



The Educator

A Newspaper for School Councils in Newfoundland and Labrador

Fall 2025



Message from the President



Message from the Provincial President

Dear School Council Members,

I want to acknowledge the vital role each of you play in shaping the educational experience in your communities. Your dedication, insights, and advocacy help ensure our schools reflect the needs and voices of students, parents, and caregivers.

Over the past several months, the NLFSC

has received many messages from school councils and parents across the province expressing deep concerns about the lack of resources in our schools. These concerns span several critical areas—including support for children with neurodiverse needs, literacy and math development, and the impact of increasing class sizes.

Many students who require individualized or enhanced support are simply going without. In some schools, hours for existing student assistants have been cut. Others are facing a serious shortage of substitute student assistants—leaving students vulnerable and unsupported. Additionally, large class sizes are making it increasingly difficult for educators to provide differentiated instruction and individual attention.

Parents and educators are also voicing concern about students falling behind in literacy and math, with limited access to targeted interventions, reading specialists, and academic support.

These foundational skills are essential to student success across all grade levels, and we must ensure the resources are in place to meet learners where they are.

As a Federation, we are advocating for urgent action to address these challenges. Every child in Newfoundland and Labrador deserves access to a safe, inclusive, and supportive learning environment—one where their unique needs are recognized and addressed. When that promise is not fulfilled, the impact is felt across classrooms, families, and communities.

With a new PC government in place, we are hopeful that meaningful improvements in education are on the horizon. This transition presents an opportunity to re-evaluate priorities, strengthen supports, and ensure that the voices of families and school communities are central to decision-making. As Provincial President, I intend to request a meeting with the incoming Minister of Education as soon as the appointment is made. It is essential that we establish a strong working relationship early on and communicate the pressing concerns shared by school councils across Newfoundland and Labrador.

There are several urgent matters that require immediate attention. One of the most pressing being the School Council Handbook.

The Handbook is a foundational resource that guides the operations, responsibilities, and governance of school councils. Its absence has left many councils without clear direction, leading to inconsistencies and uncertainty. I have repeatedly inquired and formally requested its release, yet no timeline has been provided. We urgently need clarity on when the updated version will be made available and assurance that it will reflect the evolving role of councils within today's education system.

I will also seek information on when the Provincial Advisory Council on Education (PACE) will be fully established and operational. Although the PACE regulations were officially announced on July 25, 2024, its implementation is still pending. This delay has left school councils and families uncertain about how PACE will function in practice and what role it will play in shaping education policy.

The previous liberal government said the Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of School Councils (NLFSC) would be dissolved once the Provincial Advisory Council on Education (PACE) is fully implemented. This raises serious questions about the future of advocacy in education and the mechanisms through which families and school councils will continue to have a voice in provincial decision-making.

For decades, the NLFSC has served as a vital link between school councils and government—amplifying the concerns of parents, caregivers, and communities, and advocating for policies that reflect the realities of classrooms across the province. Its role has been especially critical in times of transition, when clear communication and grassroots input are needed most.

In addition to these governance concerns, we must address the broader issues impacting education across the province such as resource shortages, overcrowded classrooms, behaviour issues, and Equity and adequate Support for children with neurodiverse needs.

We look forward to engaging with the new leadership and continuing to advocate for the voices of school councils across the province. Our goal is to ensure that every student in Newfoundland and Labrador has access to a safe, inclusive, and well-resourced learning environment—and that school councils are empowered to help make that vision a reality.

The NLFSC is unwavering in our commitment to ensuring that the voices of families, students, and school communities are heard at every level of decision-making.

Thank you for your continued dedication to public education. Your efforts are essential, and together, we can advocate for a school system that gives every student the opportunity to thrive.

With two months already under our belts, the momentum is strong! On behalf of the NLFSC Executive, best wishes for a fantastic school year ahead.

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

Provincial Advisory Council on Education (PACE)

The Ministerial appointments (names put forth through the Independent Appointment Commission and then appointed by the Minister) were reviewed and representatives appointed by previous Minister, Krista Lynn Howell.

The nominations for school council appointees were expected to begin before December. With the formation of a new government this may be delayed. An update will be provided to our members as soon as the executive can schedule a meeting with the new Minister of Education.

