



## FNBFA President's Report

### Plenary Session and Annual General Meeting

May 9, 2024

Dear Colleagues:

The following is a summary of the activities of the Federation of New Brunswick Faculty Associations (FNBFA) and the issues and situations that have come to our attention in 2023-2024.

- **FNBFA Contribution to Federal Consultation on Insolvency Legislation and public universities and colleges** – On May 26, 2023, the FNBFA sent a written submission to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, François-Philippe Champagne, which was subsequently posted on the FNBFA website: [FNBFA's contribution to the federal consultations on insolvency legislation and public universities and colleges](#).

The CAUT reported as of March 28, 2024, the following update:

Amendments to the Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act (CCAA) passed second reading in the House of Commons on March 18.

The changes would exclude publicly funded post-secondary educational institutions from the CCAA – ensuring that no university or college faces the same situation seen at Laurentian University in 2021.

The Liberals, New Democrats and Bloc Québécois voted in favor of the changes and to send this bill to the committee stage.

The legislation is currently with the Standing Committee on Finance. It will then return to the House for third reading, and if passed, will move on to the Senate.

More information about removing public universities from the CCAA is available on the CAUT [website](#)

- **CAUT Fair Employment Week** – This year, CAUT's Fair Employment Week was held from October 16 to 20. A letter on the situation of our colleagues with precarious status was sent to the Minister of PETL. A commentary on the same subject was published by NB Media Coop. In response to our letter to the Minister, as usual, we received a rather

meaningless message, presenting the amounts of funding for PSE without addressing the fundamental question of the inadequacy of this funding, which is the cause of the situation we relentlessly deplore.

- [FNBFA's Goals and Achievements](#) were revised in November for 2023-2024.
- **Student unions or associations** – The FNBFA Executive Committee and the Executive Director attended the annual lobbying week of the New Brunswick Student Association (NBSA) and the University of New Brunswick Student Union on the Fredericton Campus (UNBSU), which is not a member of the NBSA. We also make sure to keep the lines of communication with student associations open throughout the year.
- **"Meet the MLAs"** annual event. Last February, the FNBFA and its member associations held the 2024 version of the annual "Meet the MLAs" event.

This is an opportunity to meet together with elected officials to raise awareness of important issues related to public post-secondary education in the province. This year, it was decided that the meetings were to be held with caucuses or individual MLAs of ridings where universities are located or neighbouring ridings. During the meetings, elected representatives were given the opportunity to ask questions to find out more about the important issues raised by the FNBFA.

Meetings with representatives of the Liberal party caucus and with one representative of the Green Party caucus were positive.

Questions based on the FNBFA presentation and points raised during the event were brought up with PETL's Deputy Minister when he appeared before the [Standing Committee on Public Accounts on February 22, 2024](#), by Megan Mitton, the Green caucus critic for post-secondary education, training and labour, as well as by Marco LeBlanc (Restigouche-Chaleur), the official opposition critic for the same file, who are members of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts.

It has been difficult to hold any meeting with the Conservative Party MLAs or caucus. Earlier in January 2024, we had the opportunity to meet virtually with PETL Minister Arlene Dunn. The Past President and the ED will meet with Jill Green (MLA for Fredericton North, Minister of Social Development, Minister responsible for the Economic and Social Inclusion, Minister responsible for the New Brunswick Housing Corporation) at her office on May 6, 2024.

- **Public university funding**  
As we annually do, the FNBFA submitted a letter to the provincial minister of finances during the pre-budget consultations. The main point of this year's letter was an argumentation of how a well-thought-out and well-funded education can be an important

part of the solution to the province's various problems (health, demographics, development).

The 2024-2025 provincial budget was tabled March 19, 2024. Stakeholders, including the FNBFA, were invited to participate in the annual stakeholders' lock-in before the budget was tabled. Funding for post-secondary education is increased in 2024-2025 by 2.6% with an additional 1.5% conditional to goals being met for enrolment.

To better understand the 2024-2025 PSE fundings announced in the budget, the FNBFA Executive Committee and Executive Director are having a meeting with the Director of Post-Secondary Relations at PETL, Rachel Brown on May 7.

Following the **international student cap** announced by the federal government on January 22, 2024, the announcement consequences on our universities financial situations were held with Minister Arlene Dunn when we had the opportunity to meet with her a few days later. Moreover, in March the FNBFA sent a [letter to the new PETL Minister, Greg Turner](#), in which we point out that this decision constitutes irrefutable proof that determining university operating grant amounts based on performance indicators beyond our control, such as enrolment numbers, are doomed to certain failure, due to the serious repercussions on universities' ability to equip themselves with the means to achieve their mission.

The FNBFA is in the process of drafting a position paper on viable alternatives to the current university funding model; this document will enable us to offer ideas and suggestions in our ongoing discussions with PETL and the public at large.

- **Study on university administrations**

Following the example of our colleagues of ANSUT who did a study on the bloating of university administrations in their province, the FNBFA AGM and Board of Directors meeting of September 2023 recommended that such a study be done also for our province. Preliminary work began on the study.

The ED searched the archives for documents containing information gathered in connection with access-to-information requests submitted by FNBFA in the early 2010s. She collected additional information where available on universities' website. A spreadsheet has been designed for data collection, which will be partially filled in with the data to be extracted from the above-mentioned sources before transmission to the member associations, each of which will then be asked to help collect recent data concerning their specific university.

- The FNBFA is open to opportunities for collaboration and seeks to work with **other associations and unions in New Brunswick**. The federation welcomes petitions, requests for letters of support or invitations to protests issues of common interests. Member

associations can expect to be invited to answer the calls to action in case they hadn't received it themselves. However, the current year has been relatively quiet on this front.

### Upcoming activities

- **Atlantic Canada Council of Faculty Associations (ACCFA)** The FNBFA takes its turn in organizing the annual ACCFA conference, a forum for exchange and mutual support for faculty associations in Atlantic Canada. It is the UPEI faculty association's turn to host the meeting normally held in June. The date and the meeting agenda have not yet been revealed.
- **Provincial Elections**, officially scheduled for October 21, 2024, will be another opportunity to drive the federation's message home with politicians and New Brunswickers and we are getting ready. Members are encouraged to raise PSE issues with candidates competing for MLA positions in their ridings.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the following people:

- the Executive Director, Lise Robichaud, for her unwavering support of my role as President and her contribution to the activities, smooth operation, and initiatives of the Federation;
- my colleagues on the Executive Committee for their unwavering support: Jean Sauvageau (FAUST), Lacina Coulibaly (APPUMCE), Julien Massicotte (APPUMCE) and Carol Pomare (MAFA);
- the members of the Board of Directors and the various committees for their invaluable contribution to the smooth running of the Federation's activities.

The federation was founded **by and for** New Brunswick public universities faculty associations because we are stronger together. The FNBFA depends on the volunteer work of its members to accomplish its work in order to meet its goals. Let us continue to volunteer our time and encourage our colleagues to do the same in order to ensure the mission of the Federation. These are stressful times for what we stand for: academia and quality post-secondary education. Let us not spare any effort.

Respectfully submitted,

Hector Guy Adégbidi  
President  
April 23, 2024