



The Educator

A newspaper for School Councils in Newfoundland and Labrador

April 2022

Message from the President



Hello School Councils. Spring is in the air, and it brings with it a renewed enthusiasm for new growth and rejuvenation. Spring also brings with it the anticipation of the upcoming budget and as school councils we are pleased that government will continue its financial commitment to education. NLFSC believes it is critical for the government to continue its prudent management of the province's finances in order to ensure

continued prosperity in the years ahead. We also believe a sound fiscal plan is a necessary, but there are important programs and services that require investment –especially in education.

This is a very exciting time for NLFSC and School Councils. The merging of the English School District with the department of education means a stronger role for councils. The revisions to the Schools Act regarding school councils will provide council members with a better understanding of their role because training will be mandatory on a yearly basis.

The changes would also enable smaller schools, who are unable to acquire the mandatory numbers needed to establish a council, to operate.

I am pleased to see the focus on the importance of school councils as well as an understanding and appreciation of the impact they have on education and student success – shown by the Minister of Education and government. Education is a partnership involving parents, students, teachers, principals, school staff, the department of education, government, and the community. Your involvement in a council gives you the opportunity to strengthen that partnership, and to be part of a dedicated team working to ensure a high quality of education and an accountable education system for the children of NL. Your participation is making a difference!

There are changes coming for NLFSC as well. It is anticipated that NLFSC will be renamed and included in legislation in the same manner as school councils.

The mandate of the new group will be to provide parental and community advice to the minister based on the input from local school councils. This includes regional and local matters, provincial programs, policies and all initiatives that affect education.

Regional meetings with the chairs of school councils will be held at least twice a year for the purpose of discussing school matters arising in the area. Matters raised by local school councils, as well as advice and recommendations, will be passed along to the Minister.

As we approach National Volunteer Week, I would like to recognize the outstanding contributions of our School Councils. Our School Council members are dedicated volunteers who give countless hours in their advisory roles to enhance the learning environment at their schools. I applaud the many parents, teachers and community members for the time they spend creating inclusive environments that welcome and engage families in their child's learning and well-being.

Research continues to show that positive parental participation has a great impact on student achievement and well-being, and that our schools are better when they are strongly connected with parents. Many thanks to our school councils for endeavouring to create strong partnerships between school and the community.

Sincerely,

Don

Email: Don.Coombs@easternhealth.ca



2022 National Volunteer Week

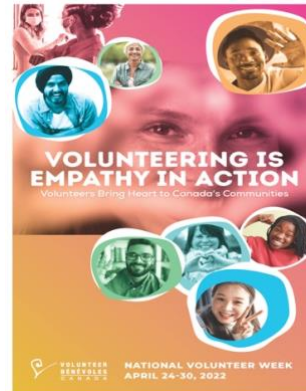
This year's National Volunteer Week (April 24 – 30) provides the opportunity for everyone to salute the invaluable work and inspiring acts of kindness shown by thousands of people across NL. If nothing else, the pandemic and shut-down has taught us how vital volunteers are and how much their services are needed to keep our non-profits functioning.

The week allows NLFSC to reflect on the efforts given by school councils throughout this province who are committed to helping students, and supporting schools.

The global pandemic has changed the way education is delivered and the way that schools operate. Never before has the role of a school council been as important as it is now. Many of you have shown great leadership in advocating on behalf of your school and communities. Your commitment to supporting your children and schools has been reaffirming, constructive and exceptionally encouraging. Thank you for your dedication. Please continue to be the bridge and information highway for your school community.

National Volunteer Week Theme

April 24-30, 2022



Let's celebrate Canada's volunteers. The empathy, compassion and generosity of volunteers creates connected communities and builds a stronger Canada.

The National Volunteer Week theme for 2022, Volunteering Is Empathy In Action, affirms the strong connection between volunteerism and empathy. This profoundly human connection is at the heart of healthier individuals and stronger communities.

Empathy is a quality that can help people relate to others and build awareness around different experiences. It connects people in ideas and actions and helps create bonds forged in common goals and aspirations.

Volunteering can help us develop empathy, to see the world through the eyes of others. It can connect people from diverse backgrounds and life experiences, expanding our views. It can build our capacity to work collectively and contribute to a vibrant, inclusive society.

From coast to coast to coast in formal and informal settings, volunteers create caring, collaborative, and compassionate communities. During National Volunteer Week 2022, we celebrate the contributions of Canada's millions of volunteers: their actions, their understanding, and their genuine concern for the world around them.

Volunteering, putting empathy into action, can build communities where people feel happier, healthier, and more welcome – creating a stronger, more connected Canada.



