



CTF/FCE Source Podcast

Women Leaders in Education Presents NBTA President Connie Keating **Episode Highlights**

In this second episode of the Women Leaders in Education podcast series, join Julieanna Mawko as she connects with Connie Keating, President of the New Brunswick Teachers' Association (NBTA). In this episode, Connie recounts her increasing involvement in the NBTA leading up to her presidency, the challenges facing women in leadership, and the advice that she received from others that helped her along the way.

Come learn about the women leading their teacher organizations throughout the CTF/FCE membership! For resources to support women in leadership, check out femleadfem.ca.

What barriers exist for women pursuing leadership roles and how can we overcome them?

Connie Keating (CK): I think that when women look at the commitment that's needed and they look at their family, sometimes they think that they can't have both. And that is definitely a significant barrier. CK: Certainly, there needs to be supports in place for females, knowing that they may be raising a family, they may actually be involved in the community in other ways and just the belief that they are very capable. Sometimes those leadership skills need to be nurtured.

In facing those challenges, what has helped you get to where you are today? Was there anyone that helped you along the way?

CK: Claudette Bradshaw – one of her philosophies was that regardless of the colour of your political party that you supported, or your socioeconomic status, that when there is an issue, especially around children and education and literacy, that everybody needed to come to the table, all the stakeholders. And so, I always had that on my mind and understanding that I needed to listen and be motivated for change by just bringing people together to have those conversations.

What advice do you have for women pursuing leadership in their organization?

CK: I think it's really important to get involved in your association/union, as early as possible in your career to have an understanding of how it works, the services that are offered, certainly just getting involved in the opportunities that come your way right out of the gate...there's a lot of commitment, but I think that it's very worthwhile. Marilyn Boudreau, a very wise former Executive Director of the New Brunswick Teachers' Federation said, "get involved in your union before you actually need the services of the union."

CK: Looking back, I never would have seen myself in this particular seat, but certainly again, it was about answering the call when opportunities were presented...in a number of cases, it was really outside my comfort zone, but it was through that discomfort and the change that I really grew as a leader and teacher. And I think that's really important to remember for anyone aspiring to a leadership position.