

Education and Our Future: A Road Map to Innovation and Excellence



*The Report of the Teacher Allocation Commission
May 2007*


Newfoundland
Labrador

Education and Our Future:

A Road Map to Innovation and Excellence

May 2007

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Ms. Joan Burke, M.H.A.
St. George's-Stephenville District
Minister of Education
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Dear Ms. Burke:

The Teacher Allocation Commission was announced in the Speech from the Throne 2006. The members of the Commission were appointed by the Minister of Education in August 2006. We are pleased to provide this final Report to you at this time.

Thank you for the opportunity to be of service to the Province.

Respectfully submitted,



Brian Shortall
Commissioner



Noreen Greene-Fraize
Vice-Commissioner

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Teacher Allocation Commission 2007

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Preface

It is true that students come to school to learn, yet it is the professional teacher who creates, controls, and stimulates the learning environment (Goodlad, 2004). This vital inter-relationship permeates public education. Indeed, the rationale for the creation of the Teacher Allocation Commission was to review the process whereby teachers are provided to schools in Newfoundland and Labrador. More specifically, the Commission concluded that the cornerstone of any set of recommendations would be the enhancement of **teaching** and **learning**. The Commission's Terms of Reference led it to consider four broad themes:

- i. Equity of educational opportunity,
- ii. Class size and its linkage to learning and resources,
- iii. Human resource recruitment and retention, and
- iv. Various priority provincial programming initiatives.

This, of course, was to be carried out amidst the various demographic, economic, sociological, environmental and technological challenges in which modern public education systems operate.

For the past eight months, the Commission undertook a planned approach to respond fully to the task set out for it by Government. The Terms of Reference were analyzed, researched, and communicated widely. The Commission invited consultation and advice from a variety of stakeholders in the educational community. In seeking to supplement its understanding and knowledge of issues affecting teacher allocation, the Commission launched three major research initiatives. The Commission sought to:

- i. absorb advice on current teacher allocation practice in other Canadian jurisdictions;
- ii. review, from an academic perspective, the current research on class size and student achievement;



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- iii. ascertain the underpinning principles shared by Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, for the operation of public schools within the province.

The Commission organized a visitation program, with the cooperation of the province's five school boards, to bring education stakeholders into direct contact with the Commission. Commissioners conducted on-site visits to facilities throughout the province to gain a comprehensive understanding of the various local teaching situations. The Department of Education provided a website to inform the general public of the Commission's mandate and to facilitate input and suggestions from interested persons. The Commission also made a call for formal, written submissions on topics falling within its mandate. After completing the various research initiatives, the Commission commenced a period of in-depth analysis of the information acquired. This ultimately culminated in the presentation of the Commission's findings and recommendations as outlined in this report.

It is essential to state that the mandate bestowed upon the Commission was one that could have justified many more months of exhaustive study and analysis. However, the Commission understood that an exhaustive, erudite, academic analysis of the relevant variables was not the main purpose of the exercise. The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador had determined there was a disconnect between the allocation of teachers and the needs of the school system. The task of the Commission was to investigate this and recommend actions based upon a deep reflection of stakeholder input and current research on allocation practices and educational change. This would enable a more fruitful response to the challenges at hand. Addressing teacher allocation issues was an urgent matter which required an expeditious timeframe for the work ahead. The Commission concluded that if its recommendations were to contribute to meaningful action on the part of Government, a report was necessary within a reasonable period of time. As a result, the Commission attempted to be faithful to its mandate while remaining practical in its approach to crafting recommendations to the Minister of Education and her colleagues.

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Amongst the input received, the Commission observed a solidarity of the purpose of education in Newfoundland and Labrador. Clearly, the chief element was that every student must receive an equitable educational opportunity for self-fulfillment and for the purposes of pursuing post-secondary education. It is important to note that in this regard, the class composition within each school must be reflective of the heterogeneous nature of our democratic Canadian society. Another perspective, equally cherished by our population, was the positive linkage between the future growth and development of Newfoundland and Labrador and the education levels afforded the province's youth. The Commission heard that ultimately, the province's future rests in the hands of its school-aged youth.

The cooperation, encouragement, and counsel of the Department of Education officials were absolutely invaluable. These included Rebecca Roome and Bruce Hollett, Deputy Ministers; Marian Fushell, Assistant Deputy Minister, Primary, Elementary & Secondary Education; Rick Hayward, Assistant Deputy Minister, Corporate Services; Bob Gardiner, Director, Evaluation & Research; and Kerry Pope, Manager, Research.

In addition to the Department of Education, the Commission received counsel from its Advisory Committee. This group consisted of representatives appointed by the major stakeholder groups within the public school system. The Commission was appreciative of the advice and assistance provided to it.

The Commission was also appreciative of the intellectual independence provided by the Honourable Joan Burke, Minister of Education. After having its mandate outlined by Government, the Commission was permitted to carry out its responsibilities in an unimpeded manner. Never once, was any infringement or reservation placed upon the Commission with respect to the activities,



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thoughts, and conclusions formed as a result of its study. It was the earnest desire of the Commission that its report would be helpful with respect to public policy or budgetary considerations required to address the seminal issues of the endeavour.

There were 35 recommendations rationalized and submitted in response to the mandate provided. In making these recommendations, the Commission addressed three major focus areas:

- i. a class size reduction,
- ii. a rejuvenation of the point of interaction between students and teachers, and
- iii. the development of a comprehensive instructional strategy within each school supported by a coherent school district instructional focus.

The findings and conclusions of the report were interwoven with these three focus areas. The Commission felt that taken in isolation, particular recommendations would not have the salutary impact of a comprehensive application of the overall package.

The Commission concluded that the solution to the challenge outlined in its Terms of Reference lay much deeper than the injection of additional teacher units into the system. It recognized that while an adequate, realistic supply of professional educators is a vital component of any school system, care must be taken to coordinate and support their work. The Commission hoped that its recommendations provided a comprehensive approach to addressing the teacher allocation concerns of this province.

Public education is a journey. It is about the preservation of democracy, the liberation of the human spirit, and the self-fulfillment of our youth. It enables our society to maintain its heritage and cultural traditions. It readies our citizens to face future challenges and achieve positive results.

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Finally, it prepares young people with an understanding of today's knowledge to build and sustain our communities in the unknown challenges of tomorrow.

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1.0 Introduction

On August 17, 2006, Joan Burke, Minister of Education, established the Teacher Allocation Commission, recognizing that the current teacher allocation model was not effectively serving the needs of teachers and students. According to Joan Burke (2006),

declining enrolment and a shift to urban areas make it necessary to review the ways teachers are allocated through the system. Government's ability to offer high quality educational programs and services in an era of unprecedented enrolment decline has been the single most challenging issue facing the education system.

While there is support throughout the system for the basic principles of the current allocation model, it is recognized that changes need to be made. In recent years, there has been a more aggressive rate of enrolment decline than predicted, and a more pronounced demographic shift from rural to urban and suburban areas. In addition, Government has stated commitments to resourcing the education system in areas of class size, fine arts, skilled trades, and information technology.

On March 22, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador (2006), stated its commitment to education in the *Speech from the Throne*:

It is vital to cultivate, in young Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, both the attitude and the aptitude for success, so they are prepared to sustain the growth we are working hard to nurture...One concern is the teacher allocation formula, which does not appear to work well in current circumstances ... or harmonize well with my government's efforts to add back teachers to the resource base in order to target specific priorities.



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Migration has quickly become one of the single biggest demographic phenomena affecting North America in the last century. This systemic, progressive trend has significant effects on the economy, the labour force, and the education system, causing policy makers and strategic planners to seriously consider the economic future of our provinces and of our country. Generally, decisions for migration are made on the basis of changing labour market trends and the need for the population to find meaningful employment or education. Given Newfoundland and Labrador's unique geographic nature and its challenging economic situation, the province knows full well the extent of the effects migration can have on a population. Migration patterns in the province see population shifting out of the province to other parts of Canada, the United States, or abroad. From 1995-96 to 2005-06, the number of full-time equivalent pupils in Newfoundland and Labrador dropped from 106,728 to 74,315 – a 30.4 per cent decrease in enrolment (*Education Statistics, 2005-06, p. 5*). According to Provincial Government predictions, enrolment is expected to decline to approximately 65,000 by 2010 and to 58,000 by 2015.

According to the Education and Statistics Branch, Department of Finance (2002), “Declines have not, however, been regionally balanced. Over the past decade, enrolment in some rural schools has decreased by as much as 40 to 60 percent,” (pp. 15, 16). In 2005-06, there were a total of 44 schools in Newfoundland and Labrador that had less than 50 students, (*Education Statistics, 2005-06, p. 10*). School enrolment decline in rural areas will have considerable impact on the school, as well as the community as a whole. Government and school boards will be even more challenged to recruit teachers with subject-area expertise (particularly math, science, French, music, physical education, special services, and guidance specialists) and to offer quality programs to smaller and smaller groups of students. While school amalgamation has occurred in some communities, there remain schools which simply cannot be closed, due to geography. Long travel distances and difficult regional terrains prevent school boards from taking action to consolidate resources. Sparkes & Williams (2000) help to illustrate this problem stating, “The province may

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have reached the point at which further consolidation in rural areas will be difficult because of the distances and the continuing relative isolation of some communities,” (p. 9).

According to the Education and Statistics Branch, Department of Finance (2006)

Larger population losses in rural areas of the province have resulted in an increased concentration of the population in urban areas. Further shifts in the regional distribution of the province’s population are expected as youth out-migration from rural areas continues. This combined with negative natural population change means that the share of total population in rural areas will continue to trend downward. Thus while total population decline is expected to moderate, some regions of the province will continue to record significant population decline while others will experience population growth (p. 7).

With this shift comes increasing student enrolment in urban areas, resulting in the emergence of class size issues. Overcrowded classrooms may be having a detrimental effect on our teachers’ abilities to teach and in turn, on our students’ ability to learn. In addition, many schools in the province do not have the appropriate infrastructure to accommodate the creation of new classes as a result of lowered class size.

Certain elements of the Sparkes-Williams model of teacher allocation were first implemented in 2000. Recommendations found in their report marked an essential change in the province’s educational history, espousing the fundamental principle that all students should have fair and equitable access to public education. However, amid unprecedented, aggressive enrolment decline and drastic migration patterns, the model may not, in its present form, be serving the needs of the education system as was anticipated. This is not to say that this model is ineffective, rather that changing demographic trends have warranted a reassessment of the province’s teacher allocation practices.



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1.1 Current Context

Under the current model, significant numbers of teachers have been slated to be removed from the system due to enrolment decline. Both school boards and communities have reported that the further removal of teachers will be problematic, especially in areas where school consolidation is limited because of busing distances. Because stakeholders have reported that teacher removal will cause problems, there are currently 226 more teaching units in the education system than the model suggests is required. From 2001-02 to 2003-04, an extra 218 units were retained, but in 2004-05 the new Government proposed to return to the model and subsequently removed 256 units. Of these 256 units, 147 were removed as a result of enrolment decline and another 109 were removed from the units retained in 2001-02 and 2003-04. In 2005-06, another 145 units were removed – 111 due to enrolment decline and another 34 from the 218 scheduled to be removed in the previous three years. However, Government chose to retain 75 units for the purposes of reducing class size at the primary levels and for supporting fine arts programming. In 2007-08, 151 teachers were slated for removal but on April 4, 2007 the Williams Government announced it would provide 137 teachers above the proposed amount. In addition to this, Government announced it would provide 25 teachers for a new Excellence in Mathematics Strategy and another 13 teachers to address needs in the province's growth areas.

There is a disconnect developing between two of the essential building blocks of our provincial school system. On one hand, is the interplay between the population levels and the schools available to service them; on the other hand, is the resultant ability of the system to staff and program these schools. As population numbers decline, fewer school facilities are required; that may well be unavoidable. However, the capacity of the school system to provide professional educators to deliver the required curriculum is contingent upon population levels. Therefore, the schools remaining in a given area where the population level has declined may be unable to offer a satisfac-

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tory level of programming to the remaining pupils. The internet provides some relief in this regard, but it is insufficient to offset this threat to a provincial equity of educational opportunity for all students. Hence, the Commission realized that the allocation of teachers, in an era of population decline, could not rest on the basis of population numbers alone. Student need and curricular components had to be factored in also.

The Commission has accepted the revised directions for the future development of our public education system as described in the Royal Commission report of 1992, *Our Children, Our Future*, and the Ministerial Panel Report on Education of 2000, *Supporting Learning*. More specifically, it has endorsed the fundamental principle of access to an essential education program for all students espoused in the *Supporting Learning* document. This Commission has attempted to build upon these reports to provide a further evolution of thought with respect to the allocation of teachers in the province.

1.2 Terms of Reference

In its direction to provide this further evolution of thought, the Commission was provided with 15 Terms of Reference by Government. They were:

1. Government's commitment to limit K-6 class sizes to 25 or less, one grade level at a time, by 2010;
2. Government's commitment to health and physical education initiatives;
3. Government's commitment to fine arts programming in schools;
4. Government's commitment to providing appropriate levels of special education services, while supporting inclusive educational practices;



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5. Government's commitment to developing information technology skills and integrating those technology skills into the prescribed curriculum;
6. Government's commitment to providing skilled trades and technology programming at the high school level;
7. Government's commitment to improving career/guidance counseling;
8. Government's commitment to placing an expert teacher in every classroom, as well as working with recruitment, retention, assignment, teacher training and professional development;
9. Government's desire to ensure that there is an appropriate transition from pre-kindergarten to kindergarten, (for example: Kinderstart);
10. Government's commitment to promoting bilingualism in the province;
11. Government's interest in increasing the high school graduation rate;
12. Government's interest in investigating the current practice of dividing teacher units into small incremental percentages (for example: 70 per cent teacher, 20 per cent administration, 10 per cent guidance);
13. Government's acknowledgement of the need for provision in the model to meet unexpected/emerging needs each school year;
14. Government's commitment to the provision of appropriate programming options for all students, including those in rural settings. This would include:
 - a. an examination of minimum resourcing needs;
 - b. an examination of sole charge schools;
 - c. an examination of the role of the SNE designation
 - d. an examination of the role of bursaries in providing opportunities for students living in isolated areas;
 - e. an examination of teacher recruitment and retention issues (particularly the recruitment of specialist teachers) in rural areas.

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15. Government's commitment to the improvement of Minority French Language Education

The Commission gave careful attention to each of these Terms of Reference during its preliminary research and cross-province consultations. It had the immense task of addressing each term in relation to expressed concerns and determining which issues fell under its mandate. This mandate was, simply put, to make recommendations to Government concerning the allocation of teachers to the provincial public education system. The Commission decided that rather than merely consider the Terms of Reference and its stated mandate, it would address all issues with the ultimate recognition that teacher allocation for public education must be rationalized upon the enhancement of both **teaching** and **learning**. With this in mind, the work of the Commission was to carry out research, review the current provision of teachers, receive input from appropriate stakeholders, and submit a report with recommendations to the Minister of Education in a timely fashion.

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2.0 Educational Perspective

2.1 Universal Purpose of Public Education

There is no doubt that education is a multi-faceted, core element of our society that has far reaching effects into nearly every aspect of one's well-being. It is the means by which people enrich their lives, constantly growing and sharing, so that in collaboration, they can make meaningful, lasting contributions to society and progress toward a brighter future. Harvey and Houle (2006) state:

Our public education system plays an important role in preparing young people for participation in further education and training and in the economy. This becomes of increasing importance as the world economy becomes more global and competitive and, in particular, as production systems shift to a knowledge industry base. Also, the more education people have and the better that education is, the more opportunity they have to obtain good jobs, avoid unemployment or under-employment, and create wealth. Such creation of wealth affords the individual a greatly expanded range of opportunities, but it is also highly beneficial to the society for it grows the tax base and accordingly provides more choices at the society level as well (p. 1).

Michael Fullan is an international authority on educational reform and the former Dean of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto. He led the evaluation team that conducted the four-year assessment of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy in England beginning in 1998. In 2004, Fullan was appointed as Special Advisor to the Premier and Minister of Education in Ontario. He is an award-winning author who writes on leadership and change and is currently training, consulting and evaluating for leadership change initiatives worldwide.



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In his book *The New Meaning of Educational Change*, Fullan poses the question “what are schools supposed to do?” Like many, he recognizes that the question of purpose is difficult to answer. However, based on his education, extensive experience and tireless research (which in this case includes the work of Bowles & Ginty, 1976; Sarson, 1990; and Schlechty, 1990) Fullan (1991) has developed a lucid description of what schools are supposed to do:

There are at least two major purposes to schooling: to educate students in various academic or cognitive skills and knowledge, and to educate students in the development of individual and social skills and knowledge necessary to function occupationally and socio-politically in society. Let us label these, respectively, the cognitive/academic and the personal/social-development purposes of education. Superimposed on these two main purposes in democratic societies is the goal of equality of opportunity and achievement... (p. 13).

Further to the cognitive/academic and personal/social purposes of education, as Fullan points out, is the purpose of providing opportunity of equality and achievement. According to Dewey (1916) this is “the opportunity to escape from the limitations of the social group” in which one is born (as cited in Fullan, 1991, p. 13).

2.2 A Brief Overview of Newfoundland and Labrador Educational History

To understand Fullan and Dewey’s conclusions, it is important to note that the education system in North America has gone through significant changes and has evolved to reflect the educational needs of the time. We did not arrive at these conclusions overnight. Today’s system reflects years of knowledge and learning which have culminated to give us our current view of education. The

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province of Newfoundland and Labrador has its own vision of education which has undergone a continuous, progressive evolution.

The purpose of this chapter is not to provide an in-depth discussion of the province's educational history; this would require a tremendous amount of detail and attention which is not the focus of this report. This chapter aims to provide an appropriate context from which the reader can interpret the Commission's recommendations and rationale. Williams et al (1992), in *Our Children, Our Future*, provide a well-written, concise, yet comprehensive recount of the province's educational history up until the early 1990s. Much of the history found in this report, has come from this source. Additional works consulted include: Frederick W. Rowe's *A History of Newfoundland and Labrador*, and another of Rowe's works *The Development of Education in Newfoundland*.

This overview highlights the inter-relationship of parents (as expressed or represented by a community or church group), schools, and government. These three elements have been involved since the beginning of schools in this province. Indeed government was not directly involved for the first 150 years of Newfoundland and Labrador's educational history.

Newfoundland's earliest educational practices were deeply embedded in religious ideology. The first recorded educational arrangement was drafted by the French in Placentia and St. Pierre in 1686. Under the arrangement, the local Roman Catholic priest agreed to provide educational instruction for four months per year to the children in the area. The province's first school was opened by Church of England clergyman Reverend Henry Jones, in the mid-1720s (Williams et al, 1992, p. 49).

While denominational schools (such as the one opened by Reverend Jones) remained standard for quite some time, various groups began to establish schools open to children of all denominations.



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This began in the mid-1740s with The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. Subsequently, non-denominational groups began to form, opening schools for children of varying religions, much like the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel did. These groups included The Society for Improving the Condition of the Poor, The Newfoundland School Society and The Benevolent Irish Society (Williams et al, 1992, p. 50).

Because Newfoundland had difficulty establishing institutions of local government early in its history, a public education system was not advocated for until well into the 19th century. After the establishment of Representative Government, the Education Act of 1836 was drafted. This act described a secular school system that would provide grants to non-denominational schools and would be administered by nine local school boards. While the act recognized that non-denominational schools existed at the time, it did not make any attempt to govern them. Government responsibility surrounding education came in the form of grants-in-aid rather than managerial control. Despite the Education Act, little was done to change from the predominantly sectarian form of education to a state-run model (Williams et al, 1992, p. 51).

Initially, there was little resistance from denominational groups to the movement to establish a secular form of education in the colony. Issues arose when, in an 1838 amendment to the Education Act, Government forbade clergy to interfere with any aspect of the administration of the system's schools, even going so far as to prohibit the use of text books which had tendencies toward denominational beliefs. This was a clear expression of state interest in developing a non-sectarian system (Williams et al, 1992, pp. 50, 51).

Protests continued in response to the 1838 amendment and in 1843 Government conceded and provided for the establishment of two separate schools boards: one for the Roman Catholic Church and one for the Church of England and the Methodists. Now the Education Grant would be

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divided between the two groups. This marked a beginning of a return to the denominational system in the colony. Subsequently, disagreements arose between the Church of England and the Methodists and each wanted their own portion of the grant. The Methodist view was in favour of a public, non-denominational system. The group likely would have given up total control, if Government had been prepared to assume responsibility for both management and finance (Williams et al, 1991, 52).

The Education Act of 1874 saw the further division of the Education Grant, much to the pleasure of the Church of England. At this point, the Education Grant would be divided among the Church of England, the Congregational Church, the Free Church of Scotland, the Kirk of Scotland, the Methodist Church, and the Roman Catholic Church. This marked a point in history where the education system was completely sectarian. Later in the *Education Act* of 1927, this became the standard, state-approved system for the country (Williams et al, 1992, p. 52).

The year 1920 saw the establishment of Newfoundland's first Department of Education, headed by Minister Dr. Arthur Barnes. Barnes' appointment and subsequent leadership saw an increase in the level of co-operation among denominations at the time. Despite a change in government to a British-appointed commission in 1934, progress made during Barnes tenure did not revert (Williams et al, 1992, p. 53).

Under the control of the British-appointed commission, Newfoundland underwent a restructuring of the Department of Education. Despite intentions to restructure the denominational system, the new Bureau of Education did little to change it, and followed the majority of guidelines laid down in the 1927 Education Act (Williams et al, 1992, p. 54).



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When Newfoundland joined Canada in 1949, the newly established Provincial Government reinstated the Department of Education. Denominational Superintendents now represented all major denominational groups, functioning as members of a Council of Education. The Provincial Government also appointed a Director for Amalgamated Schools, recognizing their growth and importance in the province's system (Williams et al, 1992, pp. 54, 55).

Over the next 15 years, criticism fell upon the Council of Education because the members seemed to be representing their religious views rather than their professional opinions. To make things more difficult, decisions had to be made by unanimous vote, rather than majority rule. Considering the Council was made up of a variety of denominations, disagreement was commonplace and unanimous consent was difficult to obtain (Williams et al, 1992, p. 55).