PACE Regulations

The Regulations on the Provincial Advisory Council (PACE) on Education Regulations were released by the Department of Education and Minister Krista-Lynn Howell on July 24, 2024.

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 9 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?

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.

School Council Member Roles and Responsibilities

School Council Chair Role:

The chair is elected by members of the school council. The chair, in collaboration with the principal, sets the school council meeting agenda (i.e., determines items suitable for council discussion). The school council chair must be very clear on the functions and responsibilities of the school council and must constantly ensure that school council discussions focus on improving the teaching and learning environment for all students rather than focusing on the specific or isolated issues of any one individual.

The responsibility of the chair is most evident when non-council members are in attendance and have requested to speak on an issue. In such instances, the chair must be prepared to tactfully focus discussion on issues rather than on individuals. The chair may choose to allot a specific period of time for discussion of an issue.

As a member of a school council, the chair:

- chairs the council meetings; in collaboration with the principal, schedules school council meetings and sets agenda items

- facilitates collaborative decision-making, seeks consensus, and resolves conflict;
- ensures council minutes are prepared and made available to the school community (e.g., posted on the school website); and,
- prepares the annual activity report of the school council for inclusion in the annual school report.

School council chairpersons may also be responsible for compiling correspondence and communicating with others on behalf of the school council. Such communication should follow procedures as outlined in the school protocol agreement and the bylaws of the board.

All correspondence and media contact should represent the consensual view of the council.

School Principal Role

As a member of the school council, the principal: chairs the **initial meeting of the school council** or, at the request of those present, a second meeting to facilitate the election of a chairperson for the school council;

- encourages active participation of school council members in enhancing the teaching and learning environment of the school, to increase student achievement;

- communicates to the school council information pertaining to school policies and practices;
- provides school councils with access to school information relevant to the functioning of the council;
- coordinates the implementation of the school development plan and gives periodic updates on the school development process; and,
- creates a positive climate within the school and the larger community to support the activities and decisions of the school council.

Effective leadership is a critically important element in schools where students are successful at learning and achieving. Current literature and research support the key role of principals in determining the educational success of their school and students.

The principal is the main link between the school community and the school. The manner in which the principal fulfills his/her leadership responsibilities largely determines the attitudes which students and parents have towards the school. As educational leader, the principal is a key player in promoting and facilitating a collaborative culture and climate within the school and the school council.

Parent Representatives

Any parent/guardian is eligible to serve as a parent representative on the school council, provided they have a child attending that school at the time of election and is not employed as a teacher at that school.

As a member of the school council, the parent representative:

- expresses the viewpoint of the parents they represent;
- communicates the activities of the council to the other parents;
- works collectively towards the common goal of improving teaching, learning and student achievement;
- participates in the school development process with other stakeholders; and,
- participates in and is prepared for council meetings and discussions.

Community Representatives

A community representative must be a member of the community and can be a parent of a child in the school. Community representatives are appointed by school council members. A community

representative brings an additional perspective to council decisions.

As a member of the school council, the community representative:

- expresses the viewpoint of the community they represent;
- communicates the activities of the council to stakeholders;
- works collectively towards the common goal of improving teaching, learning and student achievement;
- participates in the school development process with other stakeholders; and,
- participates in and is prepared for council meetings and discussions.

Teacher Representatives

Teachers may serve as parent representatives on the school council of any school their children attend, provided they are not employed as a teacher at that school.

As a member of the school council, the teacher representative:

- expresses the viewpoint of the teacher community they represent;
- communicates the activities of the council to the other teachers;

- works collectively towards the common goal of improving teaching, learning and student achievement;
- participates in the school development process with other stakeholders; and,
- participates in and is prepared for council meetings and discussions.

Student Representatives

In a school where high school courses are offered, at least one high school student must be elected to the school council. For continuity purposes, it is recommended that at least two high school students become members of council, one of whom is a Level II or I student.

As a member of the school council, the student representative:

- • expresses the viewpoint of the students they represent;
- • communicates the activities of the council to their stakeholders;
- • works collectively towards the common goal of improving teaching, learning and student achievement;

- participates in the school development process with other stakeholders; and,
- participates in and is prepared for council meetings and discussions

School Councils and Fundraising Activities

School councils have a responsibility to develop, encourage and promote policies, practices and activities that enhance the

quality of school programs. In terms of fiscal accountability, the *Schools Act, 1997* lists the following fiscal responsibilities of school councils:

Section 26 (3) (c) Approve and monitor activities for the raising of funds for the school

Section 26 (4) The school council may, subject to the by-laws of the board, approve a levy, the payment of which is voluntary, once in a school year, instead of, or as a supplement to, fundraising activities for the school.

