

November 19, 2019:

Dear Parents and Guardians of St. Mary's Elementary:

As was indicated in a previous memo, at the June 8, 2019 meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Newfoundland and Labrador English School District, trustees passed a motion to conduct a formal review of the entire Waterford Valley High school feeder system. The system includes Hazelwood Elementary (K-6), St. Mary's Elementary (K-6), Cowan Heights Elementary (K-7), St. Matthew's Elementary (K-7), St. John Bosco School (K-9), Beaconsfield Junior High (7-9), and Waterford Valley High (10-12).

This review is being conducted during the 2019-20 school year, and is necessitated by enrollment pressures at St. Mary's Elementary. Your school's population currently exceeds its capacity, and there will be further pressures on available classroom space in the coming years. Meanwhile, excess capacity is available at nearby schools. It is important to note that no school closures are being contemplated as part of this review. However, as indicated in the June 21, 2019 memo, there could be changes made to the grade configuration of St. Mary's Elementary during the 2020-2021 school year to address the overcrowding issue.

As part of the school review process this year, District Staff met with the School Council of St. Mary's Elementary On October 30th and discussed a number of options including; changing the catchment area of the school, as well as the possibility of changing the current K-6 grade configuration. A meeting was held with the School Council of Hazelwood Elementary on November 4<sup>th</sup> to discuss the possibility of some grade levels from St. Mary's Elementary being moved to that school. The presentation given by District Staff during these meetings with the School Councils can be accessed through the school review website referenced below. Based on the discussion at these meetings, it is being considered to change the current grade configuration of St. Mary's Elementary to K-4, with the Grade 5 and 6 students to attend Hazelwood Elementary.

The District has compiled an information booklet, which contains details about the schools within this system. Community members are encouraged to review the booklet and provide feedback to the District via ThoughtExchange, an online consultation tool. ThoughtExchange will allow for an inclusive opportunity for all school community members to participate anonymously in the decision-making process and have their thoughts and ideas considered by their peers.

The **Information Booklet for the Waterford Valley High System** contains details on the review process, and more information on ThoughtExchange can be found on the Waterford Valley High school system review website (scheduled to go live on November 20<sup>th</sup>):

<https://www.nlesd.ca/schools/schoolreview/2020/system-wvh.jsp>

The District would like to get everyone's input on the following question:

**What are the most important things for the District to consider in reviewing the grade configuration of St. Mary's Elementary, with the possibility of changing it to a K-4 school and having the grades 5 and 6 students attend Hazelwood Elementary?**

The results of this ThoughtExchange will help the District determine what, if any, adjustments should be made to the Waterford Valley High school system for the 2020-21 school year. All voices matter, so your participation is crucial and valued. Please take the time to thoughtfully participate before **10:00 p.m. (NT), Friday, November 29, 2019**.

**Click here to launch ThoughtExchange:** <https://my.thoughtexchange.com/#560354806>

Again, complete information on the Waterford Valley High system is available on the District's website, or directly here: <https://www.nlesd.ca/schools/schoolreview/2020/system-wvh.jsp>

Thank you in advance for your input and guidance for the future of our students.

Should you have any questions about this review, please contact Michael Tobin, Director of Schools for the Waterford Valley High school system at 758-2377 or via email at [michaeltobin@nlesd.ca](mailto:michaeltobin@nlesd.ca)

Sincerely,



Darryl Feener  
Assistant Director of Education-Programs (Avalon Region)