When the Warren Royal Commission was appointed in the mid-1960s to focus on enriching education, many of the major submissions it received dealt with the issue of departmental restructuring. As a result, the Warren Royal Commission recommended that the Department "be organized along functional lines rather than according to denominational division, and that the role of the Churches be changed," (Williams et al, 1992, p. 56).

Influenced by the Royal Commission's recommendations, the Department of Education was reorganized to replace the former Denominational Superintendents with Denominational Education Councils. In 1969, three councils were established: Integrated, Roman Catholic, and Pentecostal. In September of 1969, the Presbyterian Church joined the Integrated Council and was followed eight years later by the Moravian Church. The Seventh Day Adventist Church refused to join the Integrated Council and established its own school board. "The governance and operation of the system [were] thus shared among a non-denominational Department of Education, the Denominational Educational Councils and the school boards," (Williams et al, 1992, pp. 56, 57).

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As a result of the integration in 1969, the province's 270 school boards were consolidated into 37. Twenty were Integrated, 15 were Roman Catholic, one was Pentecostal and another Seventh Day Adventist. This marked a significant step towards denominational co-operation in the province's educational history. In subsequent years, both the Integrated School Board and the Roman Catholic School Board underwent significant boundary changes to consolidate their school districts and many schools were closed. This was a result of studies conducted at various times over a 20-year time period by a number of committees working on behalf of both school boards. Moving into the 1990s, there were 16 Integrated School Board districts and nine Roman Catholic School Board districts. Also at this time there was one Pentecostal Assemblies Board and one Seventh Day Adventist Board (Williams et al, 1992, p. 57).

The release of *Our Children, Our Future*, by the Royal Commission of Inquiry into the Delivery of Programs and Services in Primary, Elementary, Secondary Education, in 1992, saw a further evolution in the province's education system. "The Commission's survey showed that large majorities - from 74% to 87% were in favour of dismantling many aspects of the system..." (McCann, n.d.).

Subsequent to the Royal Commission's recommendations, the education system in Newfoundland and Labrador was transformed into one that was truly public in nature. Denominational Educational Councils were abandoned and publicly elected school boards were adopted. Children of all denominations attended school together and learned about all world religions— not just their own or Christianity, for that matter. Daytime prayers were removed from the classroom, along with any religious displays, such as crucifixes. The change also resulted in the amalgamation of many schools in communities throughout Newfoundland and Labrador, bringing students together in one building and closing infrastructure that had become redundant. The system that evolved from recommendations by the Royal Commission, despite minor changes, is essentially the system that is in place today.



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2.3 Legacy of Tri-Party Involvement

To reiterate, this brief historical synopsis highlights the partnership among the three historic players in our provincial school system. This includes the parent, as manifested by a community group, religious denominational body, or school board; the actual school; and the Government, via the Department of Education. The Commission remained keenly aware of this historic interplay. The Commission ascribed to the principle that its responsibility was to work within the system. Therefore, its major recommendations have attempted to reflect the historical underpinnings and partnerships which have brought our school system to its present stage of development. This three-way leadership component must be reflected in the governance of the system and the major policy divisions, which support the system. The Commission's discussion of the proposed Teacher Allocation Model will embody this value.

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3.0 Process: A Four Phase Approach

For the purposes of organization, the Commission structured its intended operation into four phases. These phases, accompanied by estimated timelines, served as a guide to inform the Commission, as well as stakeholders, of the progress that was being made. The Commission believed that a transparent approach to its work must be maintained and it realized the necessity of maintaining an open, collaborative stance with all key stakeholders. By outlining a phased approach with estimated timelines, the Commission remained on task and provided updates at each phase to Government and other stakeholders.

3.1 Phase One (August – September 2006)

In Phase One, the Commission established a foundation for the work that needed to be carried out in Phase Two and subsequent phases. It was given its Terms of Reference, began communicating its mandate, made a call for submissions, and organized a schedule to conduct provincial consultations. A considerable amount of preparation was conducted in Phase One to determine a strategic approach to the primary research that would be done in Phase Two. Before planning for the cross-province, public consultations to be conducted in Phase Two, the Commission worked with a communications professional, Caron Hawco, to establish a number of objectives for the process.

3.1.1 Objectives of the Public Consultation Process

- Give stakeholders an understanding of the Commission’s goals and to explain that the results of the consultation process will be used as a main consideration in making recommendations regarding teacher allocation.
- Ensure that the message that stakeholders receive is accurate and balanced.



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- Ensure that stakeholders understand the significance of the Commission, in terms of the issues being addressed and how it may affect their lives.
- Allow stakeholders an opportunity to ask questions, offer solutions, and voice concerns.
- Present information in such a way as to mitigate any potential negative fallout.

From there, the Commission attempted to bring a focus to the consultation process. Because the Terms of Reference represent a significant number of educational issues, it was essential that the Commission narrow its focus into four major themes to serve as a guideline for the public consultations. This would allow contributors at the public consultations to focus on four themes rather than 15 Terms of Reference, facilitating dialogue. The four major themes were:

- i. Equity of educational opportunity,
- ii. Class size and its linkage to learning and resources,
- iii. Human resource recruitment and retention, and
- iv. Various priority provincial programming initiatives.

In addition to streamlining the Terms of Reference into four general themes, questions were drafted and posed to further discussion and help conceptualize the themes. These questions were designed to drive the overall consultation process:

1. Equity in Educational Opportunity

Given that enrolment is declining at a rapid rate in rural Newfoundland and Labrador, how do we allocate teachers in a fair and equitable manner, while still addressing the needs of the rural student and teacher?

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2. Class Size

Given that classrooms in specific urban areas are overcrowded, how do we offer a diverse curriculum and still keep classroom numbers within a reasonable range?

3. Human Resources/Recruitment

Given that many rural areas have a difficult time recruiting and retaining teachers (especially specialists), are there more innovative ways to attract and retain new teachers in rural areas?

4. Government initiatives

The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador is committed to providing appropriate programming options, such as special education services, fine arts programming, health and physical education, and information technology, as well as well as promoting bilingualism. How do we determine priorities and allocate the appropriate teaching resources, given our obvious fiscal and geographical limitations?

3.1.2 Consultation Protocol

Once the objectives had been established and the Terms of Reference had been organized into four major themes, the Commission continued to work with the communications professional to establish protocol to be used when making the cross-province consultations. The main goal of this protocol was to establish a climate of consistency from meeting to meeting, from group to group and from community to community. The protocol standardized the process, allowing for an approach that yielded consistent results in which the Commission was confident.

Prior to each meeting the Commission would...



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- ...collect important demographic and political data and identify a best approach for the area's consultation.
- ...identify economic and political considerations likely to influence stakeholder input.
- ...prepare a tight agenda to help engage public participation and keep those involved on track.
- ...clearly communicate the focus of the meeting and provide examples of issues that were not in the study's focus.

After each meeting the Commission would...

- ...recap what had been discussed and compare the discussion with the Terms of Reference and the Commission's Guiding Principles.
- ...(amongst its members) debrief, ensure all notes were collected and ensure important themes were highlighted while they were current.

3.1.3 Research Studies

Phase One also saw the implementation of two major research studies. These were a Pan-Canadian Allocation Practice study, designed to assess Newfoundland and Labrador's teacher allocation practices in relation to other provinces in Canada, and a scholarly review of literature on the issue of class size and student achievement.

Pan-Canadian Allocation Practice Study

A common theme that appears throughout the country in all variations of teacher allocation is student enrolment. Whether the resulting formulae output specific teaching units that must be used as directed or a block of funds that can be used at the local school district's discretion, the core of

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virtually all allocation funding is enrolment numbers. Students are the reason for teachers and this has been recognized. The variations come in how the student enrolment numbers are employed to decide on allocations. A full version of the Pan Canadian Allocation Practice Study can be found in Appendix II of this report. The following is a summary of that report:

- Prince Edward Island is the only province that uses a similar system to Newfoundland and Labrador, allocating units according to a wide-spread provincial formula.
- Within recent years many jurisdictions have abandoned formulae based on student teacher ratios in favour of formulae that take class size caps or averages into account.
- Most all provinces now have introduced class size restrictions, via class size limits or district-wide class size averages in an effort to provide a better learning environment for both teachers and students.
- In Ontario, a school district that chooses not to adhere to the province's class size initiatives can have its grants withheld as the first penalty. However, the districts are not required to achieve class size limits at the expense of other educational priorities.
- Since 2006, no more than three students with identifiable special needs are permitted in any one classroom in any grade in the province of British Columbia. To exceed composition limits at any grade, teachers must be consulted.
- In Manitoba, extra funding is available to the districts to aid in educating children with special needs. They have also increased the per pupil funding amount that covers guidance and counselling in recognition of the increased workload being placed on these individuals as the incident rate of children with diagnosed needs continue to rise.
- There is a clear trend towards the allocation of non-homeroom teachers separately from specialist and administrative positions. However, school boards have not been given full flexibility to determine the number of these administrative and non-classroom positions. For example, in Alberta, where the administrative positions originate from the overall basic instructional grant provided to the boards, a cap of six percent has been applied to admin-



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istrative and governance positions to ensure that instructional resources are directed towards their ultimate purpose...the classroom.

- While the need for smaller class sizes has been recognized, many are also recognizing the need for the provision of specialist teachers. Nova Scotia's specialist allocation has been broken down by grade level, recognizing that students at different stages in their educational development have differing needs. Furthermore, they have made a decision to hire specialists as opposed to generalists where possible.
- All Maritime provinces now allocate administration separately from classroom teachers:
 - o Nova Scotia recommends a principal for every school and a vice-principal for every 420 students enrolled at the board level.
 - o New Brunswick provides an administration unit for every 275 students.
 - o Prince Edward Island provides one administration unit for small schools (less than 500 students) and three for large schools (more than 500 students).
- With the most recent funding formula, Ontario has created the "School Foundation Grant" providing for principals, vice-principals, secretaries, and office supplies. Every school has a full-time secretary and a half-time principal, and any school with an enrolment of 50 or more receives a full-time principal.
- Saskatchewan has decreed that every school must have a principal in its Education Act.
- Provinces are also recognizing the importance of early literacy and numeracy intervention with their allocation practices:
 - o Nova Scotia provides a reading readiness specialist for every 100 pupils in Grade One.
 - o Manitoba provides approximately \$6.2 million for literacy intervention and \$15 per eligible pupil in Kindergarten to Grade 4 for numeracy support.

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Regardless of the funding or allocation approach a particular jurisdiction takes, most all recognize specific instructional needs and include them in their allocation formula. By ensuring that the various educational programs and proven learning environments are specifically accounted for in their funding approach, the provinces are taking the necessary steps to providing children with the best possible education. However, while these may be interpreted as the first steps towards a true program-based approach, none have yet completely deviated from an enrolment based system.

Class Size in K-12 Schools – A Review of the Research Evidence

Class Size in K-12 Schools was a scholarly literature review conducted by Dr. Bruce Sheppard, Associate Professor for the Faculty of Education at Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador. According to Sheppard (2006) the intent of this research

[was] not to argue for or against small class sizes, rather it [sought] to synthesize the current research literature related to class size and to present it in a manner that will inform debate and policy formulation in respect to this very important topic (p. 2).

This is not to imply that the Commission sought an unanimously supported conclusion from the scholarly research pertaining to class size and student achievement. There is no such unanimity. Different authors, organizations and institutes have espoused sometimes contradictory conclusions. The Commission was seeking an objective analysis outlining the direction of the findings of valid legitimate research. The Commission recognized that it will always be possible for those who oppose its recommendations to identify contrary viewpoints on such a controversial and developing body of research. What Dr. Shepherd was requested to investigate were the overall and dominant trends and directions from the entire field of study in this regard. While the report included research of both a quantitative and qualitative nature, it excluded material that was deemed to be within the realm of political advocacy, in one direction or another, on the issue of class size



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(Sheppard, 2006, p. 2). Sheppard looked at the last 10 years of social research conducted on class size. Nearly 120 studies were referenced in the report, with approximately 500 studies having been looked at in total. In addition to the last 10 years of research on class size, the report looked at six major, large-scale reviews that were conducted as far back as a century. These major reviews included: Biddle & Berliner, 2002; Gajewsky, 1975; Glass and Smith, 1978; New England School Development Council (NESDEC), 1975; Porwoll, 1978; Robinson & Wittebols, 1986; and Smith & Glass, 1979 (Sheppard, 2006, p. 10).

Interestingly, the NESDEC study initially found there was evidence demonstrating better student performance in larger class sizes than in smaller ones. Contrary to this, it concluded that there were small improvements in reading in small classes for students identified as slower learners. In the end, the study determined that the evidence was not enough to warrant a quantification of ideal class size and that the research was inconclusive and contradictory (Sheppard, 2006, p. 10).

Gajewsky's (1979) literature review concluded that while there is little evidence to support small or large class sizes, there is evidence to support small class sizes with regards to certain elements (Sheppard, 2006, p. 11).

Glass & Smith's (1978) first study found that the relationship between class size and achievement was strong, particularly so at the secondary grades rather than at the elementary grades. They concluded there was little doubt that in keeping all other elements constant, more is learned in smaller classes. Glass and Smith's (1979) second meta-analysis was also supportive of small class size. They concluded that small class size had positive effects on the quality of schooling and the attitudes of those in the class (Sheppard, 2006, p. 12).

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Porwoll (1978) reported that “small classes at the primary level increased student achievement in specific subject areas, that the continuation of small classes at the primary level for two or more consecutive years impacted achievement, and that small classes appeared to have a particular effect on students of low socio-economic status,” (as cited in Sheppard, 2006, p. 14).

Robinson & Wittebols (1986), in their update on Porwoll ‘s (1978) research concluded there was evidence to support small class sizes but that the impact on student learning decreases as grade level increases (as cited in Sheppard, 2006 p. 15).

Biddle & Berliner (2002) in their review reported that achievement related to small class sizes was higher in early grades and for students who may have been disadvantaged in education (as cited in Sheppard, 2006, p. 16).

Sheppard (2006) noted that while there is some overlap between the six major reviews, the differing contexts and methodological approaches of the authors of the separate works provide insights into the debates that have surrounded the class size issue for a century. At least one or more of those reviews form the foundation for the current research on class size, and therefore have helped shape research directions and provided a framework that continues to influence interpretations of research findings (p. 10).

In review of the current literature, Sheppard (2006) included three major experimental and quasi-experimental research projects in his report. These were the Tennessee STAR Project (Achilles, 1999), Wisconsin’s SAGE Program (Molnar, Smith, Zahorik, Palmer, Halbach, & Ehrle, 1999) and the Burke County, North Carolina initiative (Egelson, & Harmon, 2000; Scudder, 2001).



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According to Sheppard (2006), The Tennessee Student/Teacher Achievement Ratio (STAR) Project, "...is an experimental study that is considered by some... as the *gold standard* of research," (p. 18). According to Mosteller (1995), it is "one of the most important educational investigations ever carried out and illustrates the kind and magnitude of research needed in the field of education to strengthen schools," (as cited in Health and Education Research Operative Services, Incorporated, 2003). For the STAR project, "Students in the participating schools were randomly assigned to three class types: a small class (13-17 students), a regular class (22-25 students) and a regular class (22-25 students) with a full-time teacher assistant," (Sheppard, 2006, p. 18). Authors of the study found that students who participated in the small classes showed greater achievement than those in both the regular classes and the regular classes with teacher assistants. It also showed that the longer a student remained in the small class, the greater the achievement differences (Sheppard, 2006, p. 19).

The Student Achievement Guarantee in Education (SAGE) Program was a five-year program created in Wisconsin designed to improve socially disadvantaged K-3 students' academic achievement by reducing student-teacher ratios to 15 to 1 (Molnar, Smith, Zahorik, Palmer, Halbach, & Ehrle, 1999; Zahorik, Molnar, & Smith, 2003, as cited in Sheppard, 2006). A study was conducted to compare SAGE classrooms to regular-size classrooms in participating schools. General findings were that SAGE students statistically outperformed comparison students; African-American SAGE students scored lower in comparison before the program was implemented, and scored higher than comparison students in the posttest results; and African-American students generally gained more than white SAGE students from the program (Egelson, Harman, Hood, and Achilles, 2002 as cited in Sheppard, 2006).

The Burke County Class Size Reduction Program began in 1991 in Burke County, North Carolina. The program, which began as a four school pilot program, focused on students in Grades 1 to 3

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and aimed to reduce class sizes to 18 students per teacher over a five-year period. As the program progressed, the class size goal became 15 students per teacher in all 17 schools that were included in the program (Sheppard, 2006, p. 25).

Findings revealed that the small class students significantly outperformed students in control group classes in both reading and mathematics at the end of Grade 1 and Grade 2 and by Grade 3 they outperformed regular class students by approximately one year in reading and mathematics (Egelson, Harman, & Achilles, 1996, as cited in Sheppard, 2006).

When these students returned to regular size classes in Grade 4, they continued to outperform the other students in both reading and mathematics performance and this continued in Grades 5, 6, and 7 for all students who had commenced the small-class program in Grade 1 (Egelson & Harman, 2000, as cited in Sheppard, 2006)

After a thorough review of the relevant research, Sheppard (2006) reached a number of conclusions about the effects of class size on student achievement. Sheppard warned that much of the research reviewed sought to find causation, a difficult factor to determine even under the strictest of experimental control. He also cautioned that the results from any study only best apply to the population that was examined in that study. However, Sheppard (2006) stated that ignoring these findings because they were not conducted on a specific population, for example the students of Newfoundland and Labrador, is like disregarding medical research that has been conducted on a population elsewhere.

There was compelling evidence to support lower class size at the primary grade level when examining student achievement. This was particularly true of students at risk, students from lower socio-economic status or students from ethnic minorities. Much of the research focused on small



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class size at the primary grade level and found that small class size at this level helped prepare students for larger classes later on. There was little research to date on the effects of small class size in junior high and high school settings (Sheppard, 2006, p. 41, 42).

There are multiple definitions of large and small class sizes. Sheppard (2006) demonstrated that in order for small class size to make a significant difference, the class size must be below 20. Despite the compelling evidence, Sheppard (2006) warned that the conclusions about class size must be taken into context. Class size is only one of the factors which affect student achievement and conclusions must be made in the context of all others (p. 42).

The Commission recognized the significance of this research and attempted to move in the direction suggested by the results. The Commission also realized that in order to significantly improve teaching and learning and the overall quality of education in the province's classrooms, the issue of class size had to be addressed in a strategic manner. Specifics regarding class size will be discussed in further detail later in this report.

3.2 Phase Two (October – November 2006)

In Phase Two, the Commission continued to consult with key groups and, shortly thereafter, began data collection. While an Advisory Committee to the Commission was established in Phase One of the process, the Commission had its first meeting and began working with the Committee in Phase Two.

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3.2.1 The Advisory Committee

The Advisory Committee consisted of key stakeholders in the province's education system and its purpose was to advise on the operation and direction of the Commission's work, ensuring the Commission followed through with the implementation of its mandate. Each member of the advisory committee represented a formal legal entity or organizational group in the province's education system. The Advisory Committee was given its own terms of reference under which it would operate. When established, the purpose of the Advisory Committee was:

- to consult with the Commission on its operational activities,
- to meet at the call of the Commission,
- to consult with the Commission about its work plans and schedule, and
- to address any other issues as requested by the Commission.

Members of this committee had a vast, concrete knowledge of the issues surrounding the education system and proved to be a valuable resource for the Commission. Members of the Advisory Committee and their respective organizations were:

- Mr. Joe Arruda, Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Directors of Education
- Ms. Nada Borden, Newfoundland and Labrador School Board's Association
- Dr. David Dibbon, Faculty of Education, Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador
- Mr. Perry Downey, Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association
- Ms. Denise Pike, Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of School Councils
- Mr. Bob Gardiner, Director, Evaluation & Research, Department of Education



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3.2.2 Provincial Stakeholder Forum

In addition to establishing the Advisory Committee as a means of consultation, the Commission held a Provincial Stakeholder Forum on public education to gain further knowledge and advice on the course of its actions. The forum took place on October 17, 2006 and participants included a variety of invited community and education leaders with interest in the mandate of the Commission. Participants in the Provincial Stakeholder Forum included:

- Ms. Lynn Greene, Community Service Council
- Mr. Bob Gardiner, Department of Education, Government of Newfoundland and Labrador
- Ms. Nada Borden, Newfoundland and Labrador School Board Association
- Mr. Joe Arruda, Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Directors of Education
- Mr. Perry Downey, Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers Association
- Mr. Eldred Barnes, Department of Education, Government of Newfoundland and Labrador
- Ms. Hazel Hickey, Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of School Councils
- Ms. Denise Pike, Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of School Councils
- Ms. Cynthia Fleet, Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Directors of Education
- Dr. Andrea Rose, Faculty of Education, Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador
- Dr. Marian Fushell, Department of Education, Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador
- Dr. David Dibbon, Faculty of Education, Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador
- Mr. Clyde K. Wells, Newfoundland and Labrador Regional Economic Development Association
- Ms. Sabrina Fitzpatrick, Student Member of Mayor's Advisory Committee on Youth

The goal of the forum was to review the Commission's process and develop guiding principles to assist the Commission in its understanding of both the nature and the vision of public education

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within the province. In order to arrive at a set of guiding principles, forum attendants first participated in working groups, to develop ideas based on perceived issues in the education system. The groups then communicated their work in the form of oral presentations. The next exercise focused on taking the groups' reports and analyzing them to find common themes. These themes were then presented, discussed and organized into a set of guiding principles. The members at the forum were then given the opportunity to vet the guiding principles through their respective organizations to ensure the list was all encompassing and that all stakeholders agreed with its content. The guiding principles embody the basic beliefs and values of the Commission and are interdependent; therefore, they must be considered as a whole.

3.2.3 Guiding Principles

- Our education system is a reflection of who we are: the parent, the student, the teacher, the worker, and the volunteer. It is our community. We all have a role and responsibility to ensure the standards of our community are met and that education delivery is accessible, integrated, community based, and student centered.
- Every child must have access to an affordable and dependable public education system that allows children to contribute appropriately and within their means.
- We have a responsibility to ensure our education system is relevant and appropriate, connecting curriculum to the broader community.
- Equity in education is the fair and equal treatment of all members of our society who are entitled to participate in and enjoy the benefits of an education. All students should have the opportunity to participate fully and to experience success and human dignity while de-



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veloping the skills, knowledge and attitudes necessary to make a meaningful contribution to society. The challenge of ensuring equity in education and the magnitude of the change required to address this challenge calls for comprehensive, concerted, and continuing strategies that engage individuals and organizations in this commitment.