While school councils have no legal authority to raise funds in the school or hold monies, they are responsible for ensuring any fundraising activities are planned and approved in advance and conducted in a manner consistent with board and school

policies and the provisions of the *Schools Act, 1997*. When approving fundraising activities, it is important for school councils to consider the educational needs of the school and the number of fundraising requests.

School councils are also responsible for the approval of any levy that is charged by the school. In such cases, the school council must ensure parents are informed the levy is a voluntary payment.

A primary consideration for the school board, school council and school is that fundraising activities should always be undertaken based upon extensive dialogue and discussion by all members of the school community to ensure that decisions benefit all. This will result in greater consensus around fundraising.

School Development

School development is a school-level strategic planning process. The provincial school development model (see diagram below) was designed to guide a school toward building a professional learning community by completing a group of interrelated components.

As part of the process, a school undergoes a comprehensive self-assessment (Internal Review) that contributes to the formation of a 3 to 5-year school development plan.

The formation of this plan is a collaborative effort of the entire school community, including the school council. The school development plan is unique to each school but is within the context of both the provincial and district strategic education plans. A school's plan consists of goals, with yearly objectives and strategies. The objectives in the plan are monitored regularly, reviewed on a yearly basis, and adjusted accordingly.

As legislated in the *Schools Act, 1997* Section 26(3), school councils shall participate in the following activities:

1. *a) approve, for recommendation to the board, a plan for improving teaching and learning in the school;*
2. *b) support and promote the plan approved by the board for improving teaching and learning in the school;*
3. *c) approve and monitor activities for the raising of funds for the school;*
4. *d) consider information respecting performance standards in the school;*
5. *e) assist in the system of monitoring and evaluating standards in the school;*

6. *f) monitor the implementation of recommendations in reports on the performance of the school;*
7. *g) conduct meetings with parents and members of the community on matters within its responsibility under this section;*
8. *h) ensure that the report on the school prepared under paragraph 24(3)(k) is available to members of the public; and,*
9. *i) communicate concerns respecting board policies and practices to the board.*

2025-2026 School Holiday Schedule

- **September 1 - Labour Day**
- **September 2 - Administration Day**
- **September 3 - School Reopens/Students**
- **September 30 - National Day for Truth and Reconciliation**
- **October 13 - Thanksgiving Day**
- **November 10/11 – Fall Break/Remembrance Day**
- **December 19 - Last Day - Christmas**
- **January 5 - School Reopens**
- **February 23 - Mid Winter Break**
- **March 16 - St. Patrick's Day**
- **April 2 - Last Day - Easter**
- **April 13 - School Reopens**
- **May 18 - Victoria Day**
- **June 25 - Last Day - Summer**
- **June 26 - Administration Day**



The Provincial Government has partnered with School Sports NL to launch the Safe Sport in Education course for student athletes in grades 7-12. The Safe Sport in Education course is locally developed and designed to equip students with the knowledge and tools to foster safer, more respectful sporting environments within their schools. Starting this month, all NL Schools student athletes will be required to complete the Safe Sport in Education course and submit their course completion certificate along with a signed NL Schools and School Sports NL Athletic Contract in order to join team activities. The course will be available through the [Centre for Distance Learning and Innovation \(CDLI\)](#).

As this is the Year of Sports, this initiative aims to promote key values such as teamwork, good sportsmanship, ethics, inclusion, and safety in athletic programs in Newfoundland and Labrador.



Kids in the Know, a body safety program for kids, will be available in all K-9 classrooms in Newfoundland and Labrador this school year.

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

Kids in the Know is currently offered in all K-3 classrooms in the province. Professional learning for educators for grades 4-9 will occur this October to ensure a full implementation of the program this school year.

Body safety is a part of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development'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.

Health and well-being in education environments was one of four pillars of the Education Accord. A full implementation of the Kids in the Know program in grades K-9 supports student and educator safety measures through education and prevention.



