

Campaign to showcase real stories about school system ***Education Partners encourage Nova Scotians to share*** ***positive impact of programs and services***

Halifax, N. S., February 8, 2011 -- Nova Scotians have a chance to share their positive stories about the public education system as part of a new campaign by the Nova Scotia Education Partners. *Tales Out Of School: True Stories about the P-12 Education System in Nova Scotia* is a grassroots awareness campaign that will spotlight how the system improves the lives of students and families and boosts the potential of Nova Scotia's communities and economy.

"Tales Out Of School is a focused effort to increase awareness of the many programs and services the public education system offers and the broader impact it has on our province," says Nova Scotia Teachers Union president Alexis Allen, member of Nova Scotia Education Partners. "It encourages Nova Scotians to tell other Nova Scotians how the public education system has positively affected them—and it's those personal stories that really hit home."

The campaign includes a website (www.nstalesoutofschool.ca) where people can upload video or written testimonials. There will also be community presentations and regional communications activities that celebrate personal stories about positive experiences with programs and services offered in public schools.

Since only three out of 10 Nova Scotians have children in the public school system, the campaign also aims to show that public education is an investment in the economic and social future of Nova Scotia communities.

"Not only do schools provide training for the future workforce, but a good school system is a draw for professionals from outside the province, both nationally and abroad. Given the pressing need to attract skilled workers, this is directly tied to the province's economic success," adds Nova Scotia School Boards Association president Vic Fleury, member of Nova Scotia Education Partners .

The public education system delivers a wide range of programs that improves the lives of students and their parents including Reading Recovery, Options and Opportunities and enrichment programs like advanced placement and the International Baccalaureate (IB) program. At a regional level, the public education system delivers support for students with special needs including autism and severe learning disabilities, psychological and speech language pathology services, and assistive technology.

In addition to academics and student supports, the school system is also responsible for breakfast programs, library services, French immersion, co-op placements, athletics, technology and healthy living initiatives.

"The school system delivers academic education, but it also provides supports and programs that affect the students outside the classroom, enabling students, families and communities to succeed," continues Fleury. "Every part of the system contributes to this success and to the social and economic future of Nova Scotia."

Examples of testimonials featured on the nstalessoutofschool.ca website include:

“My younger son was part of the Schools Plus program and it has done him a world of good. My older son had two teachers who encouraged him to be proud of being smart and getting good marks. It made a huge impact on his outlook and what he wants to do with his life.” Alex Wilson, Strait region.

“My son Ben has autism, and the support he has received from the staff at the Chester school has been phenomenal. Without the programs and support he receives, frankly, I don’t think Ben would even be in school. The support we receive on a regular basis makes it so much easier.” Rob McInnes, Chester.

Nova Scotians are encouraged to submit their stories to the nstalessoutofschool.ca website, as well as to send an e-mail postcard to their network of contacts encouraging them to do the same. The *Tales Out Of School* campaign will run over the next several months with the goal of collecting as many stories as possible.

About Nova Scotia Education Partners

For the past several years, Nova Scotia’s major education partners have held regular meetings to discuss issues and concerns. These meetings are highly valued by the partners as opportunities to keep one another informed on initiatives, share concerns and collaborate on issues of mutual importance.

Nova Scotia's Education Partners believe that continued investment in public education is critical to the economic and social success of our province.

The Education Partners Group includes the Nova Scotia School Boards Association, Nova Scotia Teachers Union, Nova Scotia Federation of Home and School Associations, Association of Nova Scotia Educational Administrators and La Fédération des parents acadiens de la Nouvelle-Écosse.

Nova Scotia School Boards Association

The Nova Scotia School Boards Association is dedicated to excellence in public education for students by providing services to member school boards. It is the provincial voice for school boards. The Association represents Nova Scotia’s eight school boards that serve more than 128,000 students.

Nova Scotia Teachers Union

The Nova Scotia Teachers Union represents 10,900 public school teachers, as well as administrators and faculty and professional support staff in the Community College system. Organized in 1895 to unify and elevate the teaching profession in Nova Scotia, its programs are directed towards improving the quality of public education in Nova Scotia.

Nova Scotia Federation of Home and School Associations

The Nova Scotia Federation of Home & School Associations (NSFHSA) is an independent, volunteer, provincial organization, comprised of local home & school associations, and parent-teacher associations. The Federation welcomes School Advisory Councils throughout Nova Scotia as well. Members are parents, teachers,

students, administrators, school board members and others who are interested in working together for the benefit of all children and youth at home, in schools and in communities.

Association of Nova Scotia Educational Administrators

The Association of Nova Scotia Educational Administrators (ANSEA), is the professional association of all the senior management personnel employed by the eight elected school boards in Nova Scotia. ANSEA's mission is to be the independent voice of senior educational leaders in Nova Scotia dedicated to the betterment of public education.

La Fédération des parents acadiens de la Nouvelle-Écosse

La Fédération des parents acadiens de la Nouvelle-Écosse s'engage à appuyer les parents et les associations de parents dans leurs efforts pour développer un milieu propice à l'épanouissement global de leurs enfants. It is committed to supporting parents and parents' associations in their efforts to foster an opportune environment for the overall development of children.

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