- Our education system does not operate in isolation. A well-educated workforce is the cornerstone of a thriving provincial economy and a community's socio-economic strength. For our province to realize its potential, the education of our youth must be promoted and encouraged. Students must have access to the curriculum they need to succeed. It is vital to cultivate in young Newfoundlanders and Labradorians both the attitude and the aptitude for success so they are prepared to sustain economic growth. From safe and secure learning environments, to accessibility and affordability, we must give all our students the tools they require to be the leaders of tomorrow. They must be prepared to take on the tremendous emerging opportunities in Newfoundland and Labrador in a wide range of industries.
- To ensure schools have the teaching resources they need to deliver the programs our students need, teacher allocation must take proper account of demographic changes and the changing priorities of the province. Each and every school in the province must be resourced adequately so teachers and students are working with proper educational tools. Programs designed to meet student learning differences must be adequately supported with resources as well as teachers who understand how different students learn.
- Our education system must be dynamic, adapting to emerging technologies, student and population needs, and longer-term economic conditions.

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- Education for rural people lies at the heart of rural development and is fundamental for a sustainable economy. People in rural areas that have strong education programs are more likely to adopt new technology, become more productive, and deal better with change.
- Fostering trust amongst stakeholders is critical in education because relationships grounded in mutual respect will foster collaboration and cooperation in the education system among educators, students and communities in the common pursuit of desired educational outcomes.
- Smaller classes make for better learning. To foster optimal learning and teaching, children should be learning in classrooms that are not crowded.
- The education system will support the education, training, and retention of education professionals upon which it relies.

Because the guiding principles were vetted through all major stakeholders in the province's education system, they were considered to represent a consensus of views and therefore could be used as a basis to form recommendations. The Commission could articulate a much stronger rationale for its actions if it was to parallel its recommendations with such an established set of expectations. By using this approach and working closely with the people most involved in the system, the Commission could work towards developing a comprehensive, collaborative strategy to address relevant issues.

3.2.4 Data Collection



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The process of primary data collection used in the formulation of the Commission's recommendations came in one of three forms:

- i. Community Learning Tables
- ii. One-on-one Interviews
- iii. Formal Submissions

Itinerary Overview

In mid-October of 2006, the Commission traveled across the province to meet with a variety of representatives of teachers, administrators, school districts, parents, school councils, special interest groups, guidance counsellors, educational psychologists, and students. The Commission divided this endeavour into the four major school districts in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador. These are: the Labrador School District, the Western School District, the Nova Central School District, and the Eastern School District. A later specific meeting was conducted with the Conseil Scolaire Francophone (CSF). Please refer to Appendix I for a detailed outline of the Commission's itinerary.

Beginning in Labrador on October 18, the Commission met with groups in Labrador West and Happy Valley-Goose Bay. From there, the Commission traveled to Gander on October 23 to conduct consultations with groups in the Nova Central School District. Next, the Commission traveled to St. John's on October 26 to begin consultations in the Eastern School District. After four days of meetings in the Eastern School District, the Commission traveled west again to meet with groups from the Western School District. The Commission finished these meetings on November 8. After a final consultation with the Conseil Scolaire Francophone on November 24 and 25, the Commission returned to its offices in St. John's to begin Phase Three of the project –review, compilation, and analysis of the notes.

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Provincial Community Learning Tables and One-on-One Interviews

The Community Learning Tables were roundtable exchanges whereby the Commission engaged groups of stakeholders in meaningful discussion of the issues currently affecting the province's education system. The Commission conducted more than 70 Community Learning Tables that were provincial in scope and designed to facilitate discussion to find long-term solutions that could address individual community realities. The One-on-one interviews were used in much the same fashion as the Community Learning Tables except on an individual basis. The Commission conducted interviews province-wide with leaders in education, politics, academia, economic development, and social development.

The Commission felt that the Community Learning Tables and the One-on-one Interviews provided a level of engagement that would not be present in the more formal written submissions. It enabled the Commission to understand the context of diversity of the participating communities and groups. The Commission was able to visit participants at the local level to better understand the rationale behind what each group was communicating.

Formal Submissions

In addition to the public consultations, the Commission provided people with the opportunity to share their concerns through formal submissions. A request was made through the Commission's website where relevant contact information was provided. Submissions could be made through mail, e-mail, and fax. They ranged from lengthy formal reports by major stakeholder groups to letters from concerned parents and students. A total of 93 submissions were received. They not only enabled stakeholder groups to provide information in a hard copy, they allowed anybody who



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was not part of the scheduled cross-province consultations to voice their concerns regarding teacher allocation. Please refer to Appendix IV for a complete list of submissions.

3.3 Phase Three (November – December 2006)

Phase Three involved the processing of all relevant information collected in Phase Two. During the Community Learning Tables and One-on-one interviews, each Commission member recorded his or her own copy of notes pertaining to the discussions. The initial action in Phase Three was to discuss the notes together. From there, the Commission identified emerging issues as heard from the stakeholder groups. Issues were then organized by school district to ensure fair representation. They were also studied in relation to the Terms of Reference to determine which issues related to the mandate of the Commission. The issues were documented in a spreadsheet that included the headings of theme, issue, problem, related term of reference and suggested solutions. Due to the confidential nature of the cross-province consultations, this spreadsheet will not be directly included in this report. However, all relevant issues and concerns will be expressed in Chapter 6.

In addition to the issues discussed here, there were a number of concerns brought forth that did not directly relate to the Terms of Reference outlined for the Commission. However, many of the issues had emerging implications that could affect the education system in general and therefore could not go unmentioned. These issues have been discussed in Chapter 7 of this report.

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3.4 Phase Four (January – March 2006)

The final phase saw the Commission looking towards the distillation of the message it would express in its final report. It began to develop a strategic instructional focus that was based on a variety of solid education research, experiments, and leadership and change initiatives. The Commission extracted elements of these works and applied them to the issues as expressed in the cross –province consultation. The Commission recognized that any work considered had to be examined and analyzed to understand how it best applied to Newfoundland and Labrador’s unique situation. Beginning in Chapter 4 and continuing through the latter half of this report, the Commission will outline a strategic instructional focus and a new teacher allocation model, discuss expressed concerns as they relate to this instructional focus and new model, and make recommendations on how to best address the concerns affecting our educational system.

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4.0 Comprehensive Instructional Focus and Strategy

The overall goal of the Commission was to recommend an educational approach whereby each student in the province would achieve a true equity of educational opportunity. Not equity in mere quantitative terms, wherein a measure of external variables such as teacher qualifications, capital infrastructure, programs available, or graduation rates was conducted, but equity in terms of qualitative assessments of the teaching and learning provided within each classroom across the province. This would be measured in terms of the students' progress towards the stated essential graduation learnings outlined in the provincial curriculum.

This direction would be meaningless unless it was consistent across the province. Different learning conditions exist throughout our schools, due to the personal and community variables at play. However, there exists a quintessential reality within the public education system. It is fostered by the classroom teacher and can be described as effective and appropriate instruction. Therefore, the Commission's thinking turned towards that common expectation of appropriate instruction. It sought to achieve a broad-scale approach or strategy whereby the instruction in each school could be simultaneously addressed in a manner that was both community and individual student needs based. It was clear to the Commission, during its province-wide consultations, that few expected complete equality of the school experience for students. However, there was a consensus of expressed opinion that every student must be eligible and equipped academically to pursue appropriate post-secondary education upon graduation. This equity of educational opportunity was centered within the teaching and learning domain of every school.

To achieve such a provincial strategy to improve instruction in each classroom, several prerequisites exist. One is aligning the goals of the province, the school district, the local school, and the



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individual teacher with the learning requirements of the individual student. Such synchronization is not simple. It will only result from comprehensive, broad-based, cyclical, collaborative planning.

Significant efforts in this regard already exist throughout our public education system. These come as a result of our local school development program; our school district level capital, operational, financial, and transportation planning; and other requirements from the Accountability and Transparency Act. However, mere efforts to create such plans are not sufficient. Care to ensure an alignment of purpose and outcome is necessary. Similarly, meaningful provisions for grass-roots involvement, coupled with a collaborative, goal-centered planning focus are essential. The various responsibilities and levels of functioning for all involved parties require adequate determination, clarification, and communication. Of course, adequate resources for such a process are mandatory. There is a dynamic interconnectivity amongst the resources, the curricular outcomes, the teacher needs, the student learning needs, the school community and school district educational goals, and the overall province-wide direction set by Government for our public education system.

While community-sensitive public education and school-based needs identification were resounding themes in both the submissions and consultations, there was essentially a plea from every public meeting, public consultation, forum, and written submission, to recognize the individual character of the various local schools throughout the province. One approach will not and can not match the individuality of local school needs. Public education belongs to the citizens of the province. It is not seen as a statement of policy, rather it is valued as a dynamic public service to which parents entrust their children. Time after time, speakers rose to remind the Commission that the future of our province lay in the hands of the students within our public schools. If we believe in a strong tomorrow for Newfoundland and Labrador, then we must ensure that these stu-

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dents receive the skill sets, the personal development, and the educational values required to ensure the existence of our heritage in the years ahead.

It was clear that the persons and parties who engaged the Commission held a deep realization that the two most significant variables in the process of education were the student and the teacher. Therefore, the expectation for the Commission was to make recommendations that provided for a set of local school-based circumstances, where the blending of these two human variables, within the context of a province-wide curriculum, led to a truthful equity of educational opportunity.

In other words, the Commission was expected to respond to its challenge with an instructional focus that was student-centered, faithful to the provincial curriculum outcomes, and resourced in a realistic manner. Currently, school-based human resources are viewed as over demanded. Hence, a strategic approach founded upon demographic, curricular, student achievement, professional teacher development, and socio-economic planning dimensions was sought. The task then was to explore a model outlining the development, execution, and maintenance of a dynamic instructional focus for every student in the provincial public education system.

Learning is personal for both teacher and student. It can be influenced and facilitated. It can not be mandated. An instructional focus is an expectation which our society can legitimately and reasonably expect from each school. It is the very essence of schooling and it can be made a requirement of the professional performance of our public school system. Therefore, excellence of every school and excellence in every classroom can be expected and pursued.



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The Commission defines instructional focus as the provision by the leadership of each school of the means and the opportunity to analyze the achievement of each student in relation to the student's ability, the program placement, the program efficacy, and the teaching methodologies used.

4.1 Instructional Focus and Leadership Research

The Commission considered two specific sources with respect to the provision and creation of such an instructional focus. Both of these captured the imagination of the Commission because each successfully addressed the simultaneous development of all schools within a school district. It was not the Commission's intent to recommend that the Provincial Government replicate these examples; clearly the reality of Newfoundland and Labrador is unique. However, the direction taken and the techniques employed by these studies are significant variables. It is this starting point that provides a basis upon which we can build an instructional focus for the province.

The first source the Commission reviewed was the work of Fullan (2001) in his book *Leading in a Culture of Change*. He describes two examples whereby an instructional focus worked to improve the teaching and learning conditions in the schools. In Fullan's (2001) first example, a community school district in New York City was chosen to be the object of study. Titled District 2, it consisted of 24 elementary schools, seven junior high schools and seventeen so-called "option" schools. These schools fed into a regional high school system which was organized separately. The point of interest for the Commission was the manner in which all of the schools in the district were addressed simultaneously (p. 55).

Over a nine-year period from 1987 to 1996, the district rose from a tenth-place ranking to a second-place ranking in reading and mathematics. This was the result of a strategy implemented to improve the teaching and learning in each school based upon teacher professional development.

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Fullan (2001) described seven organization principles for this reform:

- i. It was about instruction and only instruction;
- ii. Instructional improvement is a long, multi-stage process involving awareness, planning, implementation and reflection;
- iii. Shared expertise is the driver of instructional change;
- iv. The focus is on system wide improvement;
- v. Good ideas came from talented people working together;
- vi. Set clear expectations; then decentralize;
- vii. Collegiality, caring and respect are paramount (p. 57).

In this district, the instructional focus of each school and classroom level was achieved via an active teacher professional development program. In other words, provision was made to lead teachers towards improving instruction in ways that were meaningful to their students. There was opportunity for professional exchange, collaboration, and learning provided to these teachers within the work place.

The second example Fullan identified was a San Diego school district that was larger and more complex than District 2. It had numerous ongoing change initiatives during the 1990's, however these initiatives were often school isolated and lacked cohesion. He described how the district was reorganized to avoid overload and fragmentation which can result from many diverse local school-change initiatives.

In this situation, the district was restructured so that the instructional focus was built into the district's line authority. The schools were reorganized from regional or geographic clusters into "families of schools". An instructional leader replaced the area superintendents and became responsible for 20 to 25 schools. The expectation was that the instructional leader would concen-



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trate solely upon instructional leadership – that is coaching and evaluating principals – and student performance.

The initial emphasis was placed upon literacy and mathematics and included various strategies designed to identify and correct learning problems early in a child’s schooling. Again, the approach was a teacher professional development model which carefully monitored student achievement. The district issued a monthly report that discussed and updated the strategies employed and the successes achieved. It then developed school-based leadership and obtained assistance from the local university (Fullan, 2001, p. 58).

There were eight instructional leaders in total. They held monthly conferences wherein their role and performance was reviewed by themselves, the principals, and the senior district administration. Each leader conducted monthly onsite conferences with his or her principals and made weekly school visitations. The focus of the discussion centered upon student performance and the implementation of instructional practices. As well, the eight stimulated sharing amongst the school principals with regards to successful teacher coaching and instructional strategies.

Fullan (2001), reports significant gains by all San Diego schools involved when compared to national standards. Over a seven-year period, the school district reading results moved forward by an average of ten percentile points (p. 60).

This school performance improvement was echoed in other measured research involving teacher and principal attitude surveys on leadership reform. In fact, a Stanford University study showed that:

- principals and teachers overwhelmingly valued the new role of principals as instructional leaders;

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- principal leadership and collegial support were strengthened;
- there was more coherence and focus to the district's reform efforts;
- some principals and teachers objected to the top down way in which the reform was introduced;
- the vast majority of the principals valued the context of the reform and the majority of teachers valued it (as cited in Fullan, 2001, p. 61).

The salient point in this was the provision, in a planned context, of onsite leadership at the district and school level to enable each teacher to improve instruction and therefore student performance.

The second source which the Commission considered in recommending a new strategic instructional focus was the Harvard University Public Education Leadership Project (PELP), as described by Childress, Elmore, & Grossman (2006). This was a joint initiative of the Harvard Graduate School of Education and the Harvard Business School. This project focused upon strategic alignment, execution of strategy, human capital management, and the design of resource allocation and accountability systems of the participating school districts. The Commission was interested in the approaches taken at the school district level to institute strategies whereby every school across the district was moved ahead simultaneously.

Childress, Elmore, & Grossman (2006) reported that “only the district office can create such a plan, identify and spread list practices, develop leadership capability at all levels, build information systems to monitor student improvement and hold people accountable for results,” (p. 55).



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There is no model of management to describe this role, but the PELP research has uncovered very positive directions in this regard. Fifteen U.S. school districts, ranging in size from 7,900 pupils to 434,000 pupils, were studied and progress was reported on student achievement. A district-wide framework to develop a strategy that elevated student performance across the entire school district was developed in each of the districts studied. The framework also outlined ways to build a coherent organization capable of implementing the strategy in a sustainable way. While the study is relatively new and not yet complete, early reports are quite encouraging (Childress, Elmore, & Grossman, 2006, p. 56).

Furthermore, the PELP research results inferred that over the past 25 years, the fundamental flaw in attempts to reform education was the tendency to focus on one, specific solution. It appears that broader reform efforts are necessary. The key focus for any school reform is the interaction point between students and teachers – that is the classroom. Efforts must be directed to strengthen this interaction point so that both parties can perform at higher levels. The school district can help here; this can be a strategic function employed to assist teaching and learning.

The PELP teams reported that most districts had no comprehensive strategy to pursue improvements in explicit manners. The teams also reported that the district leaders had difficulties connecting the strategies they had with the organizational elements required to carry them out. The report summarized these difficulties into five noted challenges:

- i. Consistent execution of the strategy across schools with different characteristics
- ii. Creation of a coherent organizational strategy to support the strategy
- iii. Developing and maintaining human capital
- iv. Aligning resource allocation with the strategy
- v. Using performance data to guide discussions to create accountability, (Childress, Elmore, & Grossman, 2006, p. 59).

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Furthermore, few districts saw the interconnection amongst these challenges. The development of teaching skills must be linked to assessing student performance and it must be resourced meaningfully. A district-wide coherence was required so that all elements could contribute to the overall goals of improving teaching and learning.

Beginning with this instructional case, the strategy was designed from the inside out. Engaging students in learning and ensuring that they were challenged by the curriculum meant that teaching skills had to be developed and that, where necessary, the curriculum had to be strengthened.

An example of this was found in the Chicago Public School System. Progress was achieved when a focus was placed on teaching and learning in all of its schools. Area instructional officers were appointed to work directly with groups of 18 to 44 schools. These individuals coached the school principals to work with teachers. They assisted the schools to identify the root causes of unsatisfactory student performance, measure the effectiveness of possible solutions, and to transform themselves into self-correcting enterprises. These individuals fostered principal and teacher collaboration in the design of an instructional plan. The starting position of each school was used to formulate measurable goals. Regular meetings and consultations monitored progress. Programs to provide training for the teachers and principals were made available where required. Such programs used district-wide student information systems to enable better student performance data. It was clear that improved results were achievable for all schools where teaching and learning was focused upon, clear goals and learning objectives were determined, and accountability was expected (Childress, Elmore, & Grossman, 2006, p. 62).

In some schools, teachers helped their peers learn how to deliver new curriculum and use student performance data to identify effective instructional techniques. This collaboration involved teachers observing other teachers and modeling successful practices for their peers.



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The significant point in this is that the area instructional officers assisted each school in a simultaneous manner. The instructional officers worked as a district team. They learned from each other and worked with the district senior leadership. Coherence, vision, instructional focus, and teacher skills were built upon; adequate resources and accountability were obtained; and improvements in individual schools, in terms of pupil learning, were achieved.

The greatest challenge facing public education in North America today is the improvement of student performance. There have been many diverse initiatives launched over recent decades to achieve this. There has been some improvement, but broad-scale success has not yet reached the levels where our communities are totally satisfied. It is clear that to achieve such excellence on a broad scale, a strategy to improve instruction in each classroom and to support individual schools is required. This responsibility can logically be placed upon the school district which is the organizational unit for the local schools.

The Commission is aware that no quick fix is likely. However, the direction whereby each school receives assistance with its instruction via the leadership of its principal, supported by its district, is a very positive one. An organized effort to strengthen local teaching and learning can be created in this way.

An expectation for the Commission's work is that its recommendations would be reasonably achievable. Therefore, it is not the intention of the Commission to recommend an extensive renewal or replacement of the current district administration to achieve the development of this instructional focus. Clearly, the province has a district structure in place; its aim is to lead instruction. A provincial curriculum is in place and efforts to align district planning to implement such are in operation. However, it is clear to the Commission that at both the school and the district level

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there is a shortage of human resources to enable each school and each district to develop and foster strategies to enable broad, system-wide instructional improvement strategies. Hence, the Commission will recommend measures to address the issue of an instructional focus in the context of existing district structures, but do so with an increase in human resources.

It is necessary to restate that the creation of a comprehensive strategy to focus upon instruction in each school district is of paramount importance. This focus must be linked to the learning needs of the students on a school-by-school basis. Equity for all students, in light of so many regional and local variations, can only be meaningfully embraced in this manner. The instructional base of any curriculum is the individual classroom. Therefore, it is only on that basis, can successful improvements in student learning be meaningfully explored. Teachers must understand the curriculum intended and the various teaching methodologies required. This implies attention to their working conditions and the provision of the skills required to instruct. Teaching specialists, program experts, and appropriate class sizes to enable individual student-teacher interaction are necessary. Similarly, the instructional focus of each school will only be created as a result of intentional leadership at the school site. A district capacity to support and further develop this is also necessary. This will require a strategic approach to human resource planning from demographic, curricular, student achievement, and professional development perspectives.

The ultimate goal of the Commission is to develop an innovative new plan to allocate teachers in a way that will assure the best delivery of the curriculum, to all students throughout the province, in an equitable manner. Equity is not equality. Factors of demography and geography simply render an equality of programming amongst schools impossible, if not inappropriate.

Nevertheless, it is a cornerstone of any public education system, that every child must have the opportunity to achieve self-development in a holistic, educational sense. This outcome can be



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measured most appropriately by the student's progress towards the stated provincial essential graduation learnings. School courses and programs are means to these ends. Hence, the ultimate measure of the equity of educational opportunity becomes the ability of the high school graduate to qualify for entrance to the various post-secondary institutions.

From the viewpoint of the Commission, the delivery of the curriculum rests with the provision of teachers and their direction of the learning situation within each school. This leads to a consideration of the process of providing teachers the support at the point of interaction with the students and the onsite leadership required to develop and maintain a positive instructional emphasis, which will permeate every school and classroom. Therefore, in addition to making recommendations on the allocation of teachers, the Commission will endeavour to address the question of equity for educational opportunity via a comprehensive district-wide instructional strategy.

Therefore, the Commission recommends that...

Recommendation #1

the Provincial Government seek to assist school districts with the development and ongoing support of a comprehensive district-wide instructional focus. Furthermore, this focus will be built within each school.

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5.0 A New Teacher Allocation Model

As stated earlier in this report, the vast majority of input the Commission received expressed that the solution to the challenges of teacher allocation could be found at the local school level. Approaches that emphasized mainly district-wide or provincial-level solutions are insufficient because of their inability to focus upon the local area units of instruction. It is there that students meet teachers. It is there that improvements and developments in education must be rooted and rationalized.

In other words, single-district or provincial-based solutions will not likely be effective in each local school. Strongly expressed viewpoints indicated that the realities of where students reside and where the school is located must be the starting point for improvement. Indeed, the variations of economy, demography, and geography throughout the province highlight vast local differences. Hence, the Commission moved into a new approach to the allocation of teachers. It accepted that the instructional needs of the local area students would be the basis for the allocation of teachers. Since the base of the student population was variable, it was clear to the Commission that some means to safeguard the staffing and programming levels from the vagaries of population-based planning had to be formed

School boards are empowered by the Schools Act to organize and administer local education. On an annual basis, the Provincial Government applies various formulae to the student population of each district and generates a complement of teachers. This resource is calculated on various bases and represents a pool of teachers which the board, through its professional staff, deploys to its schools. These schools then take the number of teacher resources provided and blend it into the mixture of local student programming and learning needs. The level of the teacher resources



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therefore determines class size and the breadth of programming offered. Student population is the main driver of these formulae and, when varied, impacts local programming and staffing.

