



The Educator

A newspaper for School Councils in Newfoundland and Labrador

June 2023

Message from the President



It's hard to believe we are just weeks away from the end of the 2022-23 academic year.

I would like to take this opportunity to extend my heartfelt thanks to all parents, teachers, community representatives and students for the time and energy given to school councils. Our students have benefitted from your input, advice, and leadership.

This year we heard from many school councils with concerns affecting their schools, students, and council role. We may not have the answers you were hoping for, but we did our best to listen and provide information and guidance. We always shared your concerns and questions regarding resources with Minister Haggie and/ or Deputy Minister Greg O'Leary during our meetings.

We continue to await the implementation of the Provincial Advisory Council on Education (PACE) and will keep you apprised of any changes. Department of Education officials are currently finalizing policies regarding the role of PACE and we are hoping to see some progress by September. It is hard to be patient, however

changing how the education system is governed in NL is a massive undertaking and very time consuming. We are anxious for PACE to commence, but we also want to ensure a smooth transition therefore, we must be patient until the plan is completed.

The end of a school year is super hectic for parents and students. It is also a very busy time for educators and school staff. Educating young minds with all ranges of academic abilities is no easy task. Helping children reach their potential requires a lot of energy and patience. It takes commitment and passion to groom students to become better versions of themselves.

Parents are a child's first teacher and greatest influencer; however, teachers and school staff also have a profound impact on the lives of students. They don't just impart valuable information, they inspire learning, re-designed lives and help children grow into responsible adults and good citizens.

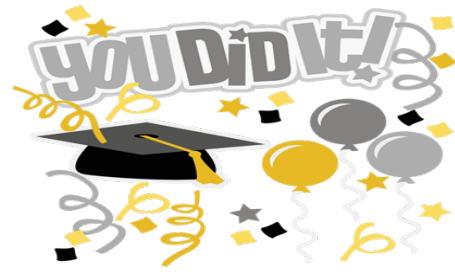
On behalf of the Federation of School Councils, thank you to all our teachers and school staff for your commitment to our students during the 2022-23 school year.

We also sincerely appreciate each volunteer that serves on our School Councils and the impact they have on the education system both locally and provincially.

Have a fun-filled and relaxing summer
Be safe and see you in September.

Don

don.coombs@easternhealth.ca



Our 2022-23 Graduates

Congratulations to all graduates across Newfoundland and Labrador from the executive and members of the Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Schools Councils.

Education is the key to unlocking your potential. Continue to learn as a life learner, and you'll graduate life successfully.

We are so proud of you!





Apply NOW for an Education Foundation Scholarship

Applications must be received by **June 30, 2023**

EDUCATION FOUNDATION
NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR

nlesd.ca/foundation

Applications are open for the Newfoundland and Labrador Education Foundation Scholarships for graduating students from level III who intend to continue their education. There will be up to 40 scholarships of \$1,200 available. Deadline is June 30, 2023 Applications can be obtained by emailing: foundationscholarship@nlesd.ca



Theatre St. John's Musical Theatre Award

Are you entering your 1st year of a Musical Theatre Post-Secondary Training Program?

Theatre St. John's will be awarding two students \$1000 each to assist in their 1st year Musical Theatre Studies.

All interested applicants are encouraged to e-mail theatrest.johns@gmail.com for more information.

Deadline for applications: July 1st, 2023.

*All applicants must be residents of Newfoundland & Labrador.



National Indigenous Peoples Day June 21, 2023

In Canada June 21st is known as National Indigenous Peoples Day. This is a day for all Canadians to recognize and celebrate the unique heritage, diverse cultures, and outstanding contributions of First Nations, Inuit, and Metis' people.

The Canadian Constitution recognizes these three groups as Aboriginal peoples, also known as Indigenous people.

Although these groups share many similarities, they each have their own distinct heritage, language, cultural practices and spiritual beliefs. In cooperation with Indigenous organizations, the Government of Canada chose June 21, the summer solstice for National Indigenous Peoples Day.



