



# *The Educator*

A Newspaper for School Councils in Newfoundland and Labrador

November 2023

## Message from the President



Hello Everyone,

The days are shorter and the nights are longer and recent snowfall has reminded us that winter is just around the corner. By now students have settled in school and many school councils are preparing for their second meeting.

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.

School Councils are important advisory bodies. The purpose of a school council, through the active participation of parents, is to improve student achievement and increase accountability of the education system to parents.

As a school council member, you can help your council learn about ways to contribute to the learning environment of students in your school. Education is a partnership involving parents, students, teachers, principals, government, and the community. Through your involvement in the council, you are part of a team working to support a high-quality education system for the children of NL. Your participation can make a difference.

As your provincial advocacy representative, I continue to bring your concerns on education to

government. Teacher shortage, class size, lack of student assistant time and violence in schools are just a few of the concerns being expressed by parents, teachers, and councils. These topics are always part of our discussions with the Minister and Deputy Ministers.

Before signing off I would be amiss if I didn't update you on the establishment and composition of the Provincial Advisory Council on Education (PACE). After repeated requests for clarification on PACE, we were informed the board of PACE will be made up of both elected and appointed representatives. All appointed and elected representatives will be ratified by the Minister before they take office on the board of PACE.

This information was relayed to myself and Executive Director Denise Pike during a meeting with Minister Howell on October 20<sup>th</sup>. Minister Howell also said there will still be a role for NLFSC after PACE is established and NLFSC will be better funded allowing us to operate more efficiently.

Further information and details on the nomination and election process for the positions on PACE will be defined in regulations which are currently being worked on by officials from the Department of Education.

I want to point out, once again, that NLFSC was very specific in the recommendations we worked on with officials from the Department of Education for a number of months during the 2021-22 school year regarding PACE. The recommendations to the Minister of Education and government stated that the advisory council will consist of 11 representatives, 6 elected from school councils, and the another 5 appointed by the Minister from a pool put forward by the Independent Appointments Commission. The elected piece is critical because it will ensure school councils members, who wish to do so, can offer themselves as candidates to an elected position on PACE. Having elected representatives on PACE will give school councils and parents a stronger voice and decision-making power on the issues impacting their schools and education. NLFSC had numerous discussions on this with former Education Ministers John Haggie and Tom Osborne in the past and were reassured having both elected and appointed representatives on PACE was a given. Minister Howell reiterated the same during our meeting on October 20<sup>th</sup>.

Meanwhile if you have any questions or Concerns, please feel free to email me at: [Don.Coombs@easternhealth.ca](mailto: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](mailto:nlfsci@gmail.com)

Sincerely,

Don

Email: [Don.Coombs@easternhealth.ca](mailto:Don.Coombs@easternhealth.ca)

### **2023-2024 School Holiday Schedule**

- September 5 - Administration Day
- September 6 - School Reopens/Students
- October 2 - National Day for Truth and Reconciliation
- October 9 - Thanksgiving Day
- November 13 - Remembrance Day
- December 20 - Last Day – Christmas
- January 2 - School Reopens
- March 28 - Last Day – Easter
- April 8 - School Reopens
- May 20 - Victoria Day
- June 20 - Last Day – Summer
- June 21 - Administration Day



### **School Council/Parent Concerns**

#### **Student Assistant Time**

Many schools do not have enough student assistant time to address needs 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 and the classroom teacher.

#### **Disruptive Students**

Parents and school councils are saying there is an increase 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 crisis.

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.

### **Teacher Recruitment and Retention**

The NLFSC membership is concerned about the shortage of teachers.

Teacher shortage is having serious repercussions on learning conditions for students and working conditions for teachers.

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.

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.

### **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 a 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.



As of Wednesday, Sept. 27, smoking and vaping is prohibited on all government property, including buildings, grounds, vehicles and parking lots. The new rule applies to employees, visitors and contractors.

