

Petition

The background to this petition is as follows:

Inclusive education has become a cornerstone of educational policy in Newfoundland and Labrador, promising to accommodate all students equitably; however, many schools are not meeting these commitments effectively, leaving students who need support and their parents without access.

Despite the provincial government's dedication to inclusive education, reports from parents, educators and advocacy groups reveal persistent gaps in resources and educational supports. Many students are continuing to face significant barriers in accessing equitable educational opportunities such as:

- (i) Inadequate classroom accommodations: Many schools lack the necessary resources to implement effective inclusive practices such as assistive technology (Chrome books, ACC devices, et cetera), sensory tools, personal care and support;
- (ii) