



MEDIA RELEASE

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NLTA ACKNOWLEDGES NEED FOR JUNIOR HIGH RENEWAL BUT QUESTIONS TIMING AND FOCUS

St. John's, NL...The Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association recognizes the need for curriculum renewal to better meet the needs of and engage junior high students, but emphasizes that student choice alone is not the answer to engagement challenges and student success.

"As a junior high school counsellor myself for most of my career, I recognize the value of offering adolescents a degree of flexibility in their program," said Trent Langdon, President of the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association. "However, focusing primarily on choice overlooks critical issues that continue to impact teaching and learning, such as class size and composition, school resourcing, and the many factors outside of school that have a significant impact on absenteeism and engagement. If numeracy and literacy are concerns, we need to reduce junior high class sizes, increase supports, and remove the disruptions caused by aggressive and violent behavior so students can focus on their studies and receive the attention and support they need."

The NLTA also questions the timing for implementation and the short window between gathering stakeholder feedback and implementing changes in the fall of 2025.

"I support the Department's efforts to engage stakeholders, but I have heard from educators and others who feel their input won't truly have any influence on the outcome," Langdon said. "There are concerns regarding the long-term impact of leaving it to adolescents to make decisions around second language learning and exposure to music, visual arts and social studies. What options won't be there in senior high and beyond as a result? With government touting the ongoing work of the Education Accord NL as, in part, a transformative initiative for the K-12 system, wouldn't it make sense to wait? A 2026-27 implementation would allow time to consider and incorporate the Accord's final recommendations and carefully assess stakeholder feedback."

The NLTA urges the government to ensure that curriculum renewal is informed by meaningful consultation and a comprehensive strategy to support student learning.

- 30 -

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