The school district divides the available teacher allocation in response to general needs and to the degree possible, local needs. Hence, the local school has little or no defense against the immediate ravages of the area's school-age population decline. It is also helpless in the face of large-scale reorganization of schools aimed at achieving greater staffing efficiency and effectiveness for the sake of program deliveries. In these scenarios, it is always difficult to respond to local school needs, not to mention individual student learning needs.

Another reality brought to the attention of the Commission was that teachers are often simply over-demanded. As each local school tries its best to offer the broadest curricular offerings it can to its students, the pressures of extra-curricular participation, planning time, preparation time, and classroom size affect the teacher's ability to attend to the individual student. Furthermore, when the demands of Individual Support Service Plan (ISSP) activity and the various expectations for school-wide, theme-based approaches (such as safe and caring schools, sports, drama, or inter-school competitions) are considered, it becomes clear that many schools are finding it impossible to respond adequately.

The result is that the professionals in local schools are being significantly challenged to focus on the individual learning needs of their students because resource levels do not match expectations to broaden the program base and raise student achievement. The resource levels decrease because enrolment is declining, yet expectations for modern levels of student programming are increasing constantly as the forces of international economics impact our local communities. Every citizen expects our public education system to assist students in their growth to an ever more

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complicated self-fulfillment, yet the very forces which challenge our student growth diminish the ability of the public school to respond.

From a further perspective, the local school requires leadership and support to aid its teachers with respect to curriculum delivery. Schools are inherently about teachers teaching and students learning. To optimize these processes, the conditions of the learning must be reasonable and class composition and size must be considered. However, an instructional focus must become a main priority of each teacher. How are the students achieving? Are the chosen teaching methodologies helpful to each student? Are the intricacies of the modern school curriculum and its component disciplines fully understood? Are we, as teachers, joining in collaborative exercises to review and analyze student learning models and the teaching methodologies best suited for these? Classroom teachers are in need of the time and leadership to assist them with these questions. Yet, the answers to these questions will detail the learning needs of each local school. The articulation and monitoring of these learning needs is now expected to drive the staffing allocation process. To begin to work outward from the individual classroom's instructional focus will require a differentiated approach to teacher staff allocation.

The school board and the district level administration must respond to local school needs. This is not to deny their professional and moral responsibility to ensure that our delivery of service to the students is adequate. Program evaluation, professional teacher evaluation, school evaluation, and a wholesome array of teacher professional development support are necessary.

Experience has demonstrated that teaching methodologies influence student learning. It is incumbent upon those responsible for the operational delivery of the school curriculum to ensure that those who deliver the curriculum are capable of selecting methodologies to achieve optimal student learning. The modern reality of most professions is that as the knowledge associated with



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the field of study grows, modifications to practice that reflect the knowledge growth will follow. To rely on the individual teacher to seek professional development on his or her own accord would be presumptuous. Even if professionals did this on an individual basis, the result of such haphazard development would not enable a comprehensive response to change. It is the responsibility of the employer to ensure that the professional staff is kept current in its practice. Therefore, substantial professional growth and development programs are necessary for on-site teachers, on-site administrators, and district-wide professional support persons. To merely increase teacher numbers without planning and supporting professional development is akin to supplying a group of people with guitars and assuming they will simply discover how to play the instruments.

5.1 Model Structure

The Commission is proposing a renewed model of provincial teacher allocation. Inherent with this proposal is a shift from the historical thinking of teacher provision to a mindset that is individual, local school, and classroom based.

The process for this contains three distinct but complementary stages: allocation, deployment, and assignment. Under our provincial education legislation, these elements are led by different parties. However, it is impossible to view one single element while excluding the other two. Historically, there has been a tendency to shirk responsibility for effectiveness or efficiency in education delivery by allowing one sector to merely blame the other for its inability to satisfactorily respond to a local need or issue. For example, the local school may claim it was not provided with enough teachers by the district. The district, in turn, claims that the provincial allocation was insufficient and restrictive. The Provincial Government explains that given its resource levels and various other demands, a richer provision for education resources was not possible. Hence, it is easy to avoid the particular question when we see only generality.

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The initial step is the allocation stage. This is led by the Department of Education and is subject to provincial financial policies and budget. This exercise follows various formula applications which are designed to achieve numerical equity with respect to the entitlement of each student. It provides resources to the school boards and not to the individual schools, even though specific localized data is utilized during the provincial-level calculations.

The second step, the deployment phase, is led by each school board in line with the powers and responsibilities granted under the Schools Act. It is here where decisions regarding resources are made on the basis of student registrations and program/student services. District priorities and goals are also considered. Often, in response to the challenges of this stage, processes to close schools or reduce programs in the name of efficiency are addressed. It is through this stage, that each school receives its staff complement. There is a boundary whereby the allocation body does not reach into specific schools. It is important that this be respected. The corollary, of course, is that the school board is responsible for the deployment to the schools.

The final step of the process is the assignment phase. This is generally school-based and consists of the principal assigning teachers their particular duties.

The primary concern for the Commission is the Allocation stage. However, it is important, from a general sense, to understand the lead players at each stage and to avoid unfair attributions of criticism. There are many difficult decisions to be made surrounding school closure, re-organization, or program discontinuation. There are also difficult choices to be made between class size levels and program offerings. May all interested parties be understanding of the focus and rationalization used in these instances. Similarly, the interrelationship amongst the three stages is clear. Major decisions at one level reverberate on the other two.



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The Commission is proposing two modifications to this allocation phase. If the model is intended to rejuvenate the classroom contact point where students and teacher interact, and if it is truly community sensitive and based on instructional needs, an adequacy of resources must be considered. Even though it is the lead player in the allocation phase, the Department of Education does not deal directly with school-based issues. However, a sense of the real instructional needs must be considered in any allocation process.

Therefore, the Commission recommends that...

Recommendation #2

the revised Teacher Allocation Model be adopted and a two-fold approach to the allocation phase be implemented. These elements are: (i) a Provincial Teacher Allocation Review Process; and (ii) School District Reports.

For the purpose of enabling more comprehensive human resource development planning, retirement/replacement transitioning, and wellness planning the Commission recommends that...

Recommendation #3

the Provincial Government make three-year planning commitments to each district, subject to provincial budget decisions and financial policy.

School performance and demographic data would also be considered in this planning. Since the bulk of this data already exists, five-year data planning modules could be made accessible to assist in the process.

Therefore the Commission recommends that...

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Recommendation #4

the Department of Education develop five-year school performance and demographic data planning modules to assist in the three-year planning commitments made to each school district.

Comprehensive human resource planning would enable sound decisions with respect to:

- i. updating new teacher skills and aligning them with individual student or school performance,
- ii. creating teacher professional mentoring and modeling programs,
- iii. sharing successful instructional leadership skills amongst administration,
- iv. retaining and replacing subject area program specialists,
- v. designing personal career development paths for teachers,
- vi. creating school and class grouping strategies, and
- vii. commissioning short and longer term research into program and teaching effectiveness.

5.1.1 Provincial Teacher Allocation Review Process

The Commission's vision of this element borders upon more accountable human resource planning on the part of the school district and the Department of Education. On an annual basis, after the provincial annual general return, the director of each district would meet with the Deputy Minister of Education. The overall topic of discussion would be the amount and nature of the teacher resources required to deliver the curriculum for the following September; each school in each district would be reviewed. One-third of these schools would be reviewed annually on an in-depth basis. The meeting would occur no later than December 15 of any given year.



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The meeting would not be a negotiating forum. However, the director would base the needs upon the district's anticipated share of resources for the coming year. The meeting would also provide an opportunity for the director to demonstrate how the district utilized its teacher resources to meet provincial, district, and school goals for the current or previous year. In the event that the teacher allocations were below expectations, or if the district failed to meet its stated goals for the period in question, these matters would be highlighted for the deputy minister. Alternative plans and coping mechanisms would be also discussed.

There are two essential elements to the discussion: human resources (teacher) data and the ability of each school to deliver the curriculum to its students. This latter topic would be reinforced with student achievement data.

The review would essentially describe the resources needed at each school for the coming school year. It would be sensitive to local community needs and expectations. It would inform the deputy minister about how the district deployed and utilized its resources from a qualitative viewpoint. It would not replace any discussion of a political nature between the local school board and the deputy minister concerning the school district's reorganization plan, program reductions or expansions, transportation, or other capital matters.

5.1.2 School District Review Contents

The specific interests of this review would be the number of teachers required to deliver the curriculum on a school-by-school basis for the coming year. This would be based upon:

- i. class sizes,
- ii. class composition,
- iii. all school programs to be offered,

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- iv. instructional hours, and
- v. a number defining the professional development time required to ensure proper program delivery and related assessment.

The related assessment would include both an evaluation of students' achievement and a district judgment of program effectiveness. These elements would be consistent with district, school, and provincial plans. Local community plans and priorities would also be reported from the perspective of the school.

On an annual basis, this information will outline in a succinct manner, the status of each provincial school. Individual student achievement, school programming, and teacher human resource needs will have been highlighted. The challenge for each district and for the overall province will be the continuing development of each school so as to guarantee equity of educational opportunity for students in the province. Now that a new Teacher Allocation Model has been described, it is necessary to return to the concept of the instructional focus described earlier in this report and address it in relation to the new model.

As mentioned in Chapter 4, the Commission defines instructional focus as the provision by the leadership of each school of the means and the opportunity to analyze the achievement of each student in relation to the student's ability, the program placement, the program efficacy, and the teaching methodologies used.

With the new Teacher Allocation model, a collaborative, collegial approach would be provided. The principals would stimulate meetings and ensure that the learning outcomes were shared across the school and if appropriate, across the district. Specialist teachers of distinct curricular areas would be available to assist generalist teachers. Instructional specialists would work from the dis-



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trict level with clusters of schools to assist with this process and to assist principals with the resultant instructional leadership.

The strategy to achieve this rests on leadership personnel and skill development. It rests with the planning to improve and the assessment of student achievement. Finally, it rests upon a class size reduction model to enable teachers to individualize instruction in more meaningful manners.

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6.0 Findings and Recommendations

To reiterate,

The instructional base of any curriculum is the individual classroom. Therefore it is only on that basis can successful improvements in student learning be meaningfully explored. Teachers must understand the curriculum intended and the various teaching methodologies required. The instructional focus of each school will only be created as a result of intentional leadership at the school site.

From the outset, the Commission attempted to review the allocation of teachers within the Terms of Reference assigned. In addition to this, recommendations regarding allocation were made on the following three bases:

- i. Any qualitative or quantitative review of public education must be centered upon the enhancement of teaching and learning.
- ii. The core beliefs, described as the Commission's fundamental Guiding Principles, were formed by the key representative stakeholders in the provincial school system. Any modern consideration of public education must be faithful to these principles.
- iii. The overriding conclusion reached by the Commission following its consideration of the consultation process, formal written submissions, and its own study and research, was that the contact point between teachers and students had to be strengthened.

There were many elements to be reviewed both within the individual school and outside the school. The former references class size, teacher numbers, on-site school leadership, and program support. The latter highlights the supports provided to the school from the district level. Instructional improvement and student growth require comprehensive, coherent approaches.



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Hence, the resources required must work within the school sites and amongst the individual schools.

6.1 Class Size Reduction (CSR)

Class size reduction (CSR) is not an intervention like those that provide curricular and instructional strategies—with training—to increase performance in reading, mathematics or any particular subject matter. Instead, reduced class sizes are an opportunity for educators to do more at the classroom level; they open the doors that allow teachers to be more effective and students to focus more of their energy on learning. (Finn, 2002, as cited in Sheppard, 2006, p. i).

There are a number of factors that have an impact on student learning. One of the key factors is class size. There have been a number of studies that have investigated the effect of small class size on learning and they have shown that reducing class size has a significant effect on the overall achievement of students, particularly those in the primary grades and especially students coming from disadvantaged backgrounds. As previously mentioned, many of these reports have been reviewed for the Commission in *Class Size in K-12 Schools: A Review of the Research Evidence* by Dr. Bruce Sheppard. Reducing class size also increases the individual contact time that students have with teachers and will decidedly helps those with learning difficulties.

Tennessee's Student Teacher Achievement Ratio (STAR) project teachers report that smaller classes increase their ability to monitor student behaviour and learning, give more immediate and more individualized reteaching, offer more enrichment, achieve a better match between their instruction and each child's ability, gain more detailed knowledge of

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each child's needs as a learner, and use a variety of instructional approaches to meet learners' needs (Bain & Achilles, 1986, as cited in *Capitalizing on Small Class Size*, n.d.).

Other teachers have cited the use of "participation in establishing classroom rules, learning centers, field trips, and peer tutors" as further tools that can be utilized in smaller classrooms (Achilles, 1999, as cited in *Capitalizing on Small Class Size*, n.d.).

A summary of the benefits that come with lower class sizes include:

- Smaller classes have an important effect on student achievement and overall student performance.
- Small class sizes help facilitate a more modern approach to teaching, further utilizing activities with learning centres, acting, and other methods that are not as practical with larger groups.
- Smaller primary classes are particularly beneficial for all children, especially in the areas of numeracy and literacy.
- Lower class size may reduce the number of students utilizing special services, as teachers may be able to focus on their needs in a class with smaller numbers.
- Students from at-risk backgrounds, who are placed in classes with smaller numbers in primary, are less likely to drop out of school.
- Enrichment is more easily accommodated in smaller classes.
- Fewer students mean lower noise levels, resulting in less distractions and ultimately, a better learning atmosphere with fewer discipline problems and class disruptions.
- Better communication is possible between parents and teachers in smaller classes.
- With more adequate classroom space, air quality in smaller classes is far better, resulting in an environment more conducive to learning.



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- Assessment and correction can be more thorough in smaller classes. With a faster turn-around time, teachers are more able to give timely, effective feedback to students.

Lundy (2006) reported a study wherein high school students from three major Canadian urban centres described, in their own words, characteristics of a successful high school. “The cry for interesting, open-ended, relevant, imaginative teaching was a key message,” (p. 51). Students also agreed that extra-curricular activities were an essential part of any successful high school. Respect was also important to the students surveyed, with students saying that teachers need to create learning environments where everybody can voice their opinions and where conflict is resolved in a timely manner. Those surveyed also spoke of being confused by the marks they had received. They expressed that it would be more constructive if teachers had time to explain their grades, show them where they went wrong, and instruct them on how they could improve. The survey also showed that students felt it was important for teachers to get to know them. They felt it was essential that teachers understand that students have lives outside of school, and be sensitive to that fact (Lundy, 2006, p. 51).

An underlying theme amongst the survey results was time—time to allow the opportunity for teachers to reflect on their practice, time to enable teachers to engage their students as individuals, and time for teachers to help other teachers with teaching practices. The salient point is that by providing teachers with classes that have less students, they can avail of the time necessary to invest in the very things that students outline as essential to a successful school.

The utilization of the opportunities provided by reduced class sizes is the key to successful school practices. It is essential for school districts to have the resources necessary to equip teachers with the skills to provide high-quality instruction in these new teaching surroundings.

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It is not sufficient to merely have teachers teach as they always have. Reduced classes open new opportunities to personalize learning. These classes open opportunities for teachers to involve their peers, student families, and the community in more creative ways than ever before.

It is important to note that class size reduction alone cannot compensate for poor teaching. An active, needs-based professional development initiative must become a cornerstone of the district's re-organization plan. This is to ensure teachers become knowledgeable about the necessary changes needed in teaching methods to get the maximum benefit of class size reduction. The nature of the public school is changing from the traditional institutional factory concept to the network logic of a learning community.

Indeed, we need to move beyond the concept of extended schools whereby schools extend the range of services they provide, towards the notion of extended learning whereby learning institutions rethink the possibilities around what can be learned, where learning can happen and who is involved in the learning process (Rudd, Sutch, & Facer, 2006, p. 2).

Schools must organize programs to enable their teachers to adopt the professional mindset necessary for such a fundamentally qualitative change in practice.

Therefore, the Commission recommends that...

Recommendation #5

teachers be allocated to school boards on the basis of the following class size maximums:

<i>Kindergarten</i>	<i>18</i>
<i>Grades 1-3</i>	<i>20</i>



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<i>Grades 4 -6</i>	<i>23</i>
<i>Grades 7-Level III</i>	<i>25</i>

Recommendation #6

in order to enable a practical response to emergent local circumstances, such as an unanticipated influx of students, the assignment of students to classes may be increased by not more than two students subject to the approval of the Director of Education.

The Commission heard that in many schools there are simply too many grades being taught in the same classroom. This requires a considerable amount of preparation time for each course, taking away from the time a teacher can spend teaching it. Similarly, groups expressed concern that there is a lack of resource materials to prepare teachers for multi-grade classroom situations. The Commission also heard that public exam courses may be suffering in multi-grade environments. Students registered in public exam courses need a certain amount of the teacher's attention because their marks determine their ability to access post-secondary education. Proper attention is not always easy to provide in multi-grade situations.

Therefore, the Commission recommends that...

Recommendation #7

where it is necessary to combine two or more grades or courses in one class with one teacher, the maximum class size will be:

<i>Kindergarten – Grade 3</i>	<i>12 students or less</i>
<i>Grade 4 – Level III</i>	<i>15 students or less</i>

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The Commission opted to follow a student enrolment cap as there were too many variables involved with attempting to utilize a subject or course cap.

6.2 Smaller Schools

The Department of Education (2006) reports a total of 285 schools in the province. Among these, there exists a vast discrepancy in school size. In the Eastern and Labrador School Districts, nearly one-half of the total schools carry in excess of 300 pupils. Such enrolments enable varying staffing assignments and program scheduling economies which strengthen local program offerings without over-stretching existing resources. On the other hand, the Western and Nova Central School Districts show that approximately 79 per cent and 75 per cent (respectively) of their schools have enrolments below 300 pupils (p. 10). The following table further illustrates this:

Schools by School Size														
District	<50		50-99		100-199		200-299		300-399		400+		Total	Median Size
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
Labrador	2	12.5	3	18.8	3	18.8	1	6.3	2	12.5	5	31.3	16	228.0
Western	15	20.3	14	18.9	16	21.6	14	18.9	8	10.8	7	9.5	74	158.0
Nova Central	17	24.6	4	5.8	21	30.4	10	14.5	10	14.5	7	10.1	69	161.0
Eastern	2	1.7	5	4.1	26	21.5	27	22.3	17	14.0	44	36.4	121	307.0
CSF	2	40.0	3	60.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	5	53.0
Province	38	13.3	29	10.2	66	23.2	52	18.2	37	13.0	63	22.1	285	216.0



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The mathematical economies of scale available in larger populated schools do not apply. It is necessary to stress that these economies offer only limited advantage to the flexibility available for school classroom organization patterns only. The per capita basis is unaffected from a resource provision standpoint. Also, all districts, due to geographical and demographic variables, have schools with enrolments with more than 50 students and less than 100 students. Such schools are challenging to staff in a manner to provide full program alternatives to students. Throughout our history, the Provincial Government has provided various staffing modifications to protect and enhance the ability of these small and often extremely remote schools to provide more equitable course offerings and student services.

Currently in the province, there are nine schools with enrolments fewer than 15 students. Indeed eight of these schools would be sole charge schools.

Assigning a single teacher to provide the entire curriculum in a school is unreasonable and not based on sound educational principles. There are economic arguments to justify such arrangements; however, there are significant disadvantages from a student supervisory/care perspective and limitations arising from the ability of one professional to respond to the diverse teaching reality of the total provincial curriculum. Furthermore, a school of any size has administrative responsibilities, which further exacerbate the time demands upon sole charge teachers. While it is true that other adults, untrained in professional education may work in or around these school buildings, these persons have no legal responsibility for the physical, personal or educational well-being of the students. Finally, a lone teacher in an isolated setting cannot avail of the professional synergy that can be achieved by interacting with another professional in the workplace. Modern technologies can, to some degree, bridge these collaborative and curriculum gaps. But these are insufficient to offset the negative drawbacks of a professional educator in an isolated sole charge school.

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An over-fractionalization of the teacher allocation for small schools has sometimes exacerbated teacher recruitment and retention in remote rural regions. This is because individual teachers prefer to hold full-time positions rather than a portion of a full-time position. While recommendations 8, 9, and 10 may appear to ignore this sentiment, it is important to note that they are part of the overall allocation of teachers to a district. There are other allocation formulae which also apply to the schools for specialists and administrative positions. The full impact of all of these allocation provisions will be weighed by a school board when the deployment phase of the teacher allocation model is enacted.

It is for these reasons the Commission recommends that...

Recommendation #8

all schools with student enrolments of fewer than 15 full-time students be allocated a minimum of two teachers.

To protect the ability of the smaller, remotely located school to provide reasonable programs, there currently exist certain compensatory staffing practices. These schools represent those with student enrolments greater than 14 students but less than 23 full time students.

In this regard, the Commission recommends that...

Recommendation #9

there be a retention of the 2.5 teacher minimum allocation for these schools.



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The Commission recognizes that the individual student registration requirement of the secondary school curriculum requires a degree of teacher flexibility. Individual subject registrations moves away from mandating same subject scheduling for students in small, remote high schools.

To assist these schools with the provision of a range of subject selection for students, the Commission recommends that...

Recommendation #10

there be a continuation of the present small High School Program Teacher Allocation Override.

The Small High School Program Teacher Allocation Override is based on the following criteria. If there are:

- less than or equal to 21 high school students (LI, II, III), there shall be an allocation of 1.5 teaching units
- greater than or equal to 22 high school students (LI, II, III), there shall be an allocation of 1.75 teaching units
- greater than or equal to 32 but fewer than or equal to 42 high school students (LI, II, III), there shall be an allocation of 2.0 teaching units.

Mid-size high schools are schools where there is less than an average of 100 students per level. That is, where the sum of Level I, Level II, and Level III students equals less than 100 students when divided by three.

The Commission recommends that:

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Recommendation #11

a hard, class size cap of 25 be used to determine the teacher allocation for mid-size high schools.

