



The Educator

A Newspaper for School Councils in Newfoundland and Labrador

Fall 2024



Message from the President



Hello Members,

It's hard to believe the first month of a new school year is already behind us. By now our students have settled in, reconnected with friends, and embarked on new learning adventures.

At the beginning of each school year, we are reminded of our collective vision to provide each student with opportunities to fulfill their potential and pursue their aspirations. We are grateful for the

collaboration of school councils, students, school staff, families, partners, and the wider community that makes this vision a reality.

By now many school councils have, or will soon hold their first meeting of the year. School councils are a valuable and vital component of the education system. They are important advisory bodies to the schools and the Department of Education.

The purpose of a school council is to improve student achievement and increase accountability of the education system to parents. Parents play the first and most important role in their children's education and key partners in building a quality education system.

School councils should endeavour to promote and support the involvement of all parents in their children's learning

As a school council member, you can help your council learn about ways to contribute to the

education of students in your school. 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.

If this is your first year on a council be sure to locate a copy of the School Council Handbook, or download it at:

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 responsibility

On behalf of the NLFSC executive congratulations on a successful first month, and best wishes for a great school year!

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

Sincerely,

Don

Email: Don.Coombs@easternhealth.ca



2024-2025 School Holiday Schedule

- September 2 - Labour Day
- September 3 - Administration Day
- September 4 - School Reopens/Students
- September 30 - National Day for Truth and Reconciliation
- October 14 - Thanksgiving Day
- November 11 - Remembrance Day
- December 20 - Last Day - Christmas
- January 6 - School Reopens
- February 21-24 - Mid Winter Break
- March 17 - St. Patrick's Day
- April 17 - Last Day - Easter
- April 28 - School Reopens
- May 19 - Victoria Day
- June 26 - Last Day - Summer
- June 27 - Administration Day



PACE Regulations Finalized

The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador has completed the Provincial Advisory Council on Education (PACE) Regulations, which are now in force. PACE is a members-based advisory council that will inform government on topics related to the K-12 education system.

The Regulations outline key elements of the operations and membership makeup of the Council, including:

- Setting out the main duties and powers of PACE, including providing advice to the Minister regarding education related issues, and communicating and collaborating with school councils;
- Providing authority to the Minister to divide the province into regions for the purpose of ensuring representation from all areas of the province;
- Establishing a membership of nine to 15 members for PACE. A representative from the school council members of each region will be selected by the chairs of the school councils. One representative will be selected by the French First Language School councils' chairs and up to seven members

will be appointed through the Independent Appointments Commission (IAC) process.

- Allowing members of PACE to be appointed for a term of three years and be eligible for reappointment with a limit of not serving more than two consecutive terms.

PACE will provide a method for meaningful engagement between parents, community, school councils and the department. By having a close connection and establishing links with the school community, PACE will be able to directly reach school councils to gain a better understanding of the concerns and developments respecting K-12 education in a timely manner.

In 2022, as part of the plan to integrate the Newfoundland and Labrador English School District (NLESD), amendments were made to the Schools Act, 1997 to dissolve the NLESD and to make other necessary changes and updates to the legislation including establishing PACE.





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.

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



This year marks 45 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)



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.



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.



School Milk Online Ordering System



Sign up your school for our online ordering system!

- Easily offer milk for sale to students
- Same low-price product as through direct sale, offered at 60 cents per 250mL carton!
- No need to handle cash - everything is handled online by the system
- Milk is ordered by parents each month and delivered to school weekly

Interested?
Contact:
matthew@schoolmilknl.ca

SCHOOL MILK FOUNDATION OF NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

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.

The School Milk Foundation encourages schools to avail of their online ordering system.

The system allows parents to order milk for recess and/or lunch, prepay it online and have it distributed to students through the school.