Governor General's History Award for Excellence in Teaching – Deadline May 31st, 2022

Each year, Canada's History Society recognizes 6 teachers for innovative approaches to teaching Canadian history. The 2022 recipients will be awarded:

- An individual cash prize of \$2500;
 - A \$1000 cash prize for the recipient's school;
- and

- A trip for two to Ottawa to attend the awards ceremony and the History Makers celebration dinner (subject to public health regulations)

If you or a teacher you know makes history come to life in the classroom, submit a nomination or apply online today! The

CanadasHistory.ca/GGAward

If you have any questions about the award or application, please contact Brooke Campbell at bcampbell@canadashistory.ca.

Membership Renewal

If you haven't already done so, please renew your annual membership with NLFSC

Why should your school be a part of NLFSC? Our commitment to education is the driving force behind everything we do.

Your continued membership will help support our mission to advocate for excellence in education for all students in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Your membership allows NLFSC to continue to represent the concerns of School Councils.

The NL Federation of School Councils is the provincial umbrella group for School Councils. NLFSC provides school councils and parent groups with a voice on education issues, and

encourages positive parental involvement at all levels of education.

The Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of School Councils also offers information, support, and guidance to parents and school councils to help them better understand the policies and procedures of their local schools, school districts, and the Department of Education.

If you have not renewed your membership and would like a renewal form, please email us at nlfsci@gmail.com



Kinderstart: Frequently Asked Questions

When should I register my child for KinderStart?

Registration for KinderStart is automatic when parents/caregivers register their child for Kindergarten at their designated school.

Registration takes place in the calendar year a child becomes four years of age.

Parents/caregivers should watch their local newspapers and school newsletters for more details regarding Kindergarten registration in their area.

2. Is busing provided for KinderStart sessions if I live greater than 1.6 kilometres from my school?

Busing is not provided for KinderStart sessions.

3. How do I register my child for KinderStart?

Registration for KinderStart is automatic when parents/caregivers register their child for Kindergarten at their designated school.

4. What does my child need to know before entering school?

Children arrive at KinderStart at different stages of development and with a multitude of experiences. Teachers organize their classrooms to meet the developing needs of all children. The KinderStart program is designed to expand children's learning experiences, extend understandings, shape concepts, acquire basic skills and form positive attitudes toward learning. Parents who support their children's learning in the early years through reading, listening, singing, embracing, experiencing new things and promoting independence will have given their child the necessary skills for school.

6. My child has a disability. Is there anything I should know before registering him for KinderStart?

Should a parent have a child with a disability entering school and the child already has an ISSP, a transition meeting with members of the school attending should happen prior to registration for KinderStart. The child may need additional support such as student assistant, itinerant or special education.

If the child does not have an ISSP the parent may initiate the process by contacting the school where the child will be registered and begin the collaboration process.



EYE SEE EYE LEARN

Newfoundland and Labrador Eye See Eye Learn Program

Eye See Eye Learn, is NL Government funded program designed to allow children to overcome potential barriers to eye exams and contributes to a more positive learning experience, as well as an overall improvement to their quality of life.

The Eye See Eye Learn Program provides a free comprehensive eye examination for every kindergarten-age child resident in the province and provides one pair of free prescription eyeglasses to children who require them. Where available, a parent is required to access private insurance before seeking financial assistance from the program.

The Essilor Foundation is providing the eyeglasses free of charge to children who require them, and the program is administered through the Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Optometrists.

To be eligible, a child must be born in 2016, and they must have a valid MCP card.

If eligible, your child may be provided free eye examination and one pair of prescription eyeglasses (if required and not covered by your personal insurance or another government program).

HOW CAN MY CHILD PARTICIPATE?

1. Book an appointment with a Newfoundland
2. and Labrador Optometrist to arrange an eye examination for your child.
3. Complete the Eye See Eye Learn application form, available on the Department of Health and Community Services Website, and give it to the Optometrist at your child's eye examination.
4. If your child is covered by insurance, please bring a copy of your insurance documents to your appointment. The Department of Health and Community Services (HCS) will cover the cost of any amount not covered by your insurance (to a maximum of \$80.00 per child). If you do not have insurance, HCS will cover the cost of the eye

examination (to a maximum of \$80.00).
If required, and not covered by your insurance, the program will provide one free pair of prescription eyeglasses per child.

5. Please remember to bring your child's valid MCP card with you to your appointment



Representation

NLFSC is in regular contact with Department of Education officials, Minister Tom Osbourne; Tony Stack, CEO of English School District; and the NL Teachers Association.

We continue to be vigilant in our attempts to keep issues that are crucial to education at the top of every discussion such as class size, administrator workload, student assistant time, mental and emotional wellness, teacher allocations, and French Immersion.