6.3 Student Resource Teachers

The classroom of today no longer debates the placement of children of varied needs, abilities or backgrounds within its walls. While this diversity is welcomed within our public schools, there is no necessary assurance that the learning needs of each child can be met. Diverse student needs propose diverse challenges for appropriate resources, professionals, and methodologies. There are obvious disparities with respect to what each child is able to receive from our school system.

Addressing such inequity of educational opportunity is referenced within the mandate of the Commission. Furthermore, the ISSP & Pathways Review Commission was launched simultaneously with this study. This represents a significant challenge for public education. Enhanced teacher allocation is unavoidable if the system is to be able to respond to exceptional individual learning or student behavioural needs.

There are many variables of a socio-economic and personal/family nature that contribute to these challenges. Issues of poverty, hunger, family circumstance, child abuse, neglect, and so forth are beyond the realm of the Commission's mandate. Nevertheless, the Commission strongly endorses efforts aimed at the identification and remediation of the consequences of such phenomena upon young children. These issues contribute greatly to the lack of success many children encounter within the school system.



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The learning and academic mandate of the public school is more properly the focus of the Commission's work. In other words, many students manifest learning exceptionalities which are often beyond the scope of regular classroom teachers or specialists. These students include those children with hearing impairments, visual impairments, behaviour disorders, emotional challenges, exceptionally high abilities, mental handicaps, learning disabilities, autism, speech-language disorders, specialized healthcare needs, and children who are generally less able to learn than their peers. This represents a non-exclusive, non-exhaustive listing of challenged students.

The assessment, identification and programming for these students are currently under consideration by the ISSP & Pathways Review Commission. However, the provision of teachers for these learners is within the scope of this report.

These teachers are presently provided using two approaches. One is the formula specifying seven teachers per 1000 students to each school district for non-categorical special education purposes. The other is through application for special categorical teachers to address the specific learning needs of certain students. These categories are as follows:

- Criteria C: severe cognitive delay or moderate global delay
- Criteria D: severe physical disability
- Criteria E: severe emotional behavior disorder
- Criteria F: severe learning disability
- Criteria G: severe health/neurological disorder (specifically autistic spectrum disorders, fetal alcohol spectrum disorder, and traumatic brain injury).

Currently, in 2006-2007, there are 552 non-categorical teachers and 288.75 categorical teachers in the system.

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During the public consultation sessions and in the written submissions to the Commission, significant concerns were raised over the adequacy of this number of teachers to address the reported outstanding needs of students with learning exceptionalities. Specific targets of this concern include the need for remedial services, literacy and numeracy instruction, classroom disruption, and various administrative or support issues surrounding the systems general response to students identified with these challenges. The impact upon the student learning environment in the regular classroom was of grave concern when the necessary assistance for these students was not available. Indeed, the resultant stress complicates the planning and class preparation demands experienced by many teachers.

It is further acknowledged that this overall situation contributed to the rationale for recommendations from this Commission concerning class size reductions, increased school-site administration time, and increased guidance counsellor provisions. The Commission believes the impact of these other recommendations must be weighed, before a substantive change in the general provision of categorical and non-categorical teacher units is undertaken.

While this position bears some logic, there are legitimate outstanding concerns, which in good conscience, cannot be ignored. The Commission has recommended a revised Teacher Allocation Model. The allocation phase of this is intended to include the provision of all teacher units to the school boards.

Therefore, the Commission recommends that...

Recommendation #12

the allocation phase shall include all teacher units and that the current individual application process outside the Teacher Allocation Model would cease. The Department of Educa-



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tion would allocate special needs teachers to school boards for deployment on a revised ratio.

The provision of the former categorical teacher units would, subject to provincial policy and guidelines, become a school board deployment decision. There would no longer be a special application from the school board to the Department of Education for these teacher units. This would also enable the school boards to build the categorical teacher units more efficiently at the school site. It would address the significant administrative time lag in the current application protocol.

The Commission also recommends that...

Recommendation #13

the teacher allocation to school boards provide 11 Student Resource Teachers per 1000 students. The qualifications required for these teachers would be the same as currently exist for the categorical and non-categorical special education teachers.

While the annual Teacher Allocation Review process would enable a multi-year approach to determining student-to-teacher needs, it is conceivable that emergent circumstances during a school year may warrant a further Student Resource Teacher allocation. Circumstances such as a student transfer or the identification of a heightened or new learning challenge would warrant this.

In these circumstances, the Commission recommends that...

Recommendation #14

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the Department of Education provide immediate consideration to any such emergent request from a school board. An emergent request is one that was not known or anticipated by the school board's director of education during the annual Teacher Allocation Review.

The overall impact of the various teacher allocation recommendations upon the special needs area is difficult to gauge at this time. The Commission does not wish to ignore or disregard the many sincere concerns expressed about the adequacy of our response to special student learning needs.

Therefore, it is further recommended that...

Recommendation #15

within three years of the implementation of these Student Resource Teacher allocations, a review of the efficacy and efficiency of this allocation be undertaken.

6.4 Expert Teachers

Expert or specialist teachers have long existed in the province's school system. The following subsection recognizes the inequity of educational opportunity created by the fact that no such specialists are provided for the K-6 schools. Only in schools where the local staffing/program arrangements are flexible enough to accommodate specialists, have these children been provided specialist or expert teachers.

Society is a mosaic of many individuals, with distinct needs and interests who combine to create the dynamic, complex world in which we live. Modern school communities and curriculum have grown in response to the heterogeneous needs and interests of our population. The Teacher Allo-



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cation Commission's Terms of Reference cite Government's commitment to many specific initiatives within the curriculum. Areas included in these initiatives are health and physical education, fine arts and music education, information technology, skilled trade programming, and the promotion of bilingualism within the province. Government is committed to placing an expert teacher in every classroom and recognizes the benefit of having highly trained individuals in schools to provide optimum curriculum delivery. Specialists are an essential part of a well-run school community. Just as hospitals require physicians with diverse specialties, the education system needs to be resourced with professionals with unique, expert skill sets. Unfortunately, many of these allocations have historically come out of the classroom teacher allocation and school districts often compromise classroom size to offer these highly beneficial programs. Throughout the provincial consultations, there was an expressed need for a separate allocation in the areas of French, physical education, music and fine arts, technology, skilled trades, literacy, numeracy, as well as learning resources and guidance. In particular, there was a marked desire to ensure these services were provided, where possible, by subject-area experts.

In today's ever-changing world, with new technologies and creative innovation, subject areas are complex and are best taught by those who have committed several years of in-depth study in highly specialized curriculum areas. These professionals have the extensive understanding of their field that is necessary for these programs to be firmly grounded and to flourish. Their expertise is not limited to subject area, but is also based on the pedagogical practices necessary to ensure strong, sequential, and organized programming that is essential to a robust delivery of the curriculum.

[The] expert teacher has extensive, accessible knowledge that is organized for use in teaching ...which allows the...expert to adapt to the practical constraints in the field of teaching.... They are efficient and insightful in solving problems in the domain of teaching... and can

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devote attention to high-level reasoning and problem solving and arrive at solutions that are novel and appropriate (Sternberg & Horvath, 1995, p. 12).

According to Dr. Andrea Rose's (2006) study *State of the Art: Arts and Cultural Education in Newfoundland and Labrador*:

The most important contributing factor to students' success in the arts has to do with the level of skill knowledge and expertise that teachers bring to their classrooms and rehearsals.... [Expert] teachers are better equipped to teach the content and applied skills inherent in arts education, as well as deal with the many complexities involved with the delivery of K-12 arts education (p. 85).

Research participants from both the educational and cultural communities in the study stated that "teachers charged with teaching in the Arts require specialist training... and that there is a need for more professionally trained arts educators to be dispersed throughout the province," (Rose, 2006, p. 60).

Similarly, the Commission heard during its province-wide consultations that non-specialists found it difficult to deliver elaborate programs such as music, physical education, or other specialist areas without specialist training. Most expert educators have spent a lifetime involved in their field; they have a plethora of pedagogical knowledge which can be used both in the classroom and collaboratively with other teachers as they exchange ideas, making an innovative and diverse curriculum a reality.



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6.4.1 K-6 Expert Teachers

6.4.1.1 Music /Fine Arts

Newfoundland and Labrador has strong and enduring cultural roots that define its people. The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador (2005), states that “music, drama, writing, film, and visual arts along with other forms of expression allow us to capture and communicate our culture.”

Government has reinforced this statement with its recent implementation of Cultural Connections, a provincial arts and cultural strategy for K-12 education that aims to increase the presence of cultural content in the school curriculum and foster links between artists and students in the school environment. By increasing the presence of arts and culture in school curriculum, Government has enabled future generations to continue to build on the province’s great cultural legacy.

Furthermore, Newfoundland and Labrador has one of the most comprehensive music curricula in Canada. The music curricula is multifaceted and includes classroom music, choral music, and instrumental music which all need to be resourced and given sufficient time within the curriculum to be effective. With the amount of literature and research currently available on music education’s positive impact, there is little debate over its contribution to student learning, skill development, and personal fulfillment. Through these programs, students grow in understanding of their strong heritage of music and song.

The Coalition for Music Education in Canada website provides an extensive amount of literature and research on why children of all ages should learn music in schools. According to the Coalition for Music Education in Canada (n.d.), music in schools:

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- provides for the development of skills needed in the future workforce (critical and analytical thinking, creative problem solving, effective communication, and team work).
- engages students.
- provides an improved atmosphere for learning.
- results in improved cross-curricular achievement in subjects such as mathematics, science, and reading.
- is the production and sharing of our culture.
- is a disciplined human endeavour with intrinsic value to society.

Because the area of fine arts is so wide, the Commission has determined that it is essential to delineate a separate category for the many other fine arts. These include visual arts, theatre arts, and dance. These areas have often been neglected due to inadequate resources. It is essential that we understand that the arts are the great pieces of our cultural fabric. While implementing these elementary fine arts programs, we must be very careful not to damage or take away from the already established music programs in the province.

The Coalition for Music Education in Canada, quoting Henriksson (1998) states "There is a growing body of research that suggests that when arts are developed and included as part of the core curricula, students have more and better chances of achieving their greatest potential."

The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, in its *Blueprint for Development and Investment in Culture*, also emphasizes the correlation between art and improved test scores, cognitive growth, and improved self esteem as just a few of the benefits of having art in our schools.

We take great pride in who we are as a people and attach great value to our cultural diversity and as a government we will continue to promote this especially for our children. Our arts and heritage in all its forms are one of the provinces success stories and we recognize



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that if we invest wisely, the benefits will be tremendous (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 2006, p. 5).

Creativity, through participation in the fine arts, fosters self-expression and discovery, as well as a tolerance and consideration for the values and opinions of others. Arts appreciation helps develop new models of thinking and novel paths of communication, which are essential in all areas of life.

Newfoundland and Labrador is blessed to possess many of the country's most gifted poets, actors, artists, dancers, and musicians. Tomorrow's creative geniuses are all around us. A stimulating arts program is an integral part of a solid curriculum, where students can flourish and broaden their skills allowing them to evolve into successful adults.

6.4.1.2 Physical Education

The Greek Civilization was the first civilization to promote physical education. It was their belief that it was crucial to train the body, as well as the mind. Physical education is a fundamental part of modern curriculum as it contributes to the individual student's fitness and health. It helps to develop their physiological, kinaesthetic, and cognitive skills, while fostering respect, sportsmanship, and cooperation.

The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador (2006) has identified significant goals with respect to healthy lifestyles for its citizens, stating "students are best poised for success when they are healthy and physically fit." Indeed, these objectives mirror the directions espoused by our National Government as well. Clearly, adequate teacher resources are required if our school curriculum is to contribute to these objectives. According to Dr. Antony Card (2007) of the School of Human Kinetics and Recreation at Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador, "students

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spend more time physically active and engaged when they are in a physical education class that is guided by a specialist.” The role of the physical education professional continues to expand and some of this growing role includes directing comprehensive, dynamic, and sequential curriculum; coaching school teams; running a daily intramural program; and coordinating the new Provincial Wellness Strategy of Government. In his or her capacity as the school resource specialist in health, the physical education teacher must coordinate and establish school-wide programs. Through a partnership with the classroom teacher, he or she can create an effective action plan to ensure the life-long health of our students. Because of the complex nature of the physical education program in our schools, it is of particular importance that a specialist teacher, who is trained not only in the pedagogical practices of physical education, but who is also knowledgeable regarding safe practices during physical activity, be used in these positions.

6.4.1.3 Core French

According to the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador (2004),

Celebrating our French heritage and ties helps define our strong cultural identity: it adds to our quality of life; it expresses our sense of inclusion; it expands our knowledge and raises our pride in who we are; and it contributes to our cultural diversity, including Canada’s two official languages.

The world grows smaller every day and in order to communicate in this bilingual nation and the international community, students must be fluent in French. The learning of a second language has many benefits, both from a pedagogical view as well as from a practical standpoint. Bilingualism is a great asset that allows students to be competitive in the world market. Through the Council of Ministers of Education (CMEC), Newfoundland and Labrador is a party to Canada’s Protocol for Agreements on Minority Language, Education and Second Official Language Instruction. The



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national goal is to double the proportion of secondary school graduates functional in both official languages by the year 2013. In the province, there has been an increase in the number of French education programs, but overall provincial student enrolment has been decreasing. As well, there is a challenge to staff schools with adequate numbers of specialized French teachers for early and late French immersion, intensive core French, and overall core French programs. The emerging needs of French education within our schools are tied to the successes of the French immersion and intensive core French programs. However, these programs are not broadly available to students throughout the province. Therefore, support for core French must be strengthened if the province is to achieve the stated national goal.

6.4.1.4 Curriculum Support Specialists: Literacy and Numeracy

The Commission clearly heard the need for curriculum support teachers in the area of literacy and numeracy. These teachers are school-based and work in the area of improving student performance in literacy and numeracy. Curriculum support specialists work in tandem with the classroom teacher to identify and implement strategies for struggling students in reading and mathematics. They join with the classroom teacher to implement a balanced curriculum and provide feedback to students, teachers, and the district office team on student progress. These teachers will utilize a team approach and be a resource for the classroom teacher offering professional development and information on the latest and most useful approaches to ensure all students have the best teaching available for future success in learning.

The Commission recognizes and applauds the Department of Education's April 2007 commitment to a provincial mathematics strategy. In concert with this, the Commission recommends an overall allocation to provide specialists to support the delivery of curriculum in all specialty areas. In addition to numeracy, this recommendation includes music, physical education, fine arts, French, and

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literacy. This is not to deny that in a perfect world, each of the above-mentioned areas would specifically be allocated such qualified teachers; however, the reality of our ability to provide such a diverse allocation cannot be ignored.

Therefore, the Commission recommends that...

Recommendation #16

at the elementary level, specialists be allocated on the basis of one per 125 students to support the areas of music, physical education, fine arts, French, and literacy and numeracy.

In addition, the Commission suggests that a minimum of 0.50 K-6 specialists be allocated to any school with any amount of K-6 enrolment. These K-6 specialist units would be allocated at a rate of 1:125 with incremental parameters. That is, 0.50 units will be allocated for each block of 63 (i.e., $\frac{1}{2} \times 125 = 62.5$) students. However, schools will only need to have 40 per cent of the required block before the 0.40 unit is rounded to 0.50 (or similarly a 0.90 unit is rounded to 1.00).

The following rounding measures will be used to accomplish this allocation model:

Actual number allocated (using 1:125)	
0 – 0.50	Adheres to 0.50 minimum
0.51 – 0.89	Rounds to 0.50
.90 – 1.39	Rounds to 1.00
1.40 – 1.89	Rounds to 1.50
1.90 - 199	Rounds to 2.00



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6.5 Grade 7 – Level III Specialists

Grades 7 to Level III specialists are currently made available via a formula-based allocation to support specified program areas. That is, on a basis of one per 250 students, specialist teachers are provided to support certain programs in Grade 7 to Level III sections. The previous paragraph identifies areas of the curriculum which merited specialist instruction. This same rationale applies for Grade 7 to Level III as it did for Kindergarten to Grade 6. However, one subject not offered in Kindergarten to Grade 6, also requires the provision of specialist teachers – skilled trades and technology.

6.5.1 Skilled Trades and Technology

“In today’s society, innovation, technology and knowledge are the main drivers of economic competitiveness and productivity. If successful, these drivers lead to more successful communities and an improved quality of life for all citizens,” (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 2005, p. 1). Similarly, in its Speech from the Throne, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador (2005) states that “A skilled, well trained labour force is the key to the ongoing economic growth and prosperity of Newfoundland and Labrador.”

Today’s world is rapidly changing and youth must change and adapt to the needs of society. Newfoundland and Labrador, as well as the rest of North America, is in dire need of skilled trades people. The province’s schools need trained professionals to teach skilled trades and technology programs in the interest of those who wish to pursue skilled trades upon graduation. The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador has provided a vast supply of new equipment for schools and created many new distinct and dynamic courses that will both interest and challenge youth, opening new avenues of possibility for the future. A significant portion of students are not focused

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on a university career and would flourish pursuing skilled trades with solid exposure and training. This may be an incentive for many individuals to continue in high school until graduation, opening up far more opportunities for future employment. It is essential that these areas are resourced with knowledgeable experts who are well-versed in the various skilled trade areas and who are able to offer a diverse, well-rounded exposure using this knowledge.

Technology Education in the K-12 school system is rooted in two areas: the intermediate Grades (7-9) and the senior Grades (10-12). In the intermediate grades, technology instruction is based primarily on a series of learning modules. There are three such modules in place to date, with at least one more in the pilot stage. They are: Communication Technology, intended for Grade 7; Production Technology and Control Technology, intended for Grade 8; and the Energy and Power module, soon to be piloted for Grade 9.

The following diagram summarizes the suite of skilled trades and technology course offerings available in the senior grades:





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Government has clearly recognized the need for skilled trades people in the province's economy. It has explicitly stated its commitment in this area and has already made considerable investment to address these shortages. With this commitment to increasing participation in the skilled trades comes a need for the technology that supplements these disciplines. According to Reeves (1998) and Ringstaff & Kelley (2002),

Students can learn “from” computers—where technology used [sic] essentially as tutors and serves to increase students basic skills and knowledge; and can learn “with” computers—where technology is used as a tool that can be applied to a variety of goals in the learning process and can serve as a resource to help develop higher order thinking, creativity and research skills (as cited in North Central Regional Educational Laboratory, 2007, p. 3).

Without increased investment in technology in schools, emphasis on skilled trades may put additional strain on the schools' technological capacity. Aging computers only exacerbate this. The Commission heard that with more and more aging computers in schools, there is more time required to do upgrades and repairs. Most schools do not have computer technicians on staff and are often left with a situation whereby staff members with some technical knowledge make their best attempt to fix problems. This situation was clearly described as a waste of valuable teacher resources. To pay a computer technician the appropriate salary to carry out necessary repairs and upgrades would be much more cost effective than having a teacher with limited knowledge leave his or her teaching position to address technology problems. Furthermore, because many teachers' technical knowledge is limited, they often have to fix things through trial and error, resulting in the loss of even more time and resources. The general consensus among those who spoke with the Commission was that there should be staff support technicians available who can attend to problems as they arise.

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Today's students not only need to become comfortable with technology, they must become fluent in their understanding and application of it, as there is no area of industry that will not be affected by its benefit. To do this, students need to have access to the appropriate technology that works properly and is current. It is also critical that students are taught by experts in the field of technology who are able to offer a multi-dimensional, sequential program that will ensure absolute life-long literacy to allow individuals to adapt to the ever-changing technological environments.

It is for these reasons the Commission also recommends that...

Recommendation #17

specialists be allocated from Grades 7 to Level III at the rate of one per 175 students to support the areas of music, physical education, fine arts, French, Centre for Distance Learning and Innovation (CDLI) support, and skilled trades/technology.

Grade 7 to Level III specialists units would be allocated at a rate of 1:175 with incremental parameters. That is, 0.50 units will be allocated for each block of 83 (i.e., $\frac{1}{2} \times 175 = 82.5$) students. However, schools will only need to have 40 per cent of the required block before the .40 units would be rounded to 0.50 (or similarly 0.90 would be rounded to 1.00). The following rounding measures will be used to accomplish this allocation model:

Actual number allocated (using 1:125)	
0 – 0.39	Rounds to 0.00
0.40 – 0.49	Rounds to 0.50
0.50 – 0.89	Rounds to 0.50
0.90 – 0.99	Rounds to 1.00



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The Commission also recommends that...

Recommendation #18

the Department of Education provide computer technicians to the school system on a proportional basis similar to its technology support in Government line departments.

6.6 School-Wide Specialists

Notwithstanding the provision of subject or academic, discipline-based specialization, there is a need for specialists who work across curricular areas. The need exists for teacher librarians and the school guidance counsellors.

6.6.1 Teacher-Librarians and Guidance Counsellors

Teacher-Librarians

Over the past decade, a noticeable reduction in teacher librarian or learning resource specialists positions has been observed; this is not unique to this province. Yet, “an investment in school libraries and teacher-librarians provides the sorts of dividends that educators now seek from public school funding: better student achievement, improved literacy and reading skills, and enhanced readiness to succeed in a post-secondary environment,” (Haycock, 2003, p. 12).

Merely maintaining a well-resourced library is insufficient to meet these expectations. Students must learn how and where to find information before they can apply it to their learning demands. Furthermore, even though school libraries provide and resource print-based material, they are be-

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coming electronic resource centres, as more and more data becomes available in digitized formats. These teachers are instrumental in the adaptation and integration of technology for a school's curriculum. Students and classroom teachers require the professional assistance of learning resource specialists to assist and guide them in compiling, organizing, and developing resources to enhance individual student and class-wide learning.

Guidance Counsellors

Modern schools are confronted with diverse and intense demands by students of a personal nature. These include career planning; comprehensive student assessments; scholarship and post-secondary application procedures and information; drug and alcohol awareness; personal counseling; anti-bullying programs; and mediation. Beyond these activities, schools conduct liaison activities with various community agencies such as Child Youth and Family Services, the Departments of Justice and Health, hospitals, regional economic development groups, and various other local service groups. These initiatives are collaborative in nature and quite often stretch across an entire school population. Sometimes the focus is student-centered and other times it may be family-based. The guidance counsellor is often the professional educator charged with these responsibilities.

