsibility of inviting representatives of New Brunswick's publicly funded universities to appear before the committee to discuss and provide insight into university administration, programming, performance measurement, accountability and transparency.") Lise Robichaud, Jean Sauvageau and I attended the two days of presentations in June, and I summarized their content in a document that has been distributed to our member associations.
2. **Atlantic Canada Council of Faculty Associations (ACCFA).** On June 8, 2018, the FNBFA hosted the annual ACCFA meetings in Sackville, N.B. This was a very successful and well-attended event, drawing 25 representatives of full- and part-time faculty members from all Atlantic provinces. Presenters included Robin Vose, David Robinson, Paul Deguire, Sue Blair and Matthew Sears. Next year's ACCFA meetings will be hosted by the Memorial University Faculty Association in either Newfoundland or Nova Scotia.
3. **Union-Government forum – June 13, 2018 –** Lise Robichaud and I attended. The representatives of the GNB, including the Premier, were mostly looking for ideas to attract and retain people in New Brunswick. They were told that better hiring practices, putting an end to casual employment and offering better wages and benefits are to be prioritized.
4. **Experiential Learning.** I wrote a detailed letter to all members of the Task Force on Experiential Learning, and to the Minister of Post-secondary Education, in response to the 2016 Task Force's Final Report released by St. Thomas University in March 2018. Once again, our letter outlined the FNBFA's objections to the exclusion of faculty members from the work being carried out on experiential learning in our public universities, and a copy of the letter was sent to university presidents. In July 2018 we received the following response from Kim Meade, Co-Chair of the New Brunswick Experiential Learning Steering Committee and Vice-President of International and Student Affairs at Mt. Allison University: "We would like to invite the FNBFA to join the steering committee and to appoint a representative and an alternate designate to participate on the steering committee. The input of faculty is essential as we plan the major experiential learning program components. I'd be happy to discuss this with you, to provide a status update on the steering committee and to consider how we can meaningfully engage with the FNBFA and your members."

This invitation was brought to the Board in September, and a call was put out to our members for expressions of interest. I am happy to report that Toni Roberts from MAFA has agreed to be our designated representative on the Steering Committee, and Hilary Young from AUNBT has agreed to be our alternate representative.

5. **Provincial Elections Campaign.** We organized and executed a very dynamic elections campaign including a survey for all political parties, press releases and for the first time in the FNBFA's history, weekly blogs, a presence in social media (Facebook, Twitter), and the publication of postcards that summarize the FNBFA's most important positions relating to post-secondary education in New Brunswick. Three out of five political parties (Green Party, Progressive Conservative Party, Liberal Party) responded to our survey and their responses were shared with member associations. Social media content and postcards have also been shared with members. In addition, Lise and I attended the leaders' debate on Friday evening, September 14th in Fredericton. Lise also attended the local candidates' debate held on September 19th and moderated by FAUST President, Robin Vose on the STU campus.
6. **CAUT National Survey on Contract Academic Staff.** Early in September, CAUT released the results of its first nation-wide survey on Contract Academic Staff. I did an interview with Radio Canada on the CAUT report's findings and the challenges faced by Contract Academic Staff in New Brunswick's public universities. The report is available at <https://www.caut.ca/latest/2018/09/caut-releases-results-first-national-surveycontract-academic-staff>
7. **Contract Academic Employees and Fair Employment Week.** My commentary on Contract Academic Employees and precarious working conditions in our public universities was published on October 28th by the Acadie Nouvelle. Although we continue to reach out to English-language newspapers on these issues as well, we have not received any response from them.
8. **Meeting of Chief Negotiators.** Chantal Sundaram from CAUT came to Fredericton on October 27th to lead a workshop for our members' chief negotiators. All member associations were present except for APPUMCE Edmundston, and ABPPUM Moncton's chief negotiators (Unit 1 and Unit 2) also attended. The workshop was very productive. Notably, we spent a significant part of the afternoon discussing ways that member associations might begin to coordinate our negotiating priorities to achieve greater gains in targeted areas.
9. **United Campus Labour Council (UCLC).** Lise has continued to attend UCLC meetings, as an observer, to maintain contact and solidarity with other unions represented on the campuses of UNB, UNBSJ and STU.
10. **Student Associations.** The New Brunswick Student Alliance (NBSA) Advocacy week took place during the second week of February and, on February 11, Lise, Jean and I met with the NBSA Board of Directors. Our discussion centered on their recently-released document "Building

Access, Building New Brunswick” and we expressed our support for the goals that they have outline therein.

- 11. Government Relations/Lobbying.** Our Executive Director, Lise Robichaud, and I met with our new Minister of Post-secondary Education, the Honourable Trevor Holder, and Deputy Minister Jean-Marc Dupuis on February 21st. We gave Minister Holder an overview of the FNBFA’s role, and we discussed funding for post-secondary education in New Brunswick, experiential learning, collective bargaining, international student recruitment, and the accessibility of our campuses.

In March we sent a letter to the Minister of Finance, the Honourable Ernie Steeves, in advance of the release of the provincial budget. Our letter outlined the FNBFA’s concerns and priorities in regard to the funding of our universities. Lise also attended the budget lock-down on March 19th.

We recently learned that Deputy Minister Jean-Marc Dupuis has left his position and a new Deputy Minister, Ms. Sadie Perron, has taken his place. We will be meeting with her in the coming weeks.

- 12. Other Media Presence.** In addition to the interview and article outlined above, in March I wrote a letter in response to an editorial, published in New Brunswick’s English-language newspapers, criticizing our public universities for their failure to train students for the job market. My letter outlined the problems with this conception of the role of public universities, and it was published in its entirety on March 14th.

- 13. Accommodations Workshop.** Lise and I continue to work Mona Chevalier, Laura Lozanski and Immanuel Lanzaderas, all from CAUT, on the accommodations workshop that we will be offering on Wednesday, May 8th. This workshop will be open to all FNBFA members and will address issues relating to workplace accommodations for faculty and the increasing number of student accommodations that we are seeing in our classrooms.

- 14. Updated FNBFA Documents and Website.** The FNBFA’s Achievements and Goals document has been updated to reflect our work over the past year, and this document has been added to our website. The FNBFA’s new website is being updated continually and other forms of social media are being exploited whenever possible, for example during the provincial elections campaign. An outline of the FNBFA’s history and mission have also been added to our website.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Lou Babineau
President, FNBFA