Quitting smoking or vaping is one of the best things a person can do for their health. People who want to quit smoking are encouraged to reach out to the Newfoundland and Labrador Smokers' Helpline to explore the programs and resources available to individuals in this province to help in quitting smoking or vaping.



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.



Congratulations to all the recipients of the Premier's Award for Innovation in Teaching - and the Minister's Award for Compassion in Teaching.

The Teaching Awards were established in 2021 to acknowledge the leadership role that all educators play in the lives of students.

The 2023 Premier's Award recipients for Innovation in Teaching are:

Wendy Marsh, Peacock Primary, Happy Valley-Goose Bay;

Brigitte White, École C.C. Loughlin School, Corner Brook ;

Joanne Broders, Smallwood Academy, Gambo;

Denise Hogan, Carbonear Collegiate, Carbonear;

Peter Constantine, Paradise Elementary, Paradise; and

Yvonne Dawe, Centre for Distance Learning and Innovation, St. John's

The following are the 2023 Minister of Education's Award recipients for Compassion in Teaching:

Rhonda Martin, Cloud River Academy, Roddickton;

Perry Hann, Corner Brook Regional High, Corner Brook;

Cameron Snow, Exploits Valley High, Grand Falls-Windsor;

Danielle Doyle, Carbonear Collegiate, Carbonear;

Gregory White, St. Kevin's High School, Goulds;

Penny Pinsent, St. Mary's Elementary, St. John's;

Tara Reid, École St. Matthew's School, St. John's;

Mathieu Laviolette, École des Grands-Vents/École Rocher du Nord, St. John's; and

Tonya Kearly Russell, Holy Trinity High, Torbay.

On behalf of NLFSC congratulations on your awards. Thank you for your dedication and compassion for your students and schools!

Teachers who love teaching, teach children to love learning.



Milk Run is back and has been updated to make it more interactive and educational with videos showing milk's path from farm to school! The game is designed to educate students about the milk supply chain while providing the opportunity for students to win some awesome prizes. Round One will run until December 8th. Sign up your K-4 class

here: <http://www.schoolmilk.nl.ca/promotion-sign-up/>



## Brief on Police-Reported Crime Statistics in Canada, 2021: Hate Crimes Targeting Sexual Orientation

### Key Highlights:

- Since 2019, hate crimes targeting sexual orientation have risen in Canada. In 2019, there were 265 hate crimes that targeted sexual orientation, and in 2021, this number rose to 423. Since 2020, there has been a rise of 64%.
- Of these 423 hate crimes, a majority (77%) targeted the gay and lesbian community, a smaller number was directed toward bisexuals (2%) and other sexual orientations (11%), and 10% of incidents had an unreported sexual orientation target.
- While most hate crimes targeting sexual orientation were perpetrated against men and boys, 74% of victims of hate crimes related to gender were women and girls. No data were compiled for other gender identities.



World Fisheries Day is November 21 and Fisheries, Forestry and Agricultural NL is celebrating this special occasion by hosting a 'Sustainability Challenge' Contest which is open to all Kindergarten to Grade 6 students in Newfoundland and Labrador.

The goal of this contest is to encourage young minds to explore and engage with the concept of sustainability in a fun and interactive way. For this contest, Fisheries, Forestry and Agricultural NL is asking students to complete a variety of sustainable practice activities and document these activities with photos. A list of suggested activities and additional contest entry information can be viewed at this link: <https://www.gov.nl.ca/ffa/fishaq/education/>

You can email your pictures to [worldfisherieday@gov.nl.ca](mailto:worldfisherieday@gov.nl.ca) for a chance to win a World Fisheries Day Prize Pack. The entry deadline is Friday, November 10.



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 6,700 meals each day, in 42 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 they served more than 30,000 lbs of fruit and vegetables in our lunches!

Over 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.

The program is expanding rapidly. This year, with the addition of new schools, they will average 6,700 meals a day. These additions will substantially increase the children who have access to the School Lunch program.