In the interest of the school and its individual students, the Commission was advised consistently by various stakeholder groups that an increase in the availability in guidance counsellor resources was an absolute necessity. In addition, the absence of a designated professional educator to coordinate and lead the ISSP & Pathways planning processes within the schools exacerbated the many demands placed upon the guidance counsellors. Also, professional communication around the information concerned with student assessment data is important and quite time consuming. It is not uncommon throughout the province to find guidance counsellors serving more than one



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school. As a result, the ability and time to respond to the myriad of demands by one person is often restricted. Furthermore, it removes the potential for meaningful, personal interaction with students. This is especially so when a guidance counsellor is assigned teaching responsibilities. Because of these various responsibilities, it is crucial that guidance is resourced sufficiently.

Therefore, the Commission recommends that...

Recommendation #19

learning resource specialists be allocated at a level of one per 500 students from Kindergarten to Level III.

Recommendation #20

guidance counsellors be allocated at a level of one per 333 students for Kindergarten to Level III.

For the allocation of learning resource specialists and guidance counsellors, the division of the school population by the amount specified in the recommendation will determine the quotient. Should the result be equal to or less than 0.99, the allocation will be the exact number that is computed. For example, 225 students divided by 333 equals 0.68 and therefore results in the allocation of exactly 0.68 guidance unit. However, in situations where dividing the school's population by the recommendation provides a quotient that is 1.00 or greater, the following "range criteria" can be used as a guide to determine the number of teaching units allocated.

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Quotient	Number of Teaching Units
0.01 to 0.99	Actual quotient
1.00 to 1.49	1.00
1.50 to 1.99	1.50
2.00 to 2.49	2.00
2.50 to 2.99	2.50
3.00 to 3.49	3.00
3.50 to 3.99	3.50

In other words, once a school is eligible for more than one teaching unit, there is a rounding process applied where subsequent units will be rounded down to the nearest half. For example, a school with a population of 750 students would receive an allocation of two guidance counsellors (750 divided by 333 equals 2.25, falling in the range of 2.00 to 2.49 and therefore qualifying for two teaching units). The same school would receive an allocation of 1.5 learning resource specialists (750 divided by 500 equals 1.5, falling in the range of 1.5 to 1.99 and therefore qualifying for 1.5 teaching units).

6.7 Early/Late French Immersion

The Commission recognizes the uniqueness of the Early and Late French Immersion programs available to students throughout the province. These programs contribute significantly to the development of French language study within the province and assist greatly in the province's efforts to match the Federal Government's stated goals for bilingualism. When students enrol in these programs, the school boards commit to continue these students in the program through to graduation. Even though the initial registration for French Immersion programs is generally robust, an erosion of enrolment in a given class is often experienced over time. This sometimes places an



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unfair imbalance within the dual stream, French Immersion and English schools with respect to class size and teacher allocation. Therefore it is necessary that adequate staffing levels be ensured to allow all students in these schools to have access to appropriate class sizes.

The Commission recommends that...

Recommendation #21

the provincial class size maximums apply to English, French Immersion, and Intensive Core French classes for teacher staffing purposes.

6.8 Minority French-Language Education

Section 23.1(b) of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms provides recognition of and guarantees the linguistic rights of both official language groups in this country. It also guarantees the right to minority-language education. French first-language education is a program designed for French-speaking students in which French is the language of instruction in the classroom for most of the subject areas (except English language arts) and is the means of communication in the school environment. The purpose of the program is:

- (1) to provide appropriate educational experiences in order to ensure the social, emotional, and intellectual development of all students; and
- (2) to develop and maintain the French-language skills and cultural heritage of this minority.

It is for this reason that the Commission recommends that...

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Recommendation #22

a French first-language director or manager position be provided at the Department of Education to promote, protect, and strengthen French first-language education.

6.9 English as a Second Language (ESL)

While the Commission's Terms of Reference do not specifically address ESL students, it must be remembered that the allocation of teachers must consider the needs of all students and programs in the Kindergarten through Level III system. Furthermore, both our Provincial Government and our industrial sector have referenced the need to increase immigration from outside Canada into this province to promote economic growth. Post-secondary institutions in the province and several of its school districts have increased their efforts to recruit international students.

Significant concerns have been expressed to the Commission to demonstrate the ineffectiveness of the current allocation model for ESL programming. Specific issues included the following:

- Itinerant models provide too many individual schools for a single teacher to engage;
 - The travel time required from these teachers detracts from their teaching time.
- The current model does not provide for any partial ESL teacher allocation;
 - As a result, teachers address student numbers beyond the stated levels until the overall number enables an additional allocation.
- There is no differentiation of ESL resources in relation to the age or grade placement of the students.
- ESL allocations, unlike other allocations, are not based upon student numbers from the previous year.



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These facts contribute to complicated teaching assignments and serious restrictions in annual educational planning. Furthermore, some ESL students are government-sponsored immigrants. These students have often experienced the serious traumas of war and refugee life, and thus present important social and educational challenges. National research reports an unacceptably high drop out rate amongst ESL students.

In order to respond to the pressing needs surrounding ESL, one district actually recruits ESL staff and offers limited contracts ahead of Government approval in order to support programming at the beginning of the school year. This is to offset the time required to make new applications for ESL teachers annually.

It is for these reasons, the Commission recommends that...

Recommendation #23

the current ESL model for teacher allocation be revised to base the allocation upon student enrolments in April of the immediately previous school year and that the base numbers be adjusted to provide a 0.50 teacher unit for every 15 ESL students registered.

6.10 Speech-Language Pathologists (S-LP)

The speech-language pathologist is an integral member of the special services support team. The Canadian Association of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists (CASLPA) states that speech-language pathologists are professionals who “identify, evaluate and rehabilitate children and adults who have speech, language or hearing disorders. S-LP’s help individuals overcome and prevent communication problems in language, speech, voice and fluency,” (n.d., p. 2).

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According to CASLPA, approximately 10 per cent of the general population has a significant hearing problem (n.d., p.1). Furthermore,

Communication disorders in school-aged children are often misdiagnosed as learning disabilities or behavioural problems, and can be very difficult to treat in later years. Children with behavioural problems are ten times more likely than other children to have language disorders (CASLPA, n.d., p. 1).

Findings from a survey commissioned by CASLPA (2003) “suggest a recommended caseload of somewhere between 26 and 30 clients, for those S-LPs working full-time and primarily seeing young children,” (p. 15). CASLPA (2003) also suggests that caseload limits should recognize “... the fact that many S-LPs working mainly with young children do so in community settings and their duties include education, training and coaching of parents, early childhood educators, teachers, and other individuals who are part of the intervention team,” (p. 15).

Unfortunately, in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador there is a significant shortage of these trained professionals. It is crucial that more become trained and recruited. Many speech-language pathologist positions have been left unfilled because of this shortage and as a result, the caseload of existing speech-language pathologists has been stretched to an untenable level. For example, the Commission heard that the monthly caseload of a speech-language pathologist in some areas of the province ranges from 100 to 140 monthly contacts, on top of the many other duties they are expected to fulfill. Adding to this is the fact that these professionals often have cases spread over considerable geographic areas. This results in extensive travel and reduced student contact time. This travel time also detracts from the direct intervention that speech-language pathologists could be providing in schools.



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Therefore, the Commission recommends that...

Recommendation #24

the Department of Education ensure that speech-language pathology preparation programs are expanded to correspond with the growing needs of the education system, ensuring adequate numbers of graduates are available.

Recommendation #25

the speech-language pathologists' caseload in the education system should correspond more closely to the national standards recommended by the Canadian Association of Speech-Language Pathologists.

6.11 Administration

School administration and school leadership are becoming synonymous. As the complexity of the school becomes better understood, so too does the complexity of its leadership. Countless attempts to succinctly define the role of a school administrator have fallen short – failing to encompass the plethora of tasks and responsibilities with which school administrators can be burdened.

6.11.1 Principals

In *Navigating the White Water: A Handbook for Administrators*, the School Administrators' Special Interest Council of the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association (2007) help to illustrate this concern:

It is a known fact that the principal strongly influences the climate and effectiveness of a particular school. He/she is expected to provide instructional leadership in addition to

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managing the day to day activities of the school. The principal plays a key role in developing a teaching-learning environment that allows for the fullest educational development of all students. He/she is expected to be the central decision maker at the school level and to establish an academic tone that fosters student progress. In addition, the principal supervises teaching and all support personnel, trains and motivates teachers, administers record keeping, prepares budgets, handles relations with parents and the community, and performs many other duties.

A wide range of professional education research, theory, and opinion concludes that the link between the role of the school administration and learning is quite significant. Liethwood et al. (2004) state that:

Successful leadership can play a significant role in improving student learning. Evidence about the effects of successful leadership on student learning justifies two important claims:

- Leadership is second to classroom instruction among all school related factors that contribute to what students learn in school...
- Legislation and policy places the Principal as the person responsible for the quality of teaching and learning in the school. Therefore, the ability and competence of that person to fulfill this role are of extreme importance (as cited in British Columbia Principals and Vice-Principals Association, 2006).

The Commission received considerable input from the field which reinforced this overall direction. There was clear consistency among the submissions that school administrators are often overburdened with responsibilities, preventing them from addressing each to its fullest capacity. Similarly, it is a fact that every school provides administrative demands. Leading a small, remote school serving sparsely populated regions differs only by degree from the crushing duties imposed



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on a principal of 500 pupils. The duties of leadership and management exist in both instances. It is unfair to deny this only because of smaller numbers of students.

The Commission concluded that there was merit in the viewpoints that modern school leadership must respond to a myriad of demands for school development, staff development, community relations, and accountability for all aspects of student learning and school operational effectiveness. In addition, necessary teaching responsibilities for administrators only exacerbate these challenges. The balancing act between leadership roles and classroom responsibilities can have a negative impact on student learning, especially when administrators are brought out of the classroom to address urgent administrative issues such as discipline.

Again, the idea that principals have an incredible role to play in the province's schools is not lost on anyone – especially not on the Commission. The School Administrators' Council of the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association (SACNLTA) (2007) in their submission to the Commission state that no matter how much responsibility is placed on the shoulders of a principal, he or she will continue to do what needs to be done. The principal is responsible for nearly every ongoing process in a given school and any discussion of teacher allocation incorporates the provision of adequate time for administrators to perform well in their roles.

This viewpoint is important. The Commission concurs with it. Furthermore, it is consistent with historical advice provided by Williams et al. (1992) in *Our Children, Our Future* that says:

...no meaningful change can take place in education unless there is a recognition of the significant contribution made by the school principal... and any discussion of what this role is or, should be, must center on the concept of instructional leadership (p. 265).

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This extends the scope of the Commission’s work beyond the consideration of time to do the job of school administrator to the assumption that the principal possesses skills and the understanding necessary to be effective in the role.

Instructional leadership is popularly viewed as the school administrator’s chief task. The foundation of knowledge underpinning the fields of curriculum, instructional techniques, evaluation, leadership, change, school growth level, and improvement are consistently developing. The skill set required to carry out the supervisory, staff development, curriculum implementation, school climate enhancement, planning, and school communication processes is mammoth. Common sense concludes that an ongoing program to support the continuous professional development of the school administrator is essential. Also essential are steps to enable principals to participate in this professional development. Chief amongst these are the time to provide the program and the resource persons to design and deliver these programs.

Ongoing professional growth is necessary; however, it is not the mandate of the Commission to engage this question beyond recommending that guidelines to support a process of continuous growth and development of school administration be proposed. This would include emerging school leadership themes, successful principal practices, a coherent approach to provincial leadership development for both new and seasoned administrators, and perhaps a discussion of some leadership standards to facilitate growth and evaluation.

It is for these reasons the Commission recommends that...

Recommendation #26

the following formula be used to allocate administrative time to schools:



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Number of Pupils	Admin FTE
1 – 74	0.5 unit
75 – 174	1.0 unit
175 – 249	1.25 units
250 – 399	1.50 units
400 – 549	1.75 units
550 – 699	2.00 units
700 – 849	2.50 units
850 +	3.00 units

Recommendation #27

the Department of Education, in cooperation with Newfoundland and Labrador School Boards Association and the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers’ Association, provide a protocol to ensure the continuous growth and development for school administrators.

6.11.2 School Level Support: Program Specialists

Instructional focus is a concept referenced in several places throughout this report. It connotes the process of planting a learning organization approach to teaching amongst the professional educators within a school and throughout a district. Teachers collaborate and reflect on their practice. Successful instructional techniques, as identified by student achievement data, are shared, modeled, and provided. Effective school practices are adopted across the district. Understandings of learning, curriculum outcomes, measurement, assessments, and goal setting are reached and enriched. The challenge and joy of successful professional practices enable every

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teacher to individualize instruction for every student. Class size reductions, specialist teacher allocations, and the provision of meaningful administrator time to enable onsite instructional leadership support this.

However, it is important that skill development and coordination are inserted into this activity. The successful recipe for good instruction demands these ingredients. Furthermore, such instructional goal-centered approaches driven by student achievement data are very compatible with the accountability expectations of modern society.

It has been suggested that the strongest impact on teaching and learning is derived from:

- establishing content standards for what students should know and are able to do;
- creating a system of state/province wide student assessment;
- providing professional development opportunities related to content standards and student assessments;
- aligning assessments and professional development with content standards (Assistant Directors of Education, 2007, p. 3).

It is clear that these represent a general direction within Newfoundland and Labrador public education since re-organization. There is no dispute over this direction. The concerns raised with the Commission questioned the capacity of our systems to meaningfully embrace such efforts.

The program specialist position has been rationalized in two areas. One was in a generic sense whereby defined disciplines within the curriculum were promoted and teachers were given instructional support with respect to improving their knowledge of these disciplines. This was done sometimes by discrete subject area or via a systems approach within the learning realities of certain groups of students (i.e., primary or junior high). Such persons were either experts in various



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disciplines or skilled in various discrete student-age development/learning sectors. The second general function of program specialists was to provide assistance, professional development, and implementation planning for broad, system-wide programs such as Safe and Caring Schools or resource-based teaching.

The current deployment of program specialists reflects some individual curricular discipline emphasis, some age group learning style emphasis, and some program implementation expertise (such as school development) emphasis. However, the thrust of the advice provided to the Commission was that sufficient capacity for this did not presently exist in the province. The question was not an assignment or organization model one; it was a question of whether the strength to address the tasks for which the program specialists were provided was sufficient.

After considerable discussion with school district senior staff and school boards, the Commission decided on a revamped allocation of program specialists.

The Commission recommends that...

Recommendation #28

program specialists be allocated to school districts in one of two general forms. These are distinct grade/curriculum discipline specialists or district-wide program implementation specialists.

Examples of this latter group would include safe and caring learning environment specialists, student learning assessment specialists, and school growth and developments specialists. Specifically the model would include the following for each district:

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- *Primary/Elementary Specialists*: to focus on literacy and numeracy. This would support the efforts to seek lead teachers in these areas at the school level.
- *Intermediate Specialists*: These positions would be responsible for all disciplines in junior high and be well-trained in current methodologies and effective diverse learner strategies. They would also support pan-district programs.
- *Program Specialists for Student Support Services*: These positions would coordinate and facilitate the efforts of all those engaged in meeting the needs of students with exceptionalities. These persons would not be grade-specific or targeted around particular curricular disciplines.
- *Program Specialists for School Development*: These positions would support the implementation of the provincial school development strategy. In this regard, student achievement would be monitored closely by school, grade, curricular area, and program. These persons would have the skills to assist in the formation of instructional goals at the school level. They would also have the training to implement and shape district level and school level strategies. These persons would be assessment specialists, capable of assisting schools and teachers with the interpretation of our various standardized tests and assessments such as Criterion Reference Tests (CRTs), Public Exams, School Achievement Indicators Program (SAIP), Program for International Student Assessment (PISA), and other external assessments.

The discrete curriculum specialty areas for K to Level III are French, art, physical education/healthy living, technology/integration, and music. Discrete curriculum specialty areas for Grade 7 to Level III include only language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies.

The Commission recommends that...



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Recommendation #29

the following table be used to determine the allocation of program specialist positions in each district:

District	# of Program Specialist Positions
Labrador	9
Western	16
Central	16
Eastern	25
CSF	Existing Arrangement

These numbers include the current positions and reflect the amount of program specialist positions that each of the five school districts feel they need to operate. The individual districts will have the latitude to deploy these units in response to district and local needs. The rationale for this would be reviewed annually in the Provincial Teacher Allocation Process.

6.11.3 School District-Level Support: Education Officers

It was clear to the Commission that all of the school districts were challenged in their efforts to support student programs and teaching. The reorganized provincial districts, by geographic standards alone, are some of the largest in Canada. Newfoundland and Labrador has many distant and remote schools. Our curriculum and our understanding of student learning is increasing in complexity. As a means of mobilizing district efforts to support, build, and apply the instructional focus required of each school, it is imperative that human resources be provided to assist individ-

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ual teachers, principals, and local school units at the school sites. Student achievement and good, consistent teaching practice will not be maximized otherwise.

The specific focus of the program specialist is the individual school or the individual teacher. It is reasonable to expect that the focus will enlarge to groups of schools and groups of teachers. But, the focus is targeted by discipline or program to sectors or areas in the field. Program specialists work at the school sites with teachers and administrators. Their chief aim is the teaching and implementation of the curriculum, not its district level and direction.

In order to embrace the Comprehensive Instructional Focus Strategy described earlier in this report, a broad, large-scale, district-wide approach is required. The translation of successful individual school or teacher practices into school-wide cluster approaches and professional development will be achieved by the principals and program specialists. However, to convert these into district-wide policies, approaches, and goals requires the expertise of those responsible for district-wide coordination and direction. Such persons work at the senior level of management; they impact school board-level planning, policy, and goal setting directly. They also assign resources and are able to direct strengths from one sector within a district to supplement efforts in other sectors. Finally, these persons hold an eye on the district's activity in terms of province-wide developments.

The Commission views a learning organization as a multi-tiered structure. At the foundation of the structure are the students and teachers in the classrooms. Next in the structure are the in-school specialists and administrators who work with teachers to strengthen educational delivery. Following in-school specialists are other resource persons located within local/regional clusters of schools. Finally, there are Instructional Education Officers who work with these clusters to ensure



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long-range planning, accountability, school board and province level support, and goal alignment. The goal of this process is to bring coherence to the process.

Such senior level management of instruction is necessary for general direction, research, organizational planning, and most importantly, coordination with district human resources and financial planning.

Therefore, the Commission recommends that...

Recommendation #30

Instructional Education Officer positions be established to support student achievement, school leadership, and school development and be provided based on the following table:

Number of Pupils	Ed. Officers for Instruction
Up to 5000	1
5000 – 20,000	3
20,000 – 30,000	4
30,000 – 40,000	5

These persons would be district-level, senior administrators responsible for:

- implementing an accountability program for student achievement in schools and guiding professional growth and performance;
- focusing leadership development and all teacher recruitment upon increased student learning;
- directing school assessment and school-based staff development;

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- resourcing public consultation, district accountability, and strategic district level planning from an instructional and student achievement perspective.

These positions would report to the Assistant Director of Instruction. Given the variation in district sizes, all districts would have at least one such position.

6.12 Recruitment and Retention

Every student deserves to be taught by a dedicated, well-qualified teacher and receive an equitable education that provides the gateway to a solid future. There are a number of concerns which need to be addressed, to ensure our rural classrooms are filled with talented, eager teachers who are passionate about their profession and committed to staying and making a difference in the communities in which they teach. Many rural schools have difficulty recruiting and retaining teachers, particularly specialists. This is not a situation that is common only to Newfoundland and Labrador; there are recruitment and retention problems in all areas of the job market throughout rural North America. In education, a high teacher turnover rate has a detrimental effect on the quality of educational delivery. The lack of consistency in both programming and methodology can result in adverse effects on student achievement, especially for those with learning difficulties.

In a study conducted by Trask (2006) on recruitment and retention in the rural context,

Almost 80% of the teacher respondents indicated that geographical distance and isolation and loneliness (social, cultural, personal, and professional) were the most frequent challenges to teacher recruitment and retention. The next, most frequently listed challenge to recruitment and retention in the rural context (69.4%) was that of workload. In this particular instance workload was broken down to mean multiple courses, extra-curricular, multi-



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aging, and multi-gradedness. The third, most frequently listed challenge (55.1%) was that of multiplicity of roles, responsibilities, and duties which teachers in rural, remote, and isolated schools were expected to fulfill. The fourth, most frequently indicated challenge to teacher recruitment and retention (49%) was that of “out of field” (subject area specialization) teaching responsibilities (p. 25).

In order to be successful in a smaller school setting, teachers must be prepared for the challenges they will meet. In pre-service training, there must be a full selection of courses relating to teaching in multi-grade situations, as well as a comprehensive overview of the primary, elementary, junior high, and high school methods. To be successful, teachers must have a secure understanding of the curriculum, as they will likely be teaching multiple disciplines.

According to Lemke (1994) and Stone (1990),

The “ideal” rural teacher is certified to teach more than one subject or grade level, can teach students with a wide range of abilities in the same classroom, is prepared to supervise extracurricular activities, and can adjust to the community (as cited in Collins, 1999, p. 2).

During the consultation process, many community and school council members felt that the community should play a supporting role with new teachers. They felt that strategies such as offering spousal employment and making the new teacher feel a part of the community were essential to encouraging the teacher to stay.

The degree to which a rural teacher becomes involved in community educational and cultural programs influences his or her decision to remain; therefore, retention requires a coordinated school-community effort. A school-community orientation can help new rural

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teachers overcome feelings of isolation, acquire a sense of community security, and develop professional competence (Collins, 1999, p. 3).

Communities need to develop policies or strategies which would distinguish local individuals who would be interested in pursuing the teaching profession.

“Most rural teachers were raised close to where they now teach. Various ‘grow-your-own’ strategies offer incentives to local residents with potential to become teachers, such as assisting them in obtaining the needed education and training...” (Lemke, 1994, as cited in Collins, 1999, p. 3).

The Commission also heard that a lack of adequate housing is a deterrent to many prospective teachers who are offered positions in isolated areas of Newfoundland and Labrador. It is necessary for Government to commence a teacher housing initiative to ensure educators will continue to stay and teach in the far reaches of our province, consequently ensuring an equitable education for all students. The Commission heard that there are currently many communities that do not have reasonable accommodations for teachers. As a result, teaching positions have gone unfilled. Many young teachers have been lured to other provinces that offer more suitable accommodations. Needless to say, a significant portion of these teachers would have preferred to stay in their home province.

