

## NEWS RELEASE

*September 25, 2017*

### **Board Chair Encourages Student Attendance and Family Engagement**

Goronwy Price, Chair of the Board of Trustees for the Newfoundland and Labrador English School District, is encouraging parents and guardians to ensure their children attend school and strive for academic excellence. Chair Price recently sent a letter to all families via schools encouraging parents and guardians to play an active role in encouraging school attendance and demonstrating the value of education.

“Research shows that students who attend school and are engaged in classroom activities are more likely to be successful and, in the end, we want all of our students to achieve to the best of their abilities,” said Chair Price. “The intention of the letter to parents and guardians was to ensure they are aware of the issue of school attendance and also remain engaged with their children and their school and encourage the establishment of consistent attendance routine.”

Newfoundland and Labrador English School District data indicates that during the 2016-2017 school year approximately 10% of students totaled 18 or more days of unexcused absences. Excused absences, and days lost to weather or facilities matters are not included in these numbers and when combined can mean a significant amount of lost instructional time. Chair Price believes that starting early and instilling the importance of education in students is critical.

“While data shows attendance issues are more noticeable in intermediate and high school students, attendance patterns are established as early as Kindergarten. Given this information, the sooner we can instill the value of school attendance, the more likely your children will be to consistently attend school,” wrote Price.

Parents and guardians are encouraged to model behaviour which values education and to become engaged in their children’s education. “This can be done as simply as asking them about their day and the activities that occurred in school. The behaviours we model as adults make a difference and ensure our students remain engaged and attend school.”

Parents and guardians are also encouraged to remain in contact with their children’s teachers and the school administration. Any parent or guardian that would like to learn more about how to become or stay engaged is encouraged to contact their school.

The letter from Chair Price is attached.

The Board of Trustees for the Newfoundland and Labrador English School District is composed of 17 elected trustees, responsible for the governance of 66,300 students and 10,000 employees.



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**OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR**

*Chair: Goronwy Price  
C.E.O./Director of Education (Interim): Anthony Stack*

September 25, 2017

Dear Parents and Guardians:

The first month of school is coming to a close and we are all settling into routines. As Chair of the Board of Trustees for the Newfoundland and Labrador English School District I would like to encourage you to work with your children to ensure consistent school attendance is an integral part of the routine of your family. Research shows that students who attend school and are engaged in classroom activities are more likely to be successful and, in the end, we want all of our students to achieve to the best of their abilities.

Newfoundland and Labrador English School District data indicates that during the 2016-2017 school year approximately 10% of students totaled 18 or more days of unexcused absences. This does not include instructional time lost due to weather, facilities matters, or appointments. When combined, unexcused and excused absences can easily add up to one month of the 10 months of instruction lost for these students and no doubt impact their ability to learn, grow, and achieve.

While we certainly understand there are times when a child is sick or an appointment must occur during the instructional day, we ask you to encourage your child to attend school each day when possible. While data shows attendance issues are more noticeable in intermediate and high school students, attendance patterns are established as early as Kindergarten. Given this information, the sooner we can instill the value of school attendance, the more likely your children will be to consistently attend school.

I encourage you to stay involved in the education of your children. This can be done as simply as asking them about their day and the activities that occurred in school. The behaviours we model as adults make a difference and ensure our students remain engaged and attend school. Please stay in contact with your children's teachers and the school administration. Demonstrate that you value education and your children will as well.

If you require advice on how to remain engaged with your child please contact their homeroom teacher, your school administration, or your school guidance counsellor.

An attending student will be a successful student.

Sincerely,



Goronwy Price  
**CHAIR**