Responsible Student Use of Personal Electronic Devices Policy

Frequently Asked Questions for Students, Parents and Guardians

Q1. Our school does not have a problem with cell phone use. Why do we have to follow this policy?

This policy applies to all schools within the NLSchools system so that all school communities have the same approach to support a positive environment for teaching and learning.

Q2. Does this policy only apply to cell phones?

This policy applies to all personal electronic devices (PEDs). This includes cell phones, smart watches, music playing devices, ear buds/head phones, etc.

Q3. When will my child/children have access to their PEDs while in school?

We encourage all students to leave their devices at home. Students in grades K-6 will not have access to their devices during the school day. Students in grades 7 to level 4 will only have access to their devices during recess and lunch time, and before and after school hours.

Q4. My child/children share a locker with another student, or their school does not provide lockers. What options are available for them to comply with the Policy?

PEDs could be placed in a bag, school bag, desk drawer, classroom locker, or anywhere out of sight but not on a student's body (e.g. in a student's clothing) during instructional hours while in school.

Q5. How can I contact my child/children during instructional hours?

Please call the school office. Schools will determine their communication processes so that that important messages are given to students in a timely manner.

Q6. My child has anxiety and needs to be able to contact parents as needed.

We encourage all students to leave their devices at home. Students who do not bring devices to school will be able call parents/guardians through the school office or counsellor's office as determined by the school. Students in grade 7 to level 4 will have

access to their devices during recess and lunch.

Calling or texting during instructional hours is a distraction to students' learning and the learning of others.

Q7. What happens if my child/children repeatedly contravenes this Policy?

If a student repeatedly contravenes this Policy, teachers and administrators may issue other progressive disciplinary actions than those outlined in the Policy.

Q8. What if my child/children have to use their PEDs for medical reasons or educational purposes during instructional hours?

This Policy provides exceptions to allow students to use PEDs for documented medical reasons or educational purposes.

- For Medical Reasons, for example: glucose monitoring and hearing aid settings.
- For Educational Purposes, for example: Proloquo2Go, Read&Write, or using assistive technologies, or others for students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs). Exceptions Forms are available online or through your student's school.

Q9. Does NLSchools offer curriculum or guidance on responsible use of PEDs?

Yes. Students receive direction and instruction at all grade levels about appropriate behaviours during instructional time, techniques for active listening

and learning, and how to avoid distractions during class time. At intermediate and senior grade levels, students may learn about how to foster positive mental health, and how to use technology responsibly.

NLFSC Supports School Bus Stop Arm Camera Pilot to Enhance Student Safety



Don Coombs, President of the Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of School Councils (NLFSC), spoke at an announcement on August 22 in support of the new school bus stop arm camera pilot project, emphasizing its potential to significantly improve student safety across the province.

“Every year, NLFSC receives emails and calls from concerned parents and school council members about drivers illegally passing school buses when the stop arm is extended,” said Coombs.

“Unfortunately, it’s a regular and widespread issue. Children are most vulnerable when getting on or off a bus, and passing a stopped school bus can lead to tragic, preventable accidents.”

The installation of stop arm cameras will play a critical role in identifying and holding accountable those who illegally pass stopped school buses. These cameras are expected to deter unsafe driving behavior and reinforce the importance of respecting school bus safety laws.

“Every day, thousands of children across Newfoundland and Labrador depend on school buses as their safe passage to education,” Coombs added. “Riding a school bus should be one of the safest parts of a child’s day—not a source of danger.”

The pilot project is a collaborative initiative aimed at strengthening enforcement and improving public awareness around school bus safety, with the ultimate goal of protecting students during their daily commutes.





This year marks 46 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)

Provincial Government Announces Call for Nominations for Early Childhood Education Awards

Government has announced the opening of nominations for the first annual Award for Excellence in Early Childhood Education. The awards will be presented to early childhood educators who demonstrate outstanding leadership

in the early learning field. Recipients will be chosen based on their contributions to the well-being of children in their care and commitment to fostering high-quality and inclusive early learning environments.

This award recognizes early childhood educators whose dedication supports the growth and development of young children, strengthens families, and advances the early learning and child care sector across the province.

Information on the awards is available [here](#). The deadline for submissions is October 31, 2025.