READING: A CRITICAL PART OF YOUR SUMMER

HOW TO BEAT "SUMMER SLIDE"

Children who are given access to books over the summer perform **35-40%** better on reading achievement tests.
—First Book



During the summer months, children who don't read fall an average of **2 MONTHS BEHIND.**



However, kids who read over the summer can make slight **GAINS!**



By fifth grade, children can be as much as **2.5 YEARS BEHIND** in reading due to "summer slide"

Reading Practice Is Essential. Kids Get Better At Reading By Reading.

"One of the major differences between poor and good readers is the difference in the quantity of total time they spend reading."

—National Reading Panel, 2000

Daily Reading Adds Up!

If a child reads **30 minutes a day** at home, every day of the school year, he or she will have read **90 hours in one year.** That's more than two weeks of school!

SA KEEP IT UP DURING THE SUMMER: READ EVERY DAY!

As we move into the summer, it is extremely important that students continue their growth in reading and literacy. Reading 20 minutes a day will allow students to continue that growth. Reading on grade level is one of the strongest indicators of success for students. For many students, summer can provide time away from school to leisurely read for fun and interest. There is plenty of research to support the benefits of summer reading, especially when it comes to preventing a decline in reading skills also known as the "Summer Slide".

Evidence suggests the summer slide is a real problem and continuing purposeful reading habits over the summer can help prevent learning loss.

Sustaining good reading habits over the summer positions students to succeed in the coming school year.

There is a lot of research that says "regardless of ethnicity, socioeconomic level, or previous achievement, children who read four or more books over the summer fare better on reading comprehension tests in the fall than their peers who read one or no books over the summer."

Summer can provide the opportunity for children to take ownership of the reading process and gives agency to students to read on their own terms. The more casual nature of summer reading lets students blossom into their identity as readers.

Tips to make reading enjoyable for your children this summer:

- Read aloud together with your child every day. Make it fun by reading outdoors on the front steps, patio, at the beach or park. Also, let your children read to you. For younger children, point out the relationship between words and sounds.
- Set a good example!

Parents must be willing to model behavior for their children. Keep lots of reading material around the house. Turn off the TV and have each person read his or her book, including mom and dad.

- Read the same book your child is reading and discuss it. This is the way to develop habits of the mind and build capacity for thought and insight. Let kids choose what they want to read, and don't turn your nose up at popular
- Buy books on tape, especially for a child with a learning disability. Listen to them in the car, or turn off the TV and have the family listen to them together.
- Subscribe, in your child's name, to magazines like *Sports Illustrated for Kids*, *Highlights for Children*, or *National Geographic World*.
- Encourage older children to read the newspaper and current events magazines, to keep up the reading habit over the summer and develop vocabulary. Ask them what they think about what they've read, and listen to what they say.
- Ease disappointment over summer separation from a favorite school friend by encouraging them to become pen

pals. Provide children with postcards or envelopes that are already addressed and stamped. If both children have access to the Internet, email is another option.

- Make trips a way to encourage reading by reading aloud traffic signs, billboards, notices. Show your children how to read a map, and once you are on the road, let them take turns being the navigator.
- Encourage children to keep a summer scrapbook. Tape in souvenirs of your family's summer activities picture postcards, ticket stubs, photos. Have your children write the captions and read them and read them aloud as you look at the book together.



Improved Access to Healthy Food

Poverty, specifically child poverty in NL, has been a concern and discussion item during meetings between the NLFSC Executive and the Minister/ Department of Education officials for quite some time. NLFSC has recommended that a portion of the funding generated by the sugar tax be directed to eliminating child hunger in schools across the province.

Every school year NLFSC receives many calls from parents, teachers and Administrators concerning children who are going to school hungry – or being kept home from school because they do not have lunch/food to take with them. We also receive numerous calls at the beginning of the school year from parents looking for school supplies for their children – and countless requests from desperate parents for toys and gifts around Christmas time. To say these pleas for help are heartbreaking is an understatement.

On May 23rd the Provincial Government said they would be allocating \$386,000 to Food First NL to help support Food System Transformation initiatives through four interrelated community food projects.

