



The Educator

A Newspaper for School Councils in Newfoundland and Labrador

Fall 2022

Message from the President



On behalf of The NL Federation of School Councils, it is my pleasure to welcome you back to a new school year. Our students are already settled back in school and learning is taking place. Thank you to our administrators, teachers, and all school staff for working so hard to make the adjustment back to school an easy process. We know many of our educators, secretaries, and caretakers were setting

up classrooms, cleaning, and making sure everything was ready long before the first day of school.

The unpaid working hours given by all school staff is truly admirable and doesn't go unnoticed by many parents and school councils. We know what you do, we know you care, and we truly appreciate your dedication to the education system in NL

We also hear your concerns about the learning conditions in school. Overcrowded classrooms, behavior issues, insufficient student assistant time, increasing social emotional needs, inadequate support staff, and far too many expectations are just a few of the complexities that impede teaching and learning.

NLFSC is not always in the media talking about these issues, but these topics are always first and foremost during all meetings with the Minister and department of education officials.

Our commitment to advocate for improvements in the education system remains strong and our

affirmation to continue to be the voice of school councils, parents, and students never wavers.

All stakeholders in education have a shared commitment to provide all students with a quality education and the skills and resources required to fulfill their dreams. It is only by working together, that we can bridge those gaps and deficiencies, and replace them with resources that our students need to succeed in an ever-changing society.

At this time many school councils are setting the agenda for their first meeting of the year. School councils are mandated organizations that facilitate parental participation in our schools. School councils are an excellent way for you to get involved in your child's education. - and is an important forum for involving parents/family and community in matters that affect the education of students.

If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to email me at: Don.Coombs@easternhealth.ca You can also contact our executive Director Denise Pike at the NLFSC office (709-764-8993) or by email at: nlfsci@gmail.com On behalf of the NLFSC Executive have a safe and successful school year.

Sincerely,

Don

Email: Don.Coombs@easternhealth.ca



2022-2023 School Holiday Schedule

- September 6 - Administration Day
- September 7 - School Reopens/Students
- September 19 - Schools and Worksites Closed to Honour Queen Elizabeth II
- September 30 - National Day for Truth and Reconciliation
- October 10 - Thanksgiving Day
- November 11 - Remembrance Day
- December 21 - Last Day - Christmas
- January 3 - School Reopens
- April 6 - Last Day - Easter
- April 17 - School Reopens
- May 22 - Victoria Day
- June 22 Last Day - Summer
- June 23 - Administration Day

Meeting with Minister Haggie

On September 16, 2022 President Don Coombs and Executive Director Denise Pike met with Education Minister John Haggie, Deputy Minister Greg O’Leary, and other Department of Education representatives. The following is an overview of the some of the topics discussed.

Student Assistant Time

During the meeting Don stressed the need for an increase to student assistant time allocated to each school. Many schools have seen a reduction in student assistant time and it is impacting student safety and programming.

Student assistants provide essential support for students and a reduction in this allocation can have negative academic ramifications on all students the classroom teacher.

Disruptive Students

Parents and school councils are saying there is an uptick in disruptive students in schools and it is interfering with learning for all students. Teachers are doing their best, but the time they need to teach often has to be used for behavioral management. NLFSC is hearing from parents who say their child loves school and learning, but is afraid and often don’t feel safe. More and more parents are becoming less tolerant of their child coming home from school with bruises and bumps stemming from being hit and shoved.

Parents are also fed up with interruptions in learning when their child is forced to leave a classroom

because another student is having an emotional meltdown.

Parents, school councils and NLFSC believe ALL children have a right to learn. They fully support the theory of Inclusive Education, however more resources are needed to properly manage a full inclusive classroom.

Small class size, additional student assistant time, and adequate resources and support is needed to ensure a successful inclusive education model and allow all children to achieve academic success to the best of their ability.

Substitute Teachers

The NLFSC membership is concerned about the shortage of substitute teachers.

Substitute teacher shortage has been a serious issue for years, especially in rural parts of the province, however it is now affecting urban and semi-urban areas.

When teachers are absent, and there aren’t enough substitute teachers to fill in, classes are combined, other teachers have to give up their planning periods, and instructional resource teachers, guidance counsellors and administrators may have to fill in.

In any case, student learning is derailed, and some staff lose valuable time to plan and complete their own work. It’s not sustainable.

NLESD and the Department of Education continues to recruit regular and retired substitute teachers, and is working with the Department of Education, Memorial University, and the NLTA to develop both short-term and long-term strategies to address any substitute teacher shortages.

The Department of Education has allowed additional substitutes to be hired on term contracts and loosened restrictions around the hiring of retired teachers by increasing the number of days a retired teacher is permitted to teach.