NLFSC Representation and Meetings

- Next Steps for School Meals, led by Food First NL.
- Steering Committee for Education Transformation
- School Safety Coalition Meeting
- NLESD Accessibility Advisory Committee
- Prime Minister's Awards for Teaching Excellence
- Canadian Mental Health Association-NL

President Coombs has been interviewed by media on school absenteeism, cell phone restrictions, elimination of the 1.6 bussing rules, school lunch program, food insecurity, student assistant time, teacher shortage, school violence, inclusive education, drug use, and the school council role.

On August 28th, Don and Denise were in-studio guests on the CBC radio show "The Signal" talking about back to school issues.

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**BORED
TEACHERS**



Dyslexia Awareness Month October 2024

October 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.

Together we are #BreakingTheSilence

For over 31 years, the Kids Eat Smart Foundation Newfoundland and Labrador has supported the education, health, and well-being of school age children and youth through nutrition programs at Kids Eat Smart (KES) Clubs throughout Newfoundland and Labrador.

There are currently 277 Kids Eat Smart Clubs operating with the assistance of volunteers, school administrators, teachers and staff. Over 46,000 meals are served every day in schools – at no cost to families.

In Newfoundland and Labrador 1 in 4 children under the age of 18 live in a food insecure home, or a home without food, and come to school hungry. It used to be that our schools knew those most vulnerable, and those children who needed breakfast the most. This is not the case anymore, and the need is great.

KES Clubs ensure all children start their school day with access to nutritious food. Kids Eat Smart Clubs support families and protect children who live in food insecure homes by providing inclusive consistent access to a healthy breakfast every school day.

The goal is to provide children with the nutrition they need to learn, to grow, and to be their very best!

The Kids Eat Smart breakfast clubs depend on the kindness of people who keep cupboards stocked and our children's bellies full. All children deserve to reach their full potential and your monthly donation will help give children a healthy start to their day so they can learn and be their very best.

[Donate Monthly](#)

Your Monthly Gift of Nutrition in the amount of:

- \$10 will give a child breakfast for six months!
- \$16 will give a child breakfast for an entire school year!
- \$20 will give two children breakfast for six months!
- \$25 will give 15 children breakfast for a month!
- \$50 will give 30 children breakfast for a month!
- \$100 will give 6 children breakfast for an entire school year!

For more information on how to donate and support Kids Eat Smart programs please call: 1(709)722-1996, or donate online at www.kidseatsmart.ca



Funding for School Meals

On September 4th, 2024 Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau, and the Premier of Newfoundland and Labrador, Dr. Andrew Furey, announced an agreement to expand school food programs in the province. The agreement, under the National School Food Program, will result in 4,100 more kids in Newfoundland and Labrador getting healthy meals this school year.

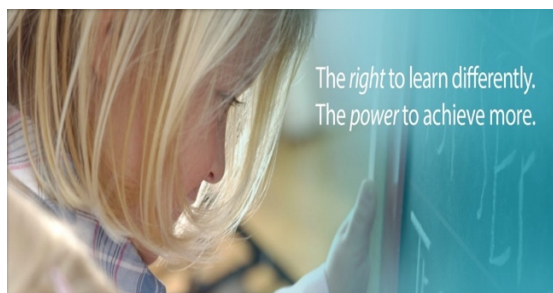
The funding will mean lower grocery bills for families. It is anticipated families with two kids will save an estimated \$800 a year, on average.

Newfoundland and Labrador is the first province to reach an agreement with the federal government through the new National School Food Program. This initial investment of approximately \$9.1 million over three years will help more kids get access to school food.

This agreement complements the actions that the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador has

taken to increase income to families with young children and to help ensure all children develop to their full potential. As part of the provincial Poverty Reduction Plan and supported by an allocation of \$3 million through Budget 2024, the Department of Education will introduce expanded “Pay What you Can” school lunch programming to all Pre-Kindergarten and K-9 schools beginning this fall.

With an investment of \$1 billion over five years, the National School Food Program, announced in Budget 2024, will feed up to 400,000 more kids across Canada every year. The Program will also be a safety net for the kids who are most impacted by the lack of access to food, including lower-income families and some Indigenous communities.



