

February 14, 2019

### **Bay d'Espoir Academy - New School Construction Update**

Dear Parents/Guardians:

On Wednesday, February 13, the Newfoundland and Labrador English School District updated the Bay d'Espoir Academy school council on the new school being constructed to serve students in the region. The following includes information provided in that update.

#### **Background**

Plans to replace Bay d'Espoir Academy did not begin with the 2017 fire. A new school had been on the former Nova Central School Board's capital request list since before 2012. Upon formation of the NL English School District in 2013, the Board retained the request for a new school and carried it forward each year. As a result of the fire, the District was tasked with providing an alternate teaching and learning environment as quickly as possible. Fortunately, the District was able to secure temporary accommodations in St. Alban's and plans for a new school were moved to the top of the Board's priority list.

#### **Site Selection**

The Milltown site was considered as a possible location for the new school, given it had the amenities required. The St. Alban's site was also considered, as it previously accommodated two schools and had adjacent amenities as well. Both sites were effectively "free" - Milltown via direct ownership and St. Alban's as the Roman Catholic Episcopal Corporation (RCEC) had title via a Crown grant provided explicitly for religious or educational purposes.

Population projections, founded on tax-filer data that includes community of residence, indicates the student population is projected to drop from the current level to about 200 for a few years, then to about 180 for the foreseeable future. By the time the new school opens, about 80 per cent of the student population is projected to be living in the immediate area of the St. Alban's site. Ultimately, given this reality, it was determined a new school would be best located in that community. The title to the property will be transferred from RCEC to NLESD (i.e., not sold or bought).

## Project Schedule

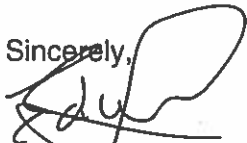
The Provincial Government (Transportation and Works) appointed Vigilant Management in fall 2018 to serve as technical advisors (architect and engineers) on this project, and they are actively working on a design for the new school. A tender to finalize design and complete construction is expected to be issued in late winter or early spring 2019, and awarded in late spring or early summer. The anticipated occupancy date is September 2021. The schedule provided by Transportation and Works (the project managers) is realistic based on past projects of a similar nature.

## Features of New School

While the fire was most unfortunate, the District is looking forward to construction of a brand new, state-of-the-art school to serve the Bay d'Espoir school community. Draft floor plans will be shared with the Bay d'Espoir Academy school council once they are developed. We do know at this point that the school will likely be a two-storey facility, as is the norm for school construction. It will be fully accessible, and in addition to classrooms, it will have a modern science lab, library, music room, art room, computer room, instructional resource suite, skilled trades suite, home economics room, cafeteria, commercial kitchen, and more. The gymnasium will be considerably larger than the present facility, and feature a fitness room, change rooms and stage.

The Board of Trustees appreciates the Provincial Government's commitment to the new facility and the opportunities it will provide area students for years to come. The District will continue to liaise with the Bay d'Espoir Academy school council with respect to progress made on the project.

Sincerely,



**Ed Walsh**

Associate Director of Education - Programs and Operations (Acting)