NLFSC feels calling back retired teachers is not a long-term solution. There needs to be an increased emphasis on overall recruitment and retention. NLFSC believes the expectations and workload on teachers has increased dramatically, therefore teaching is becoming more challenging and a less attractive profession for young people considering career options.

NLFSC Future Role in Education

The framework is in place to integrate NLFSC into the Parental Advisory Committee on Education (PACE). The mandate of PACE will be to provide parental and community advice to the Minister of Education based on local input from school councils.

PACE will consist of 11 representatives. 6 will be elected members from local school councils (1 of which will be a representative from French First Language Schools) - the other 5 will be regional representatives.

An additional 5 members will be appointed by the Minister from a pool put forward by the Independent Appointments Commission. NLFSC expects PACE will be in place by the beginning of the 2023-24 school year.

Back to School Media Release

As students, teachers and all school staff commence their first full week of learning the Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of School Councils (NLFSC) hopes the 2022-23 school year will be a more stable one filled with rich and rewarding learning experiences. “The beginning of a new school year is always exhilarating and marks a milestone for many, especially our Kindergarten students and those starting their senior year,” says NLFSC President Don Coombs. “It also marks a new chapter in the lives of all our students, parents, teachers and school staff. The past 2 years have been very tumultuous and there were many disruptions in school life. We are not out of this pandemic yet; however, we are happy to see students returning to near normal learning conditions and praying for a safe and healthy year.”

Although the 2022-23 school year has just begun, NLFSC is already hearing concerns from parents, students, and teachers. “We’ve received emails and phone calls regarding hiring and staffing shortages, class size, the need for more student assistant time, and violent and disruptive students,” says Coombs.

“We will be meeting with Minister Haggie and these issues will be included in our discussion.”



Are You New to A School Council?

Welcome and thank you for getting involved in your education community in this way! We hope you enjoy your term.

Be sure to locate a copy of the School Council Handbook, or download it at:

<http://www.ed.gov.nl.ca/edu/publications/k12/Handbook2ndedition.pdf>

This document is an invaluable resource in assisting school council members to understand their roles and responsibilities.

A School Councils effectiveness often depends on how it develops and utilizes the capabilities of its members.

A School Council should have a mix of members reflecting the school community.

One of the most important functions of School Council is to advise on the quality of the teaching and learning in the school.

The principal is responsible for the direct management of the school and, therefore, has responsibility for the development and implementation of school-based policies.

School councils act in an advisory capacity whereby they advise on how to implement such policies. This advisory role provides school councils and the school community the opportunity to improve the teaching and learning environment of the school.

School Councils promote transparency as council actions and decisions are communicated to the school community through their meeting minutes. Minutes should be posted on the school’s website.

NLFSC appreciates your willingness to be part of a school council and for renewing your membership with NLFSC each year.



This year marks 43 years the Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of School Councils (NLFSC) has been representing local school councils, PTAs,

and home and school associations. There are many changes and challenges taking place in the school system and NLFSC is busy advocating on your behalf. Your continued membership will help

support our mission in striving for excellence in education, for all children in Newfoundland and Labrador, and to represent your school council as part of the collective voice for school councils and for all parents/guardians.

Membership Form Attached in Email

EVERY TEACHER NEEDS A
"NO MATTER WHAT" TEACHER
FRIEND. SOMEONE THEY CAN
CALL NO MATTER WHAT.
SOMEONE WHO WILL NOT
JUDGE THEM NO MATTER
WHAT. SOMEONE WHO WILL
TRY TO CHEER THEM UP NO
MATTER WHAT.

**BORED
TEACHERS**



Motorists, throughout the province, are reminded to drive with extra caution, especially in school zones. The following rules, outlined in the Highway Traffic Act, must be observed at all times:

- Drivers must obey the posted speed limit in school zones and yield to pedestrians using a crosswalk.
- Drivers must not pass a school bus while stopped and must obey the visual signals of the bus driver or the bus, such as the activated stop arm and flashing red or amber lights.
- Drivers are required to leave one metre of open space between their vehicle and bicycles or pedestrians where posted speed limits are 60 kilometres per hour or less.
- Motorists are also reminded that driving while using a mobile phone or any other hand-held electronic device is illegal and poses a serious safety risk to all road users.



Dyslexia Awareness Month

October 2022

October 1st, 2022 marks the start of the annual national Dyslexia Awareness Month.

Each year across Canada, monuments and buildings are lit up red, schools and workplaces wear red, and cities and towns sign proclamations to officially declare the month of October as Dyslexia Awareness Month. Mark it Read has also been listed on the Government of Canada website as a health promotion month.

Dyslexia is a specific learning disability in reading. Kids with dyslexia have trouble reading accurately and fluently. They may also have trouble with reading comprehension, spelling and writing. According to the [International Dyslexia Association](#), 15-20% of the population has a language-based learning disability. Dyslexia is the most common cause of reading, writing and spelling difficulties. Dyslexia affects males and females nearly equally as well as people from different ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds nearly equally.