The Commission recognizes that the use of partial units may be unavoidable in certain circumstances. However, the Commission heard that it is very difficult for administrators to hire teachers for partial unit teaching positions, especially in the province’s more remote locations. These smaller schools often qualify for partial *specialist* units, which are even more difficult to recruit. For many new teachers, working and living in isolated rural communities requires a significant adjustment. In this situation, teachers must first adapt to working and living in a remote community.



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Further to this, part-time positions are not an option for most new teachers. The use of partial units only amplifies recruitment and retention issues in rural Newfoundland and Labrador.

Many post-secondary students carry huge debt loads. In university faculties such as business and engineering, students often fair better than their education and nursing counterparts, as paid co-op positions are part of the business and engineering undergraduate studies. Prospective teachers have unpaid internships that could theoretically be changed to paid internships and be used to offset student loan debt. Schools would be able to utilize these young teachers in a more extensive way than they currently do, exposing them to intensive, paid work experience that would be beneficial to the apprenticing teacher, as well as to the school system. Government could entice young teachers to work in remote areas of the province, where there are recruitment and retention problems by implementing an incentive program. Teachers would be encouraged to stay for a minimum of three years and for each year worked, a portion of their student debt would be relieved.

It is important that the Department of Education establish a partnership with Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador and The College of the North Atlantic to ensure there are sufficient numbers of graduates in specialist areas such as music, physical education, skilled trades and technology, learning resources, guidance, and speech language pathology.

Specifically, the Commission recommends that...

Recommendation #31

Government commence a teacher housing initiative in very isolated areas where teacher accommodations are a concern.

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Recommendation #32

the Department of Education and the provincial post-secondary institutions ensure that adequate graduates are available to fill specialist positions.

Recommendation #33

pre-service teachers be paid during their school internship to help offset the cost of student loans and allow them to be of further assistance to schools during their practicum, especially in rural areas.

Recommendation #34

Government develop an incentive program to encourage recruitment and retention of teachers to isolated areas by developing a student loan debt-relief plan.

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7.0 Conclusion & Implementation

*“We shall not cease from exploring
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time.”*

Excerpt from Little Gidding, The Four Quartets, by T. S. Eliot

The members of the Teacher Allocation Commission have spent their professional lives working in Canadian public education. The analogy of education as a journey is well-known to them. Their combined experience has convinced them that good teaching is the soul of a good school.

Regardless, the essence of T.S. Elliot’s message is particularly relevant. Conducting in-depth reflection and discussion on public education in Newfoundland and Labrador has led the Commissioners to a renewed and deeper understanding of a school system. This endeavour has allowed them to identify the means to ensure equity of instruction for all pupils in each of the province’s public schools. However, one must remember that equity is not equality. Equity is locally and individually based and it is respectful of the learning needs of each and every pupil.

Beyond this, the Commissioners concluded that:

- i. it is important to respect the centuries old unity of the school, parents/community, and central government in the direction of provincial education.
- ii. a class size reduction is essential if teachers are to individualize their practice.
- iii. the classroom contact point of teachers and students requires rejuvenation. Specialist/expert teachers must be provided to ensure the full delivery of the curriculum.



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- iv. schools are about instruction; such a focus should be intentionally constructed at the classroom, school district, and provincial levels.

This report has made a total 35 recommendations on the practice of teacher allocation in this province. The implementation of these requires careful planning. In some instances, preparation to equip teachers with particular skills is required. The province must engage in dialogue and identify particular needs in concert with our training institutions.

In certain cases, the physical infrastructure of schools is insufficient to support the programming or the classroom space required. A capital plan to remedy this must be initiated and funded. However, it is not necessary to postpone action on these recommendations until such a plan is designed, funded, and implemented. Our provincial school districts have manifested a long history of creative responses to challenges. The Commission urges an immediate provision of the teacher resources to achieve the necessary class size reductions and school-based specialization resources. In-school administrative support for teaching is absolutely essential for the creation and sustenance of any local school-based instructional focus. Such an approach is an essential pre-requisite to educational equity of opportunity for students. Indeed, these local school efforts will not endure without a district-wide coherent program. To reap the benefit of additional teacher units and craft the instructional focus, professional enrichment of teaching practice must be provided.

It is important to realize that the move toward a coherent sustained district-wide instructional focus will require significant professional development activities at each school site. It will also require concomitant provincial-level support for the districts. However, significant vehicles exist to aid and direct this process. The school board strategic planning process, the school district opera-

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tional plans and the provincial school development initiatives represent vital avenues to fuel and direct the growth required for the approach recommended by this report.

Such work on a provincial scale or a district scale will be challenging. New ground will be broken. To ensure success, an evaluation program will be necessary. Achievement levels can be measured on a longitudinal basis. On a shorter term, efforts to plan and measure progress are essential. The maintenance of accessible student performance, teacher satisfaction, and public perception data will be necessary to guide and inform local, district, and provincial planning.

The title for this report, *Education and Our Future: A Road Map to Innovation and Excellence*, was formed with much care. It embodies two widely accepted truths about public schooling, which the Commission encountered time again in its provincial journey. One of these is a strong conviction amongst educators, students, parents, and the general public that public education, the self-fulfillment of our children, and the future well-being of Newfoundland and Labrador are tightly interwoven.

The other point is that excellence in education is possible and achievable for all students. It requires innovation and renewal at the school site. But most of all, it requires the identification of a road map. As with any voyage, the destination must be clear and the motivation to arrive there must be relevant. Similarly, the skills and resources required to enable the efficient, effective operation of the vessel have to be present. It is not sufficient to simply load up a ship with sailors and passengers. The sailors require coordination, training and support to ensure a smooth passage. This is the challenge for our public education system.

If, at the hand of education, we can ensure that every child receives a fair start in life, we will positively influence our civilization.

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Master List of Recommendations

Note: Please refer to Chapters 4, 5, and 6 for detailed descriptions and rationale for each recommendation.

The Teacher Allocation Commission recommends that...

Recommendation #1

the Provincial Government seek to assist school districts with the development and ongoing support of a comprehensive district-wide instructional focus. Furthermore, this focus will be built within each school.

Recommendation #2

the revised Teacher Allocation Model be adopted and a two-fold approach to the allocation phase be implemented. These elements are: (i) a Provincial Teacher Allocation Review Process; and (ii) School District Reports.

Recommendation #3

the Provincial Government make three-year planning commitments to each district, subject to provincial budget decisions and financial policy.

Recommendation #4

the Department of Education develop five-year school performance and demographic data planning modules to assist in the three-year planning commitments made to each school district.



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Recommendation #5

teachers be allocated to school boards on the basis of the following class size maximums:

<i>Kindergarten</i>	<i>18</i>
<i>Grades 1-3</i>	<i>20</i>
<i>Grades 4-6</i>	<i>23</i>
<i>Grades 7- Level III</i>	<i>25</i>

Recommendation #6

in order to enable a practical response to emergent local circumstances, such as an unanticipated influx of students, the assignment of students to classes may be increased by not more than two students subject to the approval of the Director of Education.

Recommendation #7

where it is necessary to combine two or more grades or courses in one class with one teacher, the maximum class size will be:

<i>Kindergarten – Grade 3</i>	<i>12 students or less</i>
<i>Grade 4 – Level III</i>	<i>15 students or less</i>

Recommendation #8

all schools with student enrolments of fewer than 15 full-time students be allocated a minimum of two teachers.

Recommendation #9

there be a retention of the 2.5 teacher minimum allocation for these schools.

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Recommendation #10

there be a continuation of the present small High School Program Teacher Allocation Override.

Recommendation #11

a hard, class size cap of 25 be used to determine the teacher allocation for mid-size high schools.

Recommendation #12

the allocation phase shall include all teacher units and that the current individual application process outside the Teacher Allocation Model would cease. The Department of Education would allocate special needs teachers to school boards for deployment on a revised ratio.

Recommendation #13

the teacher allocation to school boards provide 11 Student Resource Teachers per 1000 students. The qualifications required for these teachers would be the same as currently exist for the categorical and non-categorical special education teachers.

Recommendation #14

the Department of Education provide immediate consideration to any such emergent request from a school board. An emergent request is one that was not known or anticipated by the school board's director of education during the annual Teacher Allocation Review.



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Recommendation #15

within three years of the implementation of these Student Resource Teacher allocations, a review of the efficacy and efficiency of this allocation be undertaken.

Recommendation #16

at the elementary level, specialists be allocated on the basis of one per 125 students to support the areas of music, physical education, fine arts, French, and literacy and numeracy.

Recommendation #17

specialists be allocated from Grades 7 to Level III at the rate of one per 175 students to support the areas of music, physical education, fine arts, French, Centre for Distance Learning and Innovation (CDLI) support, and skilled trades/technology.

Recommendation #18

the Department of Education provide computer technicians to the school system on a proportional basis similar to its technology support in Government line departments.

Recommendation #19

learning resource specialists be allocated at a level of one per 500 students from Kindergarten to Level III.

Recommendation #20

guidance counsellors be allocated at a level of one per 333 students for Kindergarten to Level III.

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Recommendation #21

the provincial class size maximums apply to English, French Immersion, and Intensive Core French classes for teacher staffing purposes.

Recommendation #22

a French first-language director or manager position be provided at the Department of Education to promote, protect, and strengthen French first-language education.

Recommendation #23

the current ESL model for teacher allocation be revised to base the allocation upon student enrolments in April of the immediately previous school year and that the base numbers be adjusted to provide a 0.50 teacher unit for every 15 ESL students registered.

Recommendation #24

the Department of Education ensure that speech-language pathology preparation programs are expanded to correspond with the growing needs of the education system, ensuring adequate numbers of graduates are available.

Recommendation #25

the speech-language pathologists' caseload in the education system should correspond more closely to the national standards recommended by the Canadian Association of Speech-Language Pathologists.

Recommendation #26

the following formula be used to allocate administrative time to schools:



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Number of Pupils	Admin FTE
1 – 74	0.5 unit
75 – 174	1.0 unit
175 – 249	1.25 units
250 – 399	1.50 units
400 – 549	1.75 units
550 – 699	2.00 units
700 – 849	2.50 units
850 +	3.00 units

Recommendation #27

the Department of Education, in cooperation with Newfoundland and Labrador School Boards Association and the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association, provide a protocol to ensure the continuous growth and development for school administrators.

Recommendation #28

program specialists be allocated to school districts in one of two general forms. These are distinct grade/curriculum discipline specialists or district-wide program implementation specialists.

Recommendation #29

the following table be used to determine the allocation of program specialist positions in each district:

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District	# of Program Specialist Positions
Labrador	9
Western	16
Central	16
Eastern	25
CSF	Existing Arrangement

Recommendation #30

Instructional Education Officer positions be established to support student achievement, school leadership, and school development and be provided based on the following table:

Number of Pupils	Ed. Officers for Instruction
Up to 5000	1
5000 – 20,000	3
20,000 – 30,000	4
30,000 – 40,000	5

Recommendation #31

Government commence a teacher housing initiative in very isolated areas where teacher accommodations are a concern.

Recommendation #32

the Department of Education and the provincial post-secondary institutions ensure that adequate graduates are available to fill specialist positions.



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Recommendation #33

pre-service teachers be paid during their school internship to help offset the cost of student loans and allow them to be of further assistance to schools during their practicum, especially in rural areas.

Recommendation #34

Government develop an incentive program to encourage recruitment and retention of teachers to isolated areas by developing a student loan debt-relief plan.

Recommendation #35

the Department of Education communicates these comments to those concerned for further consideration in the provincial plans for educational growth and development.

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Appendix I – Cross Province Consultation Schedule

Visitation to Labrador School District

October 18th, 2006

1:30 p.m. - 3:00 p.m – Menihek High School, Labrador City
Meeting with School Administrators at Menihek

3:45 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. – Menihek High School, Labrador City
Meeting with teachers/board office staff at Menihek

7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. – Regional Board Office, Labrador City
Meeting with Labrador West School Committee and School Council Representatives

October 19th, 2006

2:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. – Labrador School Board Central Office
Meeting with District Office staff/local school administrators

3:30 p.m – 5:30 p.m. – Queen of Peace Middle School, Happy Valley – Goose Bay
Meeting with teachers/school administrators

7:30 p.m – 9:00 p.m. – Queen of Peace Middle School, Happy Valley – Goose Bay
Meeting with school council representatives./stakeholders

October 20th, 2006

2:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. – Masonic Lodge, Happy Valley-Goose Bay
Meeting with Labrador School Board trustees

November 16th, 2006

3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. – Labrador School Board Office, Happy Valley – Goose Bay



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Teleconference meeting with Principals from Makkovik, Postville, Hopedale, Rigolet, Nain, Natuashshish and school board staff.

Visitation to Western School District

November 6th, 2006

9:00 a.m. - 10:45 a.m. - C.C. Loughlin, Corner Brook

Tour of C.C. Loughlin and consultation session with K-6 Principals representing the communities of Corner Brook, Pasadena and Deer Lake.

11:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. - Glynmill Inn, Corner Brook

Lunch Meeting with Senior Western District School Board Management.

2:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. - Glynmill Inn, Corner Brook

Meeting with 7 - 12 Principals and Student Councils from Corner Brook, Deer Lake, Pollard's Point, Lark Harbour, Woody Point, Trout River and Meadows.

5:30 p.m.

Meeting with Ms. Nada Borden, Newfoundland and Labrador School Board's Association

7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. - Glynmill Inn, Corner Brook

Consultation session with School Councils

November 7th, 2006

9:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. - Regional Office, Stephenville

Meeting with Principals from Stephenville and Port-aux-Basques

11:00 a.m. - 12:00 a.m. - Regional Office, Stephenville

Consultation session with School Councils

12:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. - Regional Office, Stephenville

Meeting with Regional Office Staff and Principals of La Poile, Grey River and Francois regarding the roles of staff in isolate K-12 schools.

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November 8th, 2006

9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. - Regional Office, Lower Cove
Meeting with Regional Education Office Staff

10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. - Regional Office, Lower Cove
Meeting with Principals of small K - 12 Schools from Conche, Cook's Harbour, Main Brook and Croque.

1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. - Regional Office, Lower Cove
Meeting with principals representing Port Saunders, Port aux Choix, Hawke's Bay, Englee, Flower's Cove and St. Lunaire.

2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. - Regional Office, Lower Cove
Meeting with Principals of Southern Labrador Schools from L'anse au Loup, West St. Modeste, Port Hope Simpson, Forteau

7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. - Regional Office, Lower Cove
Meeting with School Councils

November 20th, 2006

7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. - Glynmill Inn, Corner Brook
Meeting with the Western School Board

Visitation to Nova Central District

October 23rd, 2006

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. - Nova Central Board Office, Gander
Meeting with Senior Management Group

1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. - Lakewood Academy, Glenwood
School visit and meeting with principal

3:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. - Nova Central Board Office, Gander
Meeting with 4 principals from English Harbour, Musgrave Harbour, Gaultois and Buchans.



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7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. – Nova Central Board Office, Gander
Meeting with educators from the South Coast representing Cottrell's Cove, Hermitage, Milltown, McCallum, Change Islands, King's Point and Wing's Point.

October 24th

11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. - Nova Central Board Office, Gander
Meeting with sole charge teachers as well as a program specialist with specialty in small school curriculum representing: South Brook, Ladle Cove, Leading Tickles, Nipper's Harbour, Charlottetown and Greenspond.

3:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m - Nova Central Board Office, Gander
Meeting with principals and teachers from Grand Falls-Windsor, Dover, Springdale, Baie Verte, Gander Academy, Glovertown and Gambo.

7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. - Nova Central Board Office, Gander
Meeting with the Nova Central School Board

October 25th

Meeting with Principal from Fogo Island Central Academy

Visitation to Eastern School District

October 30th, 2006

9:00 a.m. – 10:15 a.m. – Christ the King School, Rushoon
School visit and meeting with administration of Christ the King School.

10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. – Fortune Bay Academy, St. Bernard's
School visit and meeting with administration of Fortune Bay Academy

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12:00 p.m.

Lunch with Regional Education Officer and Programs Staff.

1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. – Regional Office, Salt Pond, Burin

Meeting with 8 teachers from regional schools representing Lawn, South East Bight, Rushoon, Grand Bank, Terrenceville, Burin, Marystown and St. Bernard's.

2:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. - Regional Office, Salt Pond, Burin

Meeting with principals from Lawn, Marystown, Burin, Grand Bank, Lamaline and Fortune

7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

Round table discussion with School Council Chairs from regional schools

October 31st, 2006

9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. – Southwest Arm Academy, Little Heart's Ease

School visit and meeting with the administration of Southwest Arm Academy.

11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. – Clarenville Middle School, Clarenville

School visit and meeting with the administration of Clarenville Middle School

12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m. – Regional Office, Clarenville

Meeting with Regional Education Officer and Programs Staff.

1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. – Regional Office, Clarenville

Meeting with 8 teachers from regional schools representing Shoal Harbour, Catalina, Clarenville, Musgravetown, Arnold's Cove, Swift Current, King's Cove and Lethbridge.

2:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. – Regional Office, Clarenville

Meeting with principals of Clarenville, Bonavista, Random Island, Port Rexton and Clarenville.

7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

Round table discussion with School Council Chairs from regional schools

November 1st, 2006



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9:30 a.m. – 10:45 a.m. – Acreman Elementary, Green's Harbour
School visit and meeting with administration of Acreman Elementary

11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. – Coley's Point Primary, Coley's Point
School visit and meeting with administration of Coley's Point Primary

12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m. – Regional Office, Spainard's Bay
Lunch with Regional Education Officer and Programs Staff

1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. – Regional Office, Spainard's Bay
Meeting with regional school board staff and teachers representing St. Catherine's, Colliers, Carbonear, Spainard's Bay, Placentia, Avondale and Bay Roberts.

2:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. – Regional Office, Spainard's Bay
Meeting with principals from Carbonear, Blaketown, St. Bride's, Placentia, St. Mary's and Old Perlican.

7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. – Davis Elementary, Carbonear
Meeting with the Eastern School Board.

November 2nd, 2006

9:00 a.m. – 10:15 a.m. – Holy Family School, Paradise
School tour and meeting with administration of Holy Family School

10:30 a.m. – 11:45 a.m. – St. Edwards, Conception Bay South (Kelligrews)
School tour and meeting with administration of St. Edwards

12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m. – Eastern School District Office, St. John's
Meeting with Senior Administrative Staff at District Headquarters.

1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. – Eastern School District Office, St. John's
Meeting with principals of Holy Heart High School, Queen Elizabeth High School, O'Donel High School, and Gonzaga High School, Brother Rice, Villanova Jr. High, Macdonald Dr. Jr. High, Paradise Elementary and St. Peters Elementary

3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. – Eastern School District Office, St. John's
Meeting with Programs Staff and Special Education personnel of the Eastern School Dis-

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trict.

7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. – Carbonear Collegiate, Carbonear
Meeting with School Council Chairs from Avalon East.

November 3rd, 2006

9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. – St. John's
School visits to Holy Heart High School, Brother Rice and Bishop's College .

12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m. – Eastern School District Office, St. John's
Lunch with Programs Staff to discuss allocation impact on Phys. Ed, Music and Art.

1:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. – Eastern School District Office, St. John's
Meeting with 12 teachers representing schools from Paradise, Conception Bay South,
Mount Pearl, Torbay and St. John's.

Visitation to Conseil Scolaire Francophone

November 24th, 2006

2:45 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. – Goose Bay
Meeting with five principals of the Conseil Scolaire Francophone representing schools in De
Grau, Happy Valley – Goose Bay, La Grand'Terre, St. John's and Labrador City, and Camille
McLaughlin (Director of Instruction) and Mr. Christian Fagueret (Director of Education) from
the Conseil Scolaire Francophone.

November 25th, 2006

8:30 a.m.– 10:00 p.m. – Goose Bay
Meeting with Conseil Scolaire Francophone at the Annual General Meeting



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Appendix II – Pan-Canadian Allocation Practice Study

Canada, unlike most Western industrialized nations, does not have a federal office of education. The British North America Act of 1867 assigned the responsibility for education to the provinces. As a result, there is no single education system for the country. Each province and territory has developed its own distinct education system which are governed by the individual province.

Across Canada, the allocation of teachers is directly related to the manner in which school boards are financed. Traditionally, school boards have been financed from a combination of funding from taxation and government grants. Gradually, many provinces and territories have moved away from tax-based revenue and finance school districts through government funding. In those provinces and territories where school taxes remain, funding measures have been introduced to ensure equity amongst its various school districts.

Throughout Canada, financing allocation formulae are based on student enrolment. For example, the province of Newfoundland and Labrador, as well as the province of Prince Edward Island utilize provincial formulae based on student enrolment. There are provinces and territories which are more specific in their regulation of allocated teaching units, while other provinces and territories are administered through the provision of allocated funds that can be used at the local school board's discretion, with minimum restrictions on how the funds are allocated, provided that the allocations are compliant with the Education Act of their respective province or territory. The province of Québec has created governing boards to give educational institutions more autonomy in areas of budget and pedagogical issues.

For many years, many provinces and territories used formulaic calculations based on student teacher ratios, which reflect the number of students per full-time equivalent (FTE) teacher. These calculations are not widely used today, due to the formula's inaccurate representation of class-

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room size. This inaccuracy is caused by the inclusion of many individuals in the formula that do not have classroom duties, such as specialists and administrators. Today, several provinces utilize allocation formulae that are based on class size caps or class size averages. With a growing mass of research suggesting that smaller classes are beneficial to learning, it is only natural for many provinces and territories to adjust their allocation formulae to ensure this shift in thinking is taken into account. For instance, the province of New Brunswick still utilizes student/teacher ratios for the basis of their funding, but this model has been altered significantly to recognize grade levels, specialty areas, administration and demography as well as class size caps.

The majority of provinces and territories have introduced maximum class size guidelines, in an effort to provide optimum learning environments for students. There are provinces and territories which along with class size limits impose penalties for districts that fail to meet the specified maximums, however school districts are not required to achieve class size limits at the expense of other educational priorities. Several provinces and territories have allocated new funding for additional teaching units to achieve lower class sizes. For instance, the province of Ontario has allocated funds for acquiring more classroom space to achieve class size limits. Also, class size limits have been incorporated into some teacher collective agreements.

