

The Educator

Feb 2022



A Newspaper for School Councils in Newfoundland and Labrador

Message from the President



Hello Members!

It has been a challenging and stressful return to school after the holidays, but students are adjusting to being back and we are seeing many events and celebrations taking place in schools. NLFSC continues to be grateful to our teachers and school staff for their willingness to ensure students are safe and the disruption to learning is

minimal. We know it has not been easy and we see all you do for our students.

When schools moved online teachers made—and continue to make—superhuman efforts to help all students stay engaged in learning.

They identified and filled gaps, found ways to connect with everyone in their classes, worked together to address challenges, and developed strategies to transform education for a new era.

Any parent who sat next to their child during remote learning sessions developed a greater appreciation for what teachers do.

Connecting with kids through a screen was tough, but our teachers went above and beyond to make it all work.

With the reopening of school, teachers now have the added responsibilities of helping kids catch up on work missed or not completed during remote learning.

Teachers also work hard to reconnect and communicate with their students not just academically, but emotionally.

Thanks to them our children have learned to adjust to the restrictions during this long pandemic, and how to be resilient when everything in their world turned upside down.

I am looking forward to celebrating Teacher/Staff Appreciation Week more than ever this year. It will allow me to once again, express my sincerest gratitude to our teachers, administrators, secretaries, custodians, student assistants, bus drivers, and ALL other school staff for the care they give to our students on a daily basis.

The pandemic and the months of learning at home have made us realized just how much our teachers and school staff do for our children– and the patience required to do it. It takes a lot to give a lot. Patience, kindness, and understanding is constantly required to nurture young minds and personalities. Our teachers and school staff play a critical role in the lives of our children and deserve to how know much they are appreciated.

Please join NLFSC from February 13 – 19th and tell our teachers and school staff how grateful we are for their dedication to education and students.

Sincerely,

Don

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NLFSC Membership Renewal

Thank you to the school councils that have renewed their membership! We greatly appreciate your support.

To those who have not, please do so as soon as possible.

Your continued membership will help support our mission to advocate for excellence in education.

Teacher/Staff Appreciation Week

February 13–19, 2022



Thank you for helping us learn, keeping us safe and inspiring us every day

This year's annual National Teacher /Staff Appreciation Week (TSAW) takes place on February 13-19th. NLFSC encourages our membership to acknowledge and celebrate the hard work and care our teachers and support staff give to our children on a daily basis.

We realize this years' Teacher/Staff Appreciation Week will look different and many gestures and events that were part of past celebrations such as going into schools to decorate and host luncheons won't be permitted. However, there are still ways to express appreciation to the staff at your school.

Parents are permitted to make homemade treats such as cookies and muffins to drop off at school, but all food items **MUST** be individually

wrapped. Buffets and potluck meals are **NOT** permitted.

Prepackaged food from a commercial establishment, restaurant orders, and snacks like bars and chips are permitted, but please check with your school's administration beforehand. Many of you may already be aware of the regulations on food being brought into schools and it is likely many schools have already issued memos on it.

Gift cards and mementos are also permitted, but activities during TSAW do not have to be costly. A heartfelt handwritten note or Thank You card goes a long way in reiterating to our teachers and school staff that they are valued.

We also encourage parents and councils to email and text messages of appreciation to teachers and staff, and to post on the schools Facebook page and website.

As well, you are welcome to post pics of your TSAW celebrations on our Facebook page (www.facebook.com/nlfederationofschoolcouncils). We would love to showcase what is happening at your school during TSAW and throughout the year. Please include the name of your school and any other information.



What Teachers and School Staff Do

Teachers and our school staff have some of the toughest jobs. They are there for our children day in and day out, often under trying circumstances and with less than adequate resources and support. Their professionalism, dedication, and expertise form the cornerstone of our nation's public education system. Without the hard work of teachers and school staff, Canadian scientists, artists, and political and business leaders would not be among the best in the world.

Many education leaders suggest the most effective way to improve education in this country is to give teachers the status, support, and recognition they genuinely deserve.

Recognizing our teachers and school staff, for all they do, does not need to be reserved for one special week during the year.

One of the greatest ways parents can show their appreciation to those who work in our schools is by establishing a good working relationship with teachers/school staff, and by being actively involved in their child's education all year long. Talk to your children's teachers on a regular basis, not just at scheduled parent-teacher conferences. Find out how you can help with

homework assignments and reinforce at home what is being taught in the classroom. By being an involved parent, you are showing your respect and appreciation for your child's teachers and the school. When parents and teachers establish open communication and good working relations, great things get accomplished for students.

Give Teachers/School Staff More Quality Time

One thing that parents probably don't think about is that the "quality time" teachers and school staff spend with our children is just as important to them as it is for parents. Quality time for teachers means teaching.

Often teachers are asked to assume other duties that take time away from teaching our children. When you advocate for teachers, advocate for giving teachers the time they need to teach. Let your teachers and school staff know you value their profession and support their needs. Be their advocate and you will find them advocating for you and your children!

A little gesture can make a huge difference.

When parents take time to thank teachers, it makes both the parents and teachers feel good about working together; and when parents and teachers work together, student achievement soars!



2022 Pink Shirt Day

Bullying is often a problem in our schools, workplaces, homes, and over the Internet.

On **February 23rd** we encourage School Councils, across the province, to wear something pink to symbolize that we as a society will not tolerate bullying anywhere.

Pink Shirt Day began in Nova Scotia in 2007, when two Grade 12 students - David Shepherd and Travis Price - stood up to defend a young male person who was bullied because he was wearing a pink shirt during the first week of school. The students took a stand by wearing pink shirts to show solidarity, and handing out pink shirts to their classmates.

Pink Shirt Day has since become a national campaign aimed to raise awareness about the power to prevent bullying.

Newfoundland and Labrador will use this day to raise awareness of the negative effects of bullying and show that any form of bullying will not be tolerated.

You too can join the sea of pink! NLFSC invites you to take the opportunity to address the issue of bullying with your children or teens, by wearing pink, planning an event or activity, or just having an intentional conversation.



2022 Freedom to Read Week

Freedom to Read Week (February 20st- 26th) is an annual event that encourages Canadians to think about and reaffirm their commitment to intellectual freedom, which is guaranteed them under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Freedom to Read kit is suitable for librarians and educators. It includes a poster, extensive background material on freedom to read and some classroom exercises. For more information visit their website at

<http://www.freedomtoread.ca/kits.index.htm>

National Nutrition Month



March is Nutrition Month across Canada. A time for Canadians to focus on the importance of making informed food choices, developing sound eating and physical activity habits.

During this year's events dietitians, from all over Canada, will explore the key "ingredients" needed to change our food systems for a healthier tomorrow.

These ingredients will take the form of actions that can improve an individual's health.

Student Appeals

The Newfoundland and Labrador English School Board recognizes that students and parents/guardians may sometimes disagree with decisions of the Board.

Many student concerns can best be resolved through informal means at the school level, or by involving district staff. However, students and parents or caregivers have the right to formally

appeal in writing to the Board a decision which significantly impacts them, in accordance with Section 22 of the Schools Act, 1997.

Before beginning an appeal at the District level, parents/guardians and/or students are strongly encouraged to try to resolve the issue at the school level. The determination of whether a decision or a failure to make a decision significantly impacts upon a student's education, health or safety shall be made on a case-by-case basis.



The Cuffer is a benefit of membership in the Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of School Councils. Annual membership dues are based on school enrolment. Individual subscriptions are available at \$15 per year.

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