The community food projects include:

- **Great Things in Store:** Working with a cohort of eight food retailers across the province to develop and pilot partnerships and programs that improve food access for lower-income Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.
- **Rethinking Food Charity:** Supporting the implementation of recommendations developed through a year-long consultation process that engaged people with a lived experience of food insecurity and food program providers all over the province.
- **Labrador Anchor Collaborative:** Expanding and solidifying the work of the Labrador Anchor Collaborative, an initiative (part of a national cohort) focused on strengthening access to traditional foods through the health care system, led by a collaborative team that includes Indigenous Governments and Organizations, health care leaders and community partners.
- **School Food Planning:** In line with the federal commitment to a National School Food Policy, Food First NL will support collaboration around planning for future approaches to school food in

Newfoundland and Labrador.
NLFSC sees this announcement as a positive step in improving food security and reducing poverty, however we remain committed to acquiring additional funding to cover the cost of lunches/food in schools where the school lunch program is not available



Sun Safety for Kids

Extreme heat from the sun can be dangerous for all children, especially infants and young children. Babies are not born with a developed skin protection system, so they burn more easily. Babies have more sensitive skin because the outer layer of their skin is thinner. A young child has more skin (relative to body mass) than an adult, so sunburns can be very serious.

- A baby can't tell you when they're too hot or the sun's too bright. Your baby may begin to cry and you won't know

whether they're tired, hungry, or hot.

Babies totally rely on their caregivers to protect them from the sun and other related risks.

Did you know?

You and your baby or child can sunburn in only 15 minutes depending on the UV index value. If the UV index is low (from 0-2), the risk of getting too much sun is low, and no protection is needed. If the UV index is between 3 and 7, you need protection. A UV index higher than 8 calls for extra protection. In the tropics, the index could be higher than 10.

Tips for babies

- Keep babies under one year out of direct sunlight to prevent skin damage and dehydration. Never let them play or sleep in the sun.
- Keep babies in the shade, under a tree, an umbrella, or a canopy. Never leave children in a parked vehicle.
- Remember, sunscreen will protect against the sun's harmful UV rays, but will not protect children from the heat.
- Give lots of cool liquids. Water or breast milk are best.
- Do not put sunscreen on a baby less than 6 months old without asking your health care provider first.

Tips for children

- Follow the UV index readings each day to plan outdoor activities.
- The sun's UVB rays are strongest between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. and it is also usually the hottest time of day. Unless the child is protected, keep them out of the sun during these hours.
- In strong sunlight, have children wear a rimmed, breathable sun hat and sunglasses and cover their skin with clothes or sunscreen
- Get your children used to wearing sunscreen lotion early on. Pay close attention to the areas that are most exposed, like their face, lips, ears, neck, shoulders, back, knees, and the tops of their feet.
- Never let young children stay in the sun for long periods, even when wearing sunscreen.

Tips for teens

- Encourage teens to follow the sun safety tips above.
- Give teenagers sunscreen lotion if they are going to be outdoors for extended periods. Make sure they understand the importance of using it.
- Teach teens about sun safety, how to understand the UV Index, and the symptoms of sunburns and heat illness.

Use sunscreen. Apply sunscreen that

has a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 30 to protect their skin.

Protect against UVA and UVB

rays. Look for broad-spectrum sunscreens that protect against UVA and UVB rays. UVA rays can cause tanning, aging, leathery skin and skin cancer including melanoma. UVB rays can cause sunburns, skin cancer and increased moles in some individuals.

Apply and then reapply

sunscreen. Put more sunscreen on your child about every 3 hours or sooner when there is prolonged activity in the water.

Stay inside or in the shade during peak hours. Avoid activities during peak sunshine hours (10 a.m. – 4 p.m.) when possible. Seek shade if your shadow is shorter than you are.

Use sun protective clothing. Dress your children in a variety of available UV protective clothing that can be worn in and out of the pool/water (wide-brimmed hats, long sleeved cotton clothing and sunglasses).

By helping your child develop regular skin protection habits, you can help reduce their risk of skin cancer and ensure they safely enjoy the sun's rays all year long.

Gender Identity Updates to PowerSchool

Memo to Parents and Caregivers

*From Deputy Minister Greg O'Leary and
Interim Superintendent of Schools Terry Hall
May 30, 2023*

All members of our school communities within the NLESD have the right to a safe, inclusive, socially-just education, regardless of gender, race, economic status, sexuality, national or ethnic origin, age, ability, or other life factors. This is a tenant of the Department of Education's Safe and Caring Schools policy, specifically Procedure 7, and grounded in the Human Rights Act.

The NLESD District and the Department of Education strive to ensure that this is the environment provided for each and every one of our students - no matter how they identify. As we continue to refine our practices and protocols to better serve all students, we are excited to share that we have expanded how we record gender for students in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Gender identifiers in PowerSchool now include:

F (female/girl/woman)

M (male/boy/man)

X (non-binary person or another gender identity)

NS (not specified/prefer not to say)

Offering space for a student to communicate and

express their gender identity in a positive manner and having their pronouns respected creates safer, healthier, and more inclusive classes, schools, and communities.

Using someone's correct name and respecting their gender identity and pronouns demonstrates respect for their unique identity and signals that the person matters to you.

Who can make the request to change gender in PowerSchool?

- Students, and/or their parent(s)/guardian(s), can request to have their identified gender changed in PowerSchool without having to legally change their gender with Vital Statistics. This request can be made during the school registration process for Kindergarten to Grade 12, or at any time throughout the school year.

- This request can be made verbally or in writing to school administration.

Parental/guardian consent will be requested for students in Kindergarten to Grade 6. From grades 7 to 12, if the student has the capacity to consent, parental/guardian consent is not required.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to your child's school administrator or guidance counsellor if you are looking to support your child with a Gender Identity Change in PowerSchool.



June is Pride Month

Pride Month spans the month of June each year, this year beginning on Thursday, June 1 and ending on Friday, June 30. Pride celebrations – including parades, festivals, parties and picnics – are held throughout the month in different cities across Canada

Pride Month provides a great opportunity for people from Newfoundland and Labrador to celebrate in support of and in solidarity with the LGBTQIA+ community.

It symbolizes the promotion of self-affirmation, dignity, equality, and increased visibility of the LGBTQIA+ community.

The rise of anti-2SLGBTQI+ phobia and violence has been an alarming trend across Canada and around the world. According to a recent report from Statistics Canada domestic police-reported hate crimes based on sexual orientation increased drastically – by almost 60 per cent between 2019 and 2021. It also found

transgender Canadians are disproportionately more likely to experience violence than their cis-gender counterparts, including in public, online and at work.

According to ACLED, a non-partisan organisation that compiles statistics on violence globally, anti-LGBTQ mobilizations in the United States more than tripled in 2022 compared to 2021. This led to horrific tragedies including the Colorado nightclub shooting, and has raised concerns of a spillover effect in Canada.

In fact, anti-inclusion and pro-violence campaigns are continuing to gain momentum in our country, targeting a growing number of Pride events and related programming. They also seek to undermine important legislative gains aimed at increasing equity and inclusion of 2SLGBTQI+ communities in Canada. This includes disruptions at local drag story-time events and attacks against inclusive curriculum development in schools. Many of these anti-2SLGBTQI+ mobilizations have documented connections to far right and white supremacist groups . These connections include direct funding from and similar strategy to anti-2SLGBTQI+ fascist organisations, based in the U.S. and globally.

In the face of mounting hate, we will continue to vehemently oppose racism, colonialism, homophobia, biphobia, intersexphobia and transphobia in all of its forms, across Canada and around the world



When sun rays crown thy pine clad hills,
And summer spreads her hand,
When silvern voices tune thy rills,
We love thee, smiling land.
We love thee, we love thee,
We love thee, smiling land.

When spreads thy cloak of shimmering white,
At winter's stern command,
Thro' shortened day, and starlit night,
We love thee, frozen land.
We love thee, we love thee
We love thee, frozen land.

When blinding storm gusts fret thy shore,
And wild waves lash thy strand,
Thro' spindrift swirl, and tempest roar,
We love thee windswept land.
We love thee, we love thee
We love thee windswept land.

As loved our fathers, so we love,
Where once they stood, we stand;
Their prayer we raise to Heaven above,
God guard thee, Newfoundland
God guard thee, God guard thee,
God guard thee, Newfoundland.

Composed by Sir Cavendish Boyle



Newfoundland and Labrador
Federation of School Councils

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