

NEWS RELEASE

September 13, 2019

Trustees Meet to Discuss Issues as School Year Begins

The Newfoundland and Labrador English School Board welcomed a new trustee to the table during its regular weekly meeting held Saturday, September 7, 2019 in St. John's. Steve Tessier of Conception Bay South was appointed to the Board, as per the Schools Act, 1997, to fill the vacant Zone 17 seat. The seat was vacated in June 2019 with the resignation of John Smith, who has moved out of province.

"I welcome Trustee Tessier to the Board and thank him for accepting this volunteer position," said Goronwy Price, Chair of the Board. "This is a challenging role, and a time-consuming role, but we do it because we care about education and we are committed to helping all students achieve success in school and, ultimately, in life."

During the public meeting, Trustees approved changes to the Student Records policy (PROG-310) to allow students to be known by a preferred name/gender on school records, and formally amended a Protection of Children and Youth policy (PROG-305) to align with recent changes to the Children, Youth and Families Act. Both policies and associated documents can be viewed here: <https://www.nlesd.ca/about/policies.jsp>. Trustees were also provided with an update on Strategic Plan initiatives; information about ongoing infrastructure projects, and an update on the 39 additional schools being provided with resources (e.g., teaching and learning assistants, reading specialists, learning resource teachers, and/or instructional resource teachers) through Phase 2 of the Provincial Government's Education Action Plan.

The Board was also advised of a District pilot program that will see final exams in Grades 7-9 discontinued in favour of more frequent, regular assessment and evaluation throughout the year. Schools will require the approval of their staff and school councils to participate in the project, and will be able to "opt in" or "opt out" at any point during the three-year trial period. During this time, the District will monitor outcomes to determine whether there has been a positive impact on student success.

Other issues/presentations discussed during the working sessions and/or public meeting included: amendments to the Board's Constitution and Bylaws; the Human Rights Commission and its processes; resources for Deaf and Hard of Hearing students in Newfoundland and Labrador, and the 2019-20 school system review process.

The Newfoundland and Labrador School District represents approximately 64,000 students, more than 9,000 employees, over 250 schools, and 5 alternate sites throughout the province.

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