Allocation formulae have begun to address the impact of the inclusion policy on learning environments. For example the province of Manitoba provides extra funding to districts for special needs education and has also increased the per student funding for guidance counseling services. The province of British Columbia has regulated that a maximum of three students with identifiable special needs are permitted in any classroom. Prior to 2002, class size and class composition were addressed specifically in some teacher collective agreements. In 2002, when class size and class composition were removed from the collective agreements they were initially replaced with class size limits from Kindergarten to Grade Three. In 2006, British Columbia legislated (Bill 33) class



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size and composition limits at all grade levels. The class size caps are strictly adhered and can only be exceeded with the consent of the teachers and agreement of the senior board officials and school administrators.

Separate specialist and administration allocation has become a growing practice as provinces and territories recognize the importance of expert teachers and educational leadership. Traditionally, these teaching positions were taken from the main teaching allocation and the result was often larger class sizes. The province of Alberta is one of the few provinces to continue the practice and has applied a cap of six percent to administration and board governance positions to ensure that instructional resources are utilized to finance class room positions.

The necessity of expert teachers is recognized throughout Canada. A growing body of research has highlighted the benefits of strong fine arts, physical education and French programs is needed for a well rounded curriculum delivered by expert teachers. For example, the province of Nova Scotia has an extensive system of specialist teacher allocation with specific grade level requirements and this province also allocates one reading readiness specialist for every 100 Grade one students. The province of Manitoba provides substantial funding for literacy intervention and numeracy support.

The majority of provinces and territories provide a separate administration allocation, recognizing the growing role of administration in the modern school. The Maritime Provinces have a separate administration allocation. For instance, the province of Nova Scotia allocates one principal for every school and a vice principal for every 420 students enrolled at the district level. The province of New Brunswick allocates one administration unit for every 275 students. The province of Prince Edward Island allocates one administration unit for small schools with enrolments less than 500 students and three administration units for large schools with enrolments over 500 students.

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The province of Ontario has created the “School Foundation Grant” which allocates principals and vice-principals as well as secretaries and every school has a full-time secretary with a minimum of a .5 administration unit. Further in Ontario any school, with a minimum enrolment of 50 students, is allocated a full time principal. The province of Saskatchewan has legislated, through its Education Act, that every school in the province must be allocated an administration unit. All jurisdictions recognize the importance of the principal within the school system.

Although Canada is vast and diverse geographically, it is a country with a relatively small population. There are approximately five million students attending public schools in Canada and per capita, Canada is one of the world’s leaders in educational spending. Our country places great value in the education of its people and in each province and territory, there is a marked focus on teaching and learning. Despite differing approaches to allocation, the improvement of teaching and learning is the driving force behind each Canadian education system. Each province and territory has recognized that, with the establishment of a systematic approach to teacher allocation, school districts can focus on the continuous growth of the teaching and learning process, therefore having the strongest impact possible on each student.

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Appendix III - Other Issues

An objective set forth by the Commission was the stimulation of a province-wide dialogue around its mandate to review teacher allocation. While the chief education stakeholder groups of teachers, parents, students, and various other professional governmental bodies were targeted, the general public was also invited to participate. The Commission engaged in a broad discourse throughout the province and received formal and informal advice and commentary from many persons and agencies during the autumn of 2006.

Throughout the report, direct and indirect reference is made to various written and spoken submissions. Many persons approached the Commission sincere in their convictions and earnest in their desire to make a positive difference. While the terms of reference and scope of the Commission's work were clearly stated, comments sometimes addressed topics not germane to the mandate of this study.

Since these interventions were presented on the basis of their perceived importance to individuals who spoke, and since the Commission aspired to partake in honest open forums of discussions, it would be disingenuous to discard such comments on the basis of their relevance to the stated terms of reference. Furthermore, these comments often came seeking an assurance of anonymity, lest their schools or communities themselves may suffer undue investigation as a result.

Therefore, it is important for the reader to note that the Commission passes no judgment on these matters. It has received them in good faith from democratic settings. Some editing and consolidation in the interest of brevity have been undertaken. Care was taken to avoid any local identification. The contents are limited by the Commission's understanding of the ideas expressed.



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This chapter will first outline issues surrounding the teaching profession in general. Next it will describe a number of other specific issues that fell outside of the Commission's mandate.

General Professional Issues

- As professionals striving to achieve innovation and excellence, teachers require collaborative and administrative time during the school day.
 - This will allow for conference with colleagues, preparation of new curriculum materials, consultation with parents and outside agencies, as well as delivery of individual assessments. This will also allow the school community, as a whole, to focus entirely on the improvement of teaching and learning.
- Many teachers believe that they are forced to do the best they can with what they have.
 - Teachers must not feel that they should put up with inadequate supplies or substandard conditions that compromise the quality of a student's education. Often, in these situations, teachers are unable to implement the curriculum in a manner that allows students to strive for excellence.
- Supervision duties are problematic for teachers as these duties interfere with the provision of extra curricular activities such as intramural sports, choirs, bands, French club, debating teams and other clubs and activities that could be offered if teachers were not hampered by supervision duties.
 - This time could be more constructively used for curriculum organization, committee work, collaborative instructional planning, and parent consultation.

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- There is a need for more women to be involved in leadership roles, both at the district and school level.
- There is a need for more professional development opportunities, particularly when teachers are responsible for courses outside their area of expertise.
 - The employer must provide consistent teacher in-service, especially in relation to new courses, while teachers should avail of all personal growth opportunities open to them.
- Technology is an integral part of the modern curriculum. It is essential that teachers are up to date and current in their information technology skills.
- More substitute days are needed for in-service and training.
 - Substitute teachers are required for principals, when they are attending principal meetings.
- Substitute teachers are essential to the education system as they enable teachers to access collective agreement rights, for both personal and professional reasons.
 - There are many concerns about the adequacy of both substitute time and substitute teachers. Some individuals have spoken privately to the Commission over issues relating to fairness or even justice in the hiring and evaluation of substitute teachers. It is clear to the Commission that practices in this regard vary considerably across the province.
- Teachers and administrators see the need for clerical and professional support within schools.



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- o In particular, a consistent provision of school-based social workers would be beneficial for the school community.
- Notwithstanding the provisions of the collective agreement, there is a desire for flexibility, with respect to teacher transfer or rotation, within the school system.
 - o The employer needs to establish policies enabling teacher mobility.

Recruitment and Retention

- The Commission heard that a large portion of the current teaching population will retire by the year 2010.
 - o Government needs to develop a dynamic action plan to continuously recruit and train top university graduates who will not only fill positions, but view teaching as a vocation and a life long pursuit..
- There are national and international concerns about new teachers, with less than five years experience, leaving the teaching profession.
 - o Exit research should become a standard element in our human resource management. A heightened consideration of induction programs for new teachers entering the teaching profession is needed.

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Geography

- Reasonable maximum travel distances should be established for itinerant teachers who have student-related duties in various schools.
- Travel is a problem for Labrador students.
 - Airfare and other transportation modes are extremely expensive and, as a result, students become isolated and unable to participate in many events, due to the cost. A travel subsidy would help.

Small Rural Schools

- In some rural areas, there is a shortage of substitute teachers.
 - Retired teachers need to be permitted to teach more days, to alleviate this problem.
- A better isolation bonus is needed.
- As student numbers decline, teachers' workloads increase.
 - There are essential needs in every school and when allocations are based, to a certain extent, on student population, teachers must still adequately cover the curriculum and provide an equitable education for all students, while struggling with fewer resources.
- Sole charge teachers, in remote areas, deal with isolation and loneliness along with an overwhelming amount of responsibility.



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- o They are “on the job” 24 hours per day, seven days per week, no matter where they go in the community. As a result, one young woman stated “I get my name back in July and August” to emphasize her loss of personal identity, in her role as teacher.

School Environments

- Violence is a serious issue in many of our schools.
 - o It is essential that schools are given the resources to create safe environments for students and teachers.
- It would be advantageous to have Student Behaviour Assistants in the school system, to deal with behavioural issues in a consistent manner.
- The new physical education equipment, which the Provincial Government has distributed to many schools within the province, is well appreciated, but, in many schools, there is no physical space in which to place it.
 - o Often the stages or other such areas are used for this purpose, affecting the delivery of other programs.
- All schools require adequate secretarial and janitorial services.

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Community

- It is important that schools are able to make use of community volunteers.
- In many areas, the school is the heart of the community.
 - There is great fear about further school amalgamations.
- Many communities have been involved in the amalgamations of smaller schools into larger schools with the promise of more co-curricular services for the children.
 - Unfortunately, in many circumstances, these services have not improved dramatically and many communities feel they were better off with their small schools.
- Provincial policies need to be developed regarding community use of school property in the areas of risk management, wear and tear on school equipment, property damage and building security.

Curriculum Resources

- There is a necessity for a resource database of multi-grade/course materials.
- Many schools have outdated resource materials, including texts that are falling apart.
 - These need to be replaced with up-to-date materials.
- Sharing of psychological assessment tools between schools would be an asset.
- Schools require updated computers that are in good working condition.



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- o Many schools have computers that are no longer useful and must be replaced.

Special Services

- There is far too much administration required in the application process for criteria-based units.
 - o Too much time is being spent in both the documentation and re-documentation procedures. Many teachers feel there is a lack of trust in the professional judgment of teachers in the field.
- The ISSP process is tied up in a great deal of administrative “red tape” and requires many hours of meetings and a vast amount of documentation.
 - o The protocol needs to be streamlined and made more efficient. *Note: the ISSP/ Pathways Commission is currently reviewing this process.
- It is essential that deaf children receive the support and services they need quickly.
 - o Once identified, most preferably before six months of age, supports must immediately be put in place for both the parents and child, to establish superior language development. The profoundly deaf and hard of hearing need to be able to access deaf education at a very early age to allow the development of language and communication skills. It is essential that the correct interventions are made early and that these children are quickly given access to the services they need. The importance of adequate support within the school system cannot be over-stressed. Trained deaf education professionals in the classroom are also a necessity. With an expert proficiency in American Sign Language and all its subtle nuances, they can

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ensure an equitable education for deaf students in our classrooms. *Note: there is an ongoing study into deaf education.

- The student assistant application process, like the criteria application process, is tied up in “red tape” and regulations.
 - o Many students get their assistant late in the fall and suffer without them in the earlier part of the year. It is important that student assistants are not transferred during the middle of the school year, as it causes inconsistency and undue upset for the students. *Note: there is an ongoing study regarding student assistants.

Busing

- Some rural areas would like to see a return to lunchtime busing so students can go home during lunchtime.
- Late bus runs would be beneficial to allow student involvement in after-school activities.
- Some students are on the school site for 6.5 hours per day, excluding bus time, due to busing schedules and costs.
 - o This situation causes students fatigue and requires teachers to provide extensive supervision.
- Paid adult monitors are needed on school buses for the general safety of students..
 - o They would deal with emergencies, safeguard a careful entrance and exiting of the bus, guarantee the prudent behaviour of all students, assure all are seated while the bus is in motion, and prevent any bullying or inappropriate behaviour.



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Pre-School

- Kinderstart is universally praised as a very useful program, but there is a concern about the amount of time missed by the kindergarten students for the delivery of this program.
- Family resource centres are an asset for preschool students and parents, to ensure that pre-school students are ready for school.

Post-secondary

- Pre-service education students need more than the current requirement of education courses.
- Teacher training does not always match the needs of small, remote schools. There is a need for further methodology training relating to all aspects of multi-course and multi-grade teaching.
- Teachers, who will be teaching in K-12 situations, must be prepared with methodology courses in all levels from K-12.
- An increased number of required special education courses are necessary in the Bachelor of Education Diploma.

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- Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador should offer more French pedagogy courses.
- The Learning Resource Degree program at Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador needs to be re-established.
- The creation of partnerships with The College of the North Atlantic and Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador would be advantageous to high school students.

Primary/Elementary

- Lengthen the kindergarten day.
- There is a concern in the subject area of mathematics, regarding the provincial performance of students and the ability of teachers to deliver the curriculum.
- A consistent, curriculum-wide enrichment program is required for gifted students.
- Due to staffing shortages, many areas have lost Reading Recovery programs.
 - These programs, when implemented successfully through early intervention, substantially improved literacy rates.

Junior High/High School

- The junior high curriculum must be updated in all areas to reflect the many changes in our society.



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- A new province-wide curriculum will ensure that when students continue on to high school, there will be a solid, consistent knowledge base.
- The high school curriculum should allow a balance between required graduation courses and student course selection which suits their interests and career aspirations.
- The high school general science graduation requirement limits students who wish to do more specific science courses.
- There is a growing trend among students to seek the general diploma, rather than an academic diploma, which limits future career options.
- The volunteer component of the high school diploma is difficult to finish in more remote areas.
- Lengthen the school day.
- Semesterization of high school courses requires further analysis.
- Graduation rate statistics should focus upon the type of graduation certificates granted and not merely on the number of graduates.

Guidance Counsellors and Educational Psychologists

- Educational psychologists need a bonus system similar to that of guidance counsellors.

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- o In order to be certified, educational psychologists must pay costly professional fees and insurances. There is also a necessity for clear job descriptions to avoid duplication of service.
- Contract psychological assessment personnel would be advantageous.
- When itinerant guidance counsellors are in shared positions and their case and workload becomes backed up, they have difficulties dealing with school emergencies.
- There are concerns with respect to guidance counsellors who assume teaching duties.
 - o These issues relate to the disruption of the classroom setting when teaching guidance counsellors are called away to deal with school emergencies. Counsellors may also be placed in conflicts, due to the confidential nature of counselling.

Multi-grade/ Multi course/ Multi-age

- The sequence of courses offered in small, remote schools (that may or may not be multi-graded) restricts the ability or opportunity the student has to register in certain courses.
- Some multi-graded students have problems adapting to large, single-stream classrooms.
- There is a necessity for a resource database to assist teachers, in remote and multi-grade situations, with methods and teaching techniques.
 - o Pre-packed curriculum materials would be a great asset for teachers teaching in multi-course situations.



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Teacher Allocation and Deployment

- Teacher allocation has been affected by fiscal parameters, rather than educational needs.
 - As a result, many gaps have occurred and many needs have not been met.
- There are concerns that any class-size cap, unless very firm, will allow class size to gradually increase during the school year due to mid-year transfers.
 - Class size caps need to be specific and firm.

District Office

- The work year of program specialists should allow for more opportunity to address program preparation for the coming school year.

Centre for Distance Learning and Innovation (CDLI)

- CDLI courses need school personnel support for administration, supervision, and subject support.
- It is important that CDLI increase its course offerings and widen its approach to the many differing types of learners.
- There are practical school scheduling problems resulting from the intersection of local school timetables and that of CDLI.

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- Many feel it would be advantageous to record CDLI sessions and make compact discs available to schools involved in the programs.
 - These CDs could be used when material is missed due to illness and weather closures, as well as for review; but this is not to suggest we replace online instruction.
- Specialized courses offered by CDLI are providing advantages to students in remote areas.
 - An unforeseen and unintended impact of CDLI is that in certain circumstances, qualified expert teachers are unable to teach their areas of specialty onsite, due to low local enrolment. This circumstance may cause retention/job satisfaction issues.
- It would be advantageous for CDLI to be expanded for use in the junior high program.
- Teacher in-service could be facilitated through CDLI.

The Commission recommends that...

Recommendation #35

the Department of Education communicates these comments to those concerned for further consideration in the provincial plans for educational growth and development.



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Appendix IV – List of Submissions Received

Abbas, Doug	Principal, Peacock Primary
Adams, Craig	Holy Family Elementary
Baker, Kelli	MacPherson Elementary School
Baron-Kennedy, Patti	Whitbourne Elementary School Council
Barrett, Gary	Mealy Mountain Collegiate
Battcock, Andrew	Health & Wellness Coordinator; Labrador School District
Best, Margaret	Former Teacher, Arts Council
Bishop's College	Garland Jennings
Bock, Allan	Chairperson, Harriott Curtis Collegiate School Council
Bown, Raymond	Principal, St. Jame's Elementary, Port aux Basque
Brown, Don	Western School Board
Burnaby, Dr. Barbara	Canadian Coalition for Immigrant Children & Youth
Burrige, Callista	Pasadena Academy
Burt, Lloyd	School Administrator's Council
Byrne, Sheila	West Region/Eastern School District
Cheeks, Kim	Parent
Clarke-Genge, Delores	St. Jame's All Grade
Collins, Bronson	William Mercer Academy
Collins-Yetman, Patricia	Acreman Elementary
Constantine, David	Physical Special Interest Council
Cooper, Sandy	Bishop's College
Curtis, Diane	Main River
Elkins, John	Prince of Wales Collegiate
Elliott, Guy	Labrador School Board
Facey, Tim	MacDonald Drive Junior High
Fleet, Cindy	Nova Central School District
Flynn, Kevin	Holy Trinity High School
Foley, Kevin	Newfoundland & Labrador Teachers Association
Foley, Marina	School Librarian

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Furlong, Anne M.	St. Mark's School Council
Gard-Puddester, Judy Gibbons, Nicole Granter, C. Vaughn Green, Wade Green-Lynn	Inner City Cluster of Principals Upper Gullies Elementary Principal, Corner Brook High School Henry Gordon Academy Learning Disabilities Assoc.
Hammond, Vicky Hennebury, John Hickman, Kathy Hogan, Colleen Hutchings, Mary	Holy Cross School Council Gonzaga High School O'Donel High School Leary's Brook Jr. High Principal, Coley's Pt. Primary
Ingram, Dean	Discovery Collegiate
Jacobs, Denise Jennings, Jamey	Southwest Arm Academy School Council St. Paul's Intermediate School
Kent, Carolyn King, Darin King, M. Knutson, Sonja	A.P. Low Primary Eastern School District Bonne Bay Academy Studies Success Programming, Memorial University of Newfoundland
Lacosta, Harry Langdon, Hubert Langdon, Trent	J.R. Smallwood Middle School Coast of Bays Resident Newfoundland & Labrador Counsellors & Psychologist's Association
LeDrew, Catherine LeDrew-Rose, Donna	Parent Leo Burke Academy
Manstan, Donna Martin, Dominique Matthews, Guy Matthews, Robert Morgan, Gerald	School Volunteer Bishop Field Elementary Leary's Brook Jr. High School Council Templeton Academy Stephenville Primary School



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Murphy, Ken
Murrin, Mike

Arts Educate
St. Michael's Elementary

Nash, Brenda
Nash, Guy
Neville, Randy
Neville, Rose
Nakashima, Jennifer
Noseworthy, Ramona

St. Peter's All-Grade, McCallum
St. Peter's All-Grade, McCallum
Menihek High School
A.P. Low Primary School
NLTA Provincial Music Special Interest
Labrador School District

O'Grady, Sarah

District School

Pelley, Debbie
Pennell, Jackie
Penney, D.
Phillips, Frank
Pike, Denise

Jakeman All-Grade
Stella Maris Academy, Trepassey
Long Range Academy
Lake Melville School Committee
Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of School
Councils

Plowman, Rick
Poole, Joan
Powell, Wanita

J.C. Erhardt Memorial
John Watkins School Council
St. Anthony Elementary

Quigley, Sandra

Queen of Peace

Rideout, Carol Ann
Roberts, Brian

Principal, Heritage Academy
Faculty of Education, Memorial University of Newfoundland
and Labrador

Rose, Andrea

Faculty of Education, Memorial University of Newfoundland
and Labrador

Rose, Vivian

Inclusive Education Itinerant, Eastern School
District

Shortall, Debbie
Singleton, Maureen
Skinner, Edna
Skinner, Jonathan
Stacey, Kathleen
Swamidas, Melly
Sweetapple, Paula

Vanier
O'Donel High School
Parent
John Watkins Academy
Holy Name of Mary Academy
Multi-Cultural Women's Organization
Riverwood Academy

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Trahey, Martha
Trenholm, Sharon

Holy Heart High School (ESL Teachers)
MacPherson Elementary

Wall, Nellie
Way, J.
Winsor, Reg
Woodfine, Bernard
Wright, Marie-Beth

Millcrest Academy
Principal, Crescent Collegiate
Newfoundland and Labrador Arts Council
Lakeside Academy
Canadian Parents for French



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Appendix V – List of Presentations

November 28, 2006

9:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.	Canadian Parents for French, Ms. Marie-Beth Wright
10:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.	School Administrators' Special Interest Council of the Newfoundland & Labrador Teachers' Association, Mr. Lloyd Burt
11:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.	Newfoundland & Labrador Teachers' Association, Mr. Kevin Foley
1:30 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.	Physical Education Special Interest Council of the Newfoundland & Labrador Teachers' Association, Mr. Dave Constantine
2:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.	Faculty of Education, Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador, Dr. Andrea Rose
3:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.	Newfoundland & Labrador Teachers' Association Learning Resources Council, Ms. Marina Foley

November 30, 2006

9:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.	Canadian Coalition for Immigrant Children and Youth, Ms. Barbara Burnaby
10:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.	Faculty of Education, Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador, Dr. Brian Roberts

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Appendix VI - Acknowledgements

The Commission acknowledges the following people and groups who made a substantial contribution to the work of this report via consultations, submissions, or other means. Without the help of everybody involved, this report would not be possible. The Commission apologizes to anybody who has been left out.

Douglas Abbass
Mary Abbass
Phil Abbass
Todd Abbott
Craig Adams
Jan Anderson
John Andersen
Amelia Andrews
Laurie Andrews
Glenn Andrews
Joe Arruda
Dave Babb
Kelli Baker
Eldred Barnes
Shirley Barr
Gary Barrett
John Barron
Patti Barron-Kennedy
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Conseil Scolaire Francophone
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Labrador School District
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Learning Resources Council
Multicultural Women's Organization
Newfoundland & Labrador Arts Council
Newfoundland & Labrador Counsellors & Psychologists' Association
Newfoundland & Labrador Federation of School Councils
Newfoundland and Labrador Parents for French
Newfoundland & Labrador Teachers' Association



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Provincial Music Special Interest Council of the Newfoundland & Labrador Teachers' Association
Provincial Physical Education Special Interest Council of the Newfoundland & Labrador Teachers' Association
Teachers of English as a Second Language of Newfoundland and Labrador
The Inner City Cluster of Principals
The School Administrators Council of the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association
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