

For Immediate Release

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## CLASS SIZE AND COMPOSITION COUNT: NOW...MORE THAN EVER

St. John's, NL... To highlight the critical class size and composition requirements in this province's classrooms, the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association is relaunching its public awareness campaign – ***Class Size Counts: Now...More Than Ever***.

"We need to see a truly 'needs based', as opposed to a budget based, approach to school resourcing, which would go a long way to ensuring schools are properly equipped and supported to fulfill their mandate," said Trent Langdon, President of the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association. "What we see now is a reality in many of our schools that often amounts to triage – existing resources are redeployed to respond to the highest and most emergent needs, while others are left to wait. Schools are grappling with inadequate resourcing in the classroom, class sizes that are just too large, and class composition that makes it very challenging to meet individual student needs. I have written to the Minister about the current demands in our schools, and we have been advised that the concerns raised are being actively reviewed. The NLTA is calling on government to take action quickly to help students and teachers who are struggling right now."

For more than a decade, successive provincial governments have increased class sizes and made other amendments to the Teacher Allocation Model established in 2008. These changes occurred in the absence of a cabinet directed review of the Model, which was supposed to occur in 2011. The NLTA is pleased that government has finally committed to conducting this long overdue review, and is anxiously awaiting more information about the appointment of the committee and the process for the independent review of the Teacher Allocation Model. This needs to be a meaningful, fulsome process that involves consultation with and real opportunities for input from parents, students, teachers and stakeholders like the NLTA.

"When resources in our schools are stretched too thin to meet individual student needs, that hits our members personally," said President Langdon. "We represent over 6,500 professional members who work hard every day to provide quality education to the province's children, but they are finding that increasingly difficult and more challenging. Our *Class Size Counts: Now...More Than Ever* messaging is intended to encourage the general public to become more involved in the discussion on class size and class composition. The NLTA and our members in the field know that numbers alone do not tell the whole story. To develop an effective response and approach to resourcing our schools, class composition – the nature and number of student needs – must be taken into account. We encourage parents and families to talk to their children's teachers and school administration about the realities of both class size and composition in their child's classroom and school right now."

In the coming days the NLTA will be distributing material to all members to bring more attention to this important issue and to support and encourage thoughtful discussions between teachers and parents regarding the impact class size and composition are having on children's education.

For more information on the NLTA's *Class Size Counts: Now...More Than Ever* campaign, visit [www.nlta.nl.ca](http://www.nlta.nl.ca).

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