Since our last newsletter NLFSC President Don Coombs has met with members of the Teacher Allocation Review Committee, and submitted concerns and recommendations relevant to the Review of the Teacher Training Act. He has also met and spoken with numerous representatives from the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development on changes to the Schools Act, affecting school councils and NLFSC. NLFSC has also participated in several online surveys, pertaining to education and students, and continues to share information and network with Home and School Associations from Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick. NLFSC has been invited to attend an Annual General Meeting in PEI.





Parachute Safe Kids Week will be held on May 30 to June 5, 2022, with the theme of safe and active transportation.

Safe Kids Week is an annual campaign to raise public awareness of child safety issues in Canada, encouraging community involvement as part of the solution.

The topic of 2022's Safe Kids Week digital campaign is safe and active transportation for children.

With fewer than five per cent of children and fewer than one per cent of youth meeting movement behaviour guidelines during COVID-19 restrictions, creating opportunities for kids to move, such as through active transportation, is more important than ever. Parachute's vision is to make the roads safer so that every kid can walk, cycle, or wheel to encourage mental, physical, social and emotional well-being.

For more information, please email

safekidsweek@parachute.ca

MUN Faculty of Education Legacy of Leadership Awards

The Faculty of Education at Memorial University has established the **Legacy of Leadership Awards** to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of Teacher Education in Newfoundland and Labrador. These annual awards will recognize individuals who are recognized leaders and have made important contributions over their careers within the context of the K-12 and/or post-secondary education systems in Newfoundland and Labrador. The awards will be presented annually to one individual who has contributed to the K-12 school system and one individual who has contributed to the public post-secondary/higher education system.

For more information, visit the [Legacy of Leadership Awards](#) on the Faculty of Education website. The deadline for nomination is **May 31, 2022**. If you have any inquiries regarding this award, please contact Craig Adams, Events Coordinator, E-mail: cadams@mun.ca.

NL Premier and Minister's Awards

Do you know a teacher (including substitute teachers) who demonstrates innovation in instruction and a commitment to preparing their students for future success? If so, you should consider nominating them for the **Premier's Award for Teaching Innovation**

Do you know a passionate teacher at the primary, elementary or secondary level who demonstrates a commitment to supporting the social, emotional and mental health of their students, colleagues or school community as a whole? If so, you should consider nominating them for the **Minister's Award for Compassion in Teaching**.

The teaching awards were established by the Premier of Newfoundland and Labrador and the Minister of Education in 2021 to acknowledge the leadership role that educators play in the lives of students.

Nominations for the 2022 Premier's Award and the Minister's Award must be submitted by **May 20, 2022 — 11:59 p.m.** Late entries will not be considered.

Who is eligible?

- Permanent residents of Newfoundland and Labrador.
- Certified teachers (including substitute teachers) at the primary, elementary or

secondary level in Newfoundland and Labrador.

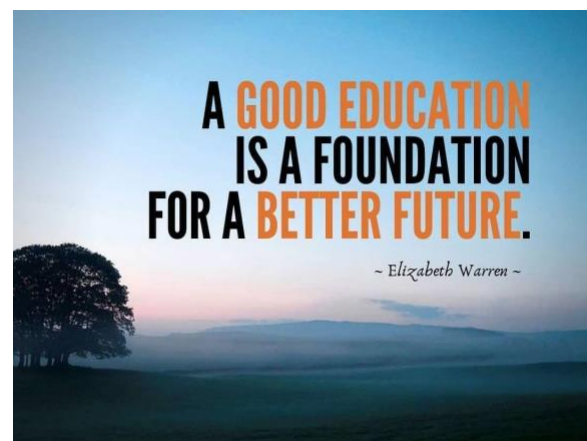
- Awards will be selected in each region (Eastern; Central, Western; Labrador and the Francophone School District.)

Who Can Nominate?

Nominators may be any person or group with direct knowledge of the nominee's contribution, such as:

- Student
- Parent
- Colleague
- School principal, Administrator or supervisor

More information on the awards can be found on the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development website





Keeping children and youth safe is everyone's responsibility. If you are worried about a child or youth, it could be your call that makes a difference.

In Newfoundland and Labrador, it is the [law](#) that every person immediately report suspected abuse and/or neglect for children (under age 16) and youth (ages 16 and 17).

It takes a community to raise a child. Your call can lead to children, youth and families getting the help they may need.

How do you report suspected abuse and/or neglect?

To report a concern of suspected child abuse and/or neglect of a child (under age 16) and/or a youth (ages 16 & 17) call toll-free:
1-833-552-2368.

If a child is in immediate danger, call 911 or your local police.

The Educator is a benefit of membership in the Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of School Councils.

Annual membership dues are based on school enrollment. Individual subscriptions are available at \$15 per year.

The views expressed or implied in this publication are not necessarily official positions of the Federation.

The mention of any program, organization, resource, product, person, place, or school does not constitute an endorsement by NLFSC.

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