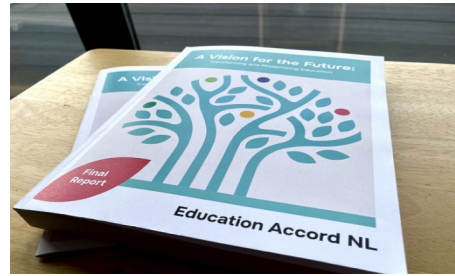
School Lunch Programming Reaching Thousands More Students

Access to school lunches is expanding significantly across Newfoundland and Labrador. By the end of the 2024-25 school year, approximately 22,000 students had access to the **pay-what-you-can** school lunch model. Starting in fall 2025, an additional 12,000 students will be included, with further expansion planned for winter 2025.

The Provincial Government is also collaborating with the NunatuKavut Community Council and the Nunatsiavut Government to support the expansion of school lunch programming in their respective jurisdictions.

By the end of the 2025-26 school year, it is expected that approximately 40,000 students will have access to the pay-what-you-can model.

In Budget 2025, the government committed \$24 million toward the continued expansion of school food programming for all pre-kindergarten to Grade 9 students across the province



Inaccurate Citations in the Education Accord Report

The Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of School Councils (NLFSC) is both deeply disappointed and concerned following revelations that the Education Accord document contains references to at least some sources that do not exist.

Dr. Anne Burke and Dr. Karen Goodnough, co-chairs and authors of the Education Accord Report, stated that the fake citations were introduced after they had submitted the document to the government.

Following media reports by CBC highlighting the inaccurate references, NLFSC President Coombs met with officials from the Department of Education. During the meeting, the Department confirmed that artificial intelligence (AI) tools had been used during the formatting, editing, and referencing stages of the document's finalization.

The Education Accord Report was developed to guide the transformation and modernization of Newfoundland and Labrador's education system. The 10-year vision includes 110 calls to

transformation that aim to improve seamless transitions across the system, promote a learner-centric educational ecosystem, and harness technology to better prepare both learners and educators for the demands of the future.

Corrections and edits are currently underway to rectify the document. Once the updated version is released, it is hoped that the discovery of fake sources will not undermine the credibility of the broader 10-year roadmap for improving education in the province.



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.

School Milk Online Ordering System

An advertisement for the School Milk Online Ordering System. It has a blue background. At the top, a white rounded rectangle contains the text "Sign up your school for our online ordering system!". Below this, a list of bullet points describes the benefits: "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", and "Milk is ordered by parents each month and delivered to school weekly". In the center, a hand holds a smartphone displaying a shopping cart icon and a "Buy" button. To the right of the phone, the text "Interested? Contact: matthew@schoolmilknl.ca" is displayed. The School Milk Foundation logo is in the bottom right corner.

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.

Advocacy and Representation

The Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of School Councils (NLFSC) continues to play an active and influential role in shaping education policy and supporting school communities across the province. Under the leadership of President Don Coombs, NLFSC has participated in several key provincial committees, including the

- “Next Steps for School Meals” initiative led by Food First NL
- Parents Advocacy Group for School Meals
- Premier’s Awards for Excellence in Education
- School Safety Coalition
- Prime Minister’s Awards for Teaching Excellence
- Education Accord Advisory Committee
- Immigration, refugees and Citizen Canada Committee

These engagements reflect the Federation’s commitment to advocating for student well-being, equity, and excellence in education.

Beyond committee work, NLFSC provides direct support to councils and families on pressing issues

such as mental health and addictions, absenteeism, vaping in school bathrooms, bullying, student assistance, and fundraising.

Council members and administrators frequently turn to NLFSC for guidance on governance, conflict resolution, and the evolving role of school councils.

President Coombs is a recognized voice in education and is regularly sought out by government and media for input on education issues and policy changes.

NLFSC also maintains strong relationships with the NL Teachers’ Association and networks with Home and School Associations across Atlantic Canada, including participation in surveys and regional meetings.

Learning Awareness Month

October is a pivotal month dedicated to raising awareness for a range of important causes: **National Learning Disabilities Awareness Month, ADHD Awareness Month, and Dyslexia Awareness Month**, along with **International Dysgraphia Awareness Day** and **World Mental Health Day**.

Each of these observances recognizes the unique challenges faced by individuals with learning differences and other brain-based differences. Those

who have learning differences also tend to be more likely to experience mental health challenges such as anxiety and depression, making empathy and support even more critically important.