Prekindergarten Pilot Program

The waitlist registration for the first Pre-Kindergarten pilot locations opened on September 8, 2022 at these locations:

- East Point Elementary, St. John's;
- Elizabeth Park Elementary, Paradise;
- Elwood Elementary, Deer Lake;
- Gander Academy, Gander; and
- Peacock Primary School, Happy Valley-Goose Bay.

YMCA of Newfoundland and Labrador (YMCA-NL), was selected as the not-for-profit operator for all 35 Pre-Kindergarten Pilot Locations. Information on the program can be found on their site at www.ymcanl.com/pre-kindergarten-program

Pre-Kindergarten locations will open in phases. These initial five locations are anticipated to open before the end of November, 2022. Second phase locations are targeted for opening between December, 2022 and early 2023. While global supply chain shortages continue to impact project schedules in all sectors, all parties continue to work toward the goal of opening all 35 pilot locations by March 31, 2023. These pilot locations will account for approximately 600 new regulated early learning and child care spaces.



The School Lunch Association is a registered charity whose mission is to operate a non-stigmatizing program that provides a hot, nutritious lunch for school children, regardless of a families' financial situation. The program serves over 6,300 meals each day, in 36 schools across Newfoundland.

In Newfoundland and Labrador 1 in 5 children grow up in a low-income family. Many of these low-income families experience a high degree of food insecurity. The School Lunch Association provides lunch for any child, regardless of their family's ability to pay.

The School Lunch Association provides 2-3 servings of fruit and vegetables every day. Last year we served more than 30,000 lbs of fruit and vegetables in our lunches!

Approximately 14,000 students have access to the School Lunch program each day. This represents 50% of the primary and elementary students on the

Avalon or 30% of all primary and elementary students in the Province.

Our program is expanding rapidly. This year, with the addition of 2 new schools, we will average 6,300 meals a day. These additions will substantially increase the children who have access to the School Lunch program.

We have received \$125,000 from the Provincial Government this year. This is the only Provincial funding we receive and translates into a mere 13 cents per meal. Our 2019 budget is approximately \$3.1 million. Schools are not required to fundraise for the program, nor are they asked to supply food, volunteers, or purchase equipment for us to operate. The Association does not receive any funding from the Federal Government.

How to Register

To take part, parents must first register their children. Registration takes place each year and will be available starting in August.

Parents can register their children at www.schoollunch.ca. Payments can be made by Visa or Mastercard online.

Alternatively, parents can print and complete the registration form (located on website), then submit the form, as well as your payment at your school, or at the School Lunch office.

The registration cost each year is \$10 for one child, \$15 for two children, or \$20 for three or more children.

Parents are encouraged to order online at www.schoollunch.ca.

Online ordering

Each month our online ordering opens for the following month service. For example, for October's lunches, ordering takes place a week in September. Online orders are payable by Visa or Mastercard. A username and password is required to access the online ordering system. You would have been asked to set one up, if you completed your registration online. If you submitted a paper registration form, you will need to call our office at 754-5323 to have a username and password set up.

Paper Menu Ordering

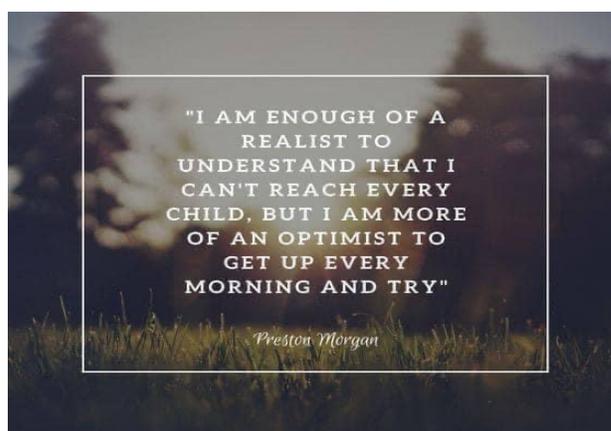
Each month we send out a paper menu and envelope to schools for the following month service. Paper menus and

envelopes are distributed to students who are registered for paper ordering.

Parents choose lunches they would like, then return the completed envelopes to their school. Envelopes can also be dropped off at our main office.

Our goal is to expand the School Lunch program throughout Newfoundland & Labrador. We recently celebrated our grand opening at Clarenville Middle School.

To arrange a time to discuss the concept of expanding the School Lunch Program to your school, please contact John Finn, Executive Director of the School Lunch Association @ 709-754-5323 (Ext: 223)
Email: jfinn@schoollunch.ca



2022-23. Capacity Grant

Applications for the 2022-23 Capacity Grant Program are now available. Capacity Grants provide funding to advance inclusion by supporting persons with disabilities to become fully engaged in their communities. and is designed to help non-profit community-based organizations, incorporated municipalities, and Indigenous governments and organizations prevent and remove barriers to inclusion.