Congratulations to the Learning Disabilities Association of Newfoundland and Labrador (LDANL) on being awarded the 2024 Council of Federation Literacy Award.

The award was created in 2004 to celebrate adult learners who undertake literacy training, as well as the valuable contributions made by Canadians in the field of literacy, including family, Indigenous, health, workplace, and community literacy. The award is presented to learners, educators, volunteers, community organizations and businesses in each province and territory.

The Learning Disabilities Association of Newfoundland and Labrador is a non-profit organization dedicated to supporting individuals with learning disabilities across the province. The association offers a wide range of services such as specialized tutoring for children and adults, support groups, screening, and community outreach programs. These services are aimed at promoting awareness, providing resources, and advocating for the rights and needs of individuals with learning disabilities and their supporters.

The (LDANL) association works closely with schools, educators, health care professionals, and the community to enhance the understanding and support for individuals with learning disabilities to help empower them to achieve their full potential.



Department of Education Clarifies Student Supervision Policy in Schools

September 26, 2024

The Department of Education is clarifying the student supervision policy particularly in relation to school athletics.

The department is assuring all school communities in Newfoundland and Labrador that there have been no recent changes to this policy.

Schools should continue to work within this policy to meet their needs as they have done every other year. As the policy states, a teacher sponsor is preferred but, when one is not available, a lead volunteer can be appointed by the school administrator. To emphasize, this practice is unchanged.

The Department of Education greatly values the role of school sports and all extracurricular activities within the system and is committed to working with all schools to enhance student participation. The department extends gratitude to the educators and volunteers who generously give their time to support these activities.

"At the end of the day, the most overwhelming key to a child's success is the positive involvement of parents."

Jane D. Hull

Parental Involvement in School

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.



The Department of Education is drafting a new personal electronic device policy that could increase school cellphone restrictions from kindergarten to Grade 12.

Under the current policy, K-6 students are not permitted to have cellphones and other personal devices in school. Devices are allowed for Junior and senior high students, but only for educational purposes.

Until now, it's been up to the administration for each individual school to decide how they manage phones in the classroom, however the Department of Education is now considering a uniform policy for all.

Several other provinces have already implemented cellphone bans in their public school system. banned the use of cell phones in school.

The Department of Education will consult with teachers, staff, and parents before making a decision. The goal is to promote a healthier learning environment.

Many teachers and parents say cell phone use by students is disruptive and impacts teaching and

learning. Students are often unable to focus on their work and do not contribute to class discussion. Cell phones are often used as forum for online bullying among students.

NLFSC is supportive of restricting the use of cellphones in schools, however the policing of it shouldn't fall solely on teachers.

All stakeholders need to be on board, including teachers, students, and especially parents, who are often the main source of pushback.

Cyber Bullying

Cyberbullying is fast becoming the most prevalent form of bullying worldwide. As kids spend more and more time on their phones, “traditional” bullying is slowly becoming a thing of the past.

Cyberbullying Statistics Canada

- 35% of Canadian adolescents experience bullying.
- 47% of Canadian parents believe their child is being bullied.
- 1 in 10 Canadian children experiences online harassment.
- 17% of Canadians aged 18 to 24 suffer from cyberbullying.
- 89% of Canadian teachers believe

cyberbullying is the number one safety issue in public schools.

- 7% of adult Canadians experience cyberbullying.
- 89% of teachers believe that cyberbullying in Canada is the leading safety issue in public schools.

Forms of cyberbullying:

- **Cyberbullying harassment** – sending a lot of messages to someone who doesn't want to receive them.
- **Cyberstalking** – stalking someone's online activity, including on social media
- **Denigration** – usually involves derogatory comments
- **Happy slapping** – filming embarrassing scenes to those who are filmed, and subsequent distribution of such videos.
- **Exclusion** – purposeful exclusion of certain members from online groups.
- **Outing and trickery** – deceiving the victim in order to gain sensitive personal information.
- **Impersonation and masquerading** – posing as someone else online
- **Indirect threat** – involves the threat of physical harm.



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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