From learning challenges like dyslexia and dysgraphia to brain-based differences such as ADHD, these differences affect millions of people worldwide. By celebrating each of these awareness efforts throughout October, we can foster greater understanding, empathy, and create a more inclusive environment for everyone.

What is Dyslexia?

Dyslexia is one of the most common learning differences, affecting how individuals process written language. Those with dyslexia often struggle with reading, spelling, and writing, despite having average or above-average intelligence. While these challenges can impact academic performance, individuals with dyslexia often have strengths in creative thinking, problem-solving, and spatial reasoning.

What is ADHD?

ADHD is a neurodevelopmental condition that affects focus, impulsivity, and self-regulation. It manifests in different ways—some may have trouble staying attentive, while others might be hyperactive or impulsive. ADHD can affect time management, organization, and task completion.

However, those with ADHD are often energetic, creative, and quick thinkers, thriving in dynamic environments where they can leverage their strengths.

What is Dysgraphia?

Dysgraphia, less well-known but equally impactful, affects a person's ability to write coherently. It may involve difficulty with handwriting, spelling, and organizing thoughts on paper. Individuals with dysgraphia often struggle with fine motor skills and may have trouble with tasks like taking notes or completing written assignments. While writing or typing may be a challenge, many with dysgraphia excel in verbal communication, artistic expression, and other non-written forms of creativity.

Why Awareness Matters

Raising awareness for learning disabilities, dyslexia, ADHD, and dysgraphia is vital because early identification and intervention are key to helping individuals. Many people with these learning differences face unnecessary stigma or are misunderstood. By educating others about these conditions, we can build a more inclusive society that recognizes and nurtures the unique talents of neurodiverse individuals.

Supporting Individuals with Learning Differences (Learning Disabilities, Dyslexia and Dysgraphia)

There are many ways to support individuals with dyslexia, ADHD, and dysgraphia, both in the classroom and beyond:

1. **Early Identification:** The sooner a learning difference is recognized, the quicker tailored interventions can be put in place. This could include specialized instruction, assistive technology, or individualized education plans (IEPs).

2. **Inclusive Learning Environments:** Classrooms and workplaces can adopt a variety of approaches to accommodate different learning styles. For example, providing speech-to-text software for dysgraphia, breaking tasks into smaller steps for ADHD, or using multi-sensory reading programs for dyslexia.

3. **Promoting Strengths:** While these conditions present challenges, they also come with unique strengths. Dyslexia is often associated with creative problem-solving, ADHD with entrepreneurial thinking, and dysgraphia with verbal or artistic talents. Fostering these strengths can help individuals excel in their own ways.

4. **Empathy and Understanding:** Creating a supportive environment starts with understanding. Simple acts like offering extended deadlines, providing visual aids, or adjusting seating arrangements can make a

world of difference for individuals who learn differently.

ADHD doesn't look the same for everyone.

It affects people of all ages, races, genders, and backgrounds — and no two experiences are exactly alike. In fact, ADHD affects approximately 7%-9% of children, 3%-5% of adults, or **1.8 million Canadians**.

For some, ADHD shows up in childhood; for others, it's recognized much later in life. It can influence school, work, relationships, and self-esteem in unique ways, but it can also bring creativity, resilience, and innovation.

This year's ADHD Awareness Month theme, "**The Many Faces of ADHD**," reminds us that ADHD is not one-size-fits-all. By sharing diverse stories and perspectives, we can break down stereotypes, reduce stigma, and highlight the strength found in every face of ADHD.



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 275 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 3 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



Egale Canada Granted Special Consultative Status by the United Nations

In August 2025, the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) - one of the six main bodies of the United Nations that tackles economic, social, and environmental global issues - officially granted Egale Canada (Equality for Gay and Lesbians Everywhere) special consultative status.

The special consultative status lends Egale greater legitimacy to our advocacy work by affording their organization a stronger voice on the global stage.

With this status granted, Egale can attend and contribute to UN sessions, participate in events at major UN conferences, submit official written statements for consideration by UN bodies, and engage with UN agencies on issues related to economic, social, and humanitarian rights.

This is a huge win for 2SLGBTQI human rights, better enabling Egale to uplift 2SLGBTQI voices, address issues, and unlock opportunities to influence UN policies and decisions that directly impact 2SLGBTQI individuals globally.

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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