The application-based program provides grants of up to \$50,000 for eligible projects that will:

- Build a positive image of disability;
- Deliver services with dignity, fairness and respect;
- Engage persons with disabilities in decision making; and
- Increase access to disability-related supports and accessibility in the built environment.

The deadline for applications for the 2022-23 Capacity Grant Program is Friday, October 28, 2022.

To date, the Capacity Grant Program has assisted many organizations and municipalities, such as the Violence Prevention Avalon East who received a capacity grant in 2022 for their project entitled Stable and Safe Horseback Riding Program. This innovative equine assisted program uses interactive activities with horses to help empower children, youth and adults to feel safer and stronger.

For more information on the Capacity Grant Program visit the Children, Seniors and Social Development Website or call toll-free [1-888-729-6279](tel:1-888-729-6279), or text [709-725-4463](tel:709-725-4463). Video Relay Service calls are welcome and information and applications are available in alternate format.



Autism Awareness Month

October is Autism Awareness Month, providing an opportunity for Canadians to learn more about this condition and about how we can support people living with autism, their families and their caregivers. It is estimated that 1 in 66 children and youth has been diagnosed with autism in Canada, yet Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a condition that remains misunderstood by many people. People who live with autism deserve every opportunity to participate fully in their communities and contribute to our society. The Autism Society of Newfoundland Labrador (ASNL) is a provincial charitable organization dedicated to promoting the development of individual, lifelong, and community-based supports and services for people with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), their families, and caregivers.

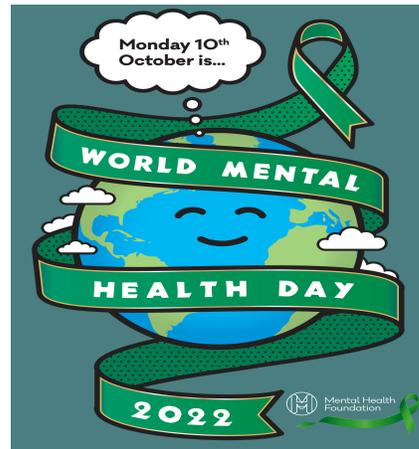


International Walk to School Month

October is International Walk to School Month. It gives children, parents, school teachers and community leaders an opportunity to be part of a global event as they celebrate the many benefits of walking. Walkers from around the world walk to school together for various reasons — all hoping to create communities that are safe places to walk. To learn more about this event and to register and receive stickers or promotional posters please visit <http://www.iwalktoschool.org/>

School Staff Halloween Costume

Crayola Crayon Box



World Mental Health Day

Make mental health & well-being for all a global priority

World Mental Health Day, observed on Monday, October 10th aims to raise awareness of mental health issues around the world and mobilizing efforts in support of mental health.

The Day provides an opportunity for all stakeholders working on mental health issues to talk about their work, and what more needs to be done to make mental health care a reality for people worldwide.

The pandemic has, and continues to, take its toll on our mental health, the ability to reconnect through World Mental Health Day 2022 provides us with an opportunity to re-ignite our efforts to protect and improve mental health.



Parental Involvement in School

“In this complex world, it takes more than a good school to educate children. And it takes more than a good home. It takes these two major educational institutions working together.”

-----Dorothy Rich, author of MegaSkills

Studies have indicated that children whose parents and/or other significant adults share in their formal education tend to do better in school. Some benefits that have been identified that measure parental involvement in education include:

- Higher grades and test scores
- Long term academic achievement
- Positive attitudes and behavior
- More successful programs
- More effective schools

All parents want their children to become successful, caring adults. Similarly, many parents want to be involved with the formal education of

their children. Sometimes, however, they don't know where to start, when to find the time, or how to go about making positive connections with the school. At the most basic level, parents can begin encouraging the education of their children by showing that they truly value education.



Teacher/Staff Appreciation Week 2023

TSAW will be held on February 12-18, 2023 in NL. The week provides the opportunity for all to say thank you to our educators and school staff for the profound influence they have on the lives of children.

Teachers and other school staff members change the lives of hundreds of children in NL every day, and their work and impact extend far beyond the boundaries of the classroom. They seek to nurture a students' natural curiosity and meaningfully connect classroom learning to the outside world. They inspire a lifelong love of learning and make a difference in a child's well-being and success.

Having a parent
that listens creates
a child who believes
their voice matters
in this world.

RACHEL MACY STAFFORD @HANDSFREEMAMA

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.

More information can be found on the English School District website.



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

Annual membership dues are based on school enrollment.

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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