The School Lunch Program received \$125,000 from the Provincial Government last year. This is the only Provincial funding they receive and translates into a mere 13 cents per meal. The 2019 budget was 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 them 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 was available starting in August.

Parents can register their children at [www.schoollunch.ca](http://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](http://www.schoollunch.ca).

### **Online ordering**

Each month the 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 are 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 they 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 their main office. The goal of the School Lunch program is to expand throughout Newfoundland & Labrador.

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@schoolslunch.ca](mailto:jfinn@schoolslunch.ca)



## Body Safety Program

### My Body Safety Rules



Kids in the Know, a body safety program for kids, will be available in all K-9 classrooms in Newfoundland and Labrador by September 2025.

Kids in the Know is the Canadian Centre for Child Protections' national safety education program. The program engages students with interactive activities to help build skills that increase personal safety and reduce risk of victimization online and offline.

Body safety is a part of the Department of Education's K-12 public education curriculum, with age and developmentally appropriate resources used at each grade level. The Kids in the Know program will enhance the teaching and learning strategies occurring in classrooms. Kids in the Know is currently available in 38 schools in kindergarten to grade 3. A further 20 schools will be added in winter 2024, ahead of full implementation for the 2025-26 school year.

## NL School Milk Program



The School Milk Program currently operates in over 240 schools across the province. In fact, there's a good chance that your neighbourhood or community school is already part of their program. The school milk comes in specially packaged cartons—and at a specially low price—to make sure all students get their best shot at a happy, healthy future.

### Mission:

The School Milk Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador is an organization which exists to enhance the health and well-being of school aged children in this province through milk promotion.

Our milk is available in:

1% and 2%

250ml or 500ml

White (2% MF only) or chocolate (1% MF only)

We work with the cream of the crop.

The School Milk Foundation has two full time office staff, one part-time staff member, as well as an independent Board of Directors. Our board has representatives from local dairy producers and processors, and the Provincial Government (in the areas of Education and Health).

Our foundation relies on funding and in-kind contributions from Dairy Farmers of Newfoundland and Labrador, Saputo Ltd., Agropur Dairy Cooperative, and the Provincial Department of Fisheries, Forestry, and Agriculture.



## 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.

“

If we expect students to be kind, we need to be **kind** adults. If we expect students to be cooperative, we need to be **cooperative** adults. If we expect students to be responsible, we need to be **responsible** adults.  
**Model. Model. Model.**

—LISA ROMANO  
Teacher

edutopia

## Child Care Demand Portal

The Department of Education has created a Child Care Demand Portal as a tool to assess the current demand for child care services.

Information on the portal can be found on the Department of Education's website. Information obtained from the portal will serve as a guide for future targeted space creations.

Below are some useful terms to help with the input of information:

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### Child Care Service Description

**Regulated Child Care Service:** A child care service that has been issued a valid child care licence by the Department of Education or a valid approval certificate by a licensed agency. [Family and Child Care Connections](#) is currently the only licensed agency in NL.

Regulated child care services are monitored regularly by the Department of Education to ensure compliance with the [Child Care Act](#) and [Regulations](#).

**Unregulated Child Care Service:** A child care service that does not hold a child care licence issued by the Department of Education or approval certificate issued by a licensed agency and is not monitored by the Department of Education.

## Types of Child Care:

- Full-Time - 4 hours or more a day
- Part-Time - Less than 4 hours a day
- Before and After School - Before the start of school and after the school session ends on the same day
- After School - After the school session ends for the day
- Non-traditional Hours - 8:30 pm to 6:30 am and/or weekends

Information is being collected under the authority of section 61(c) of the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act, 2015, for the purpose of assisting in better understanding the current demand for child care services.

Any information that may be received will be governed in accordance with the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act, 2015 and will only be used for the purpose of assisting in better understanding the current demand for child care services.

If you have any questions about how this information will be collected, used and disclosed, please contact ATIPP Coordinator of the Department of Education. A listing of all departmental coordinators and their contact information can be found at: <https://www.gov.nl.ca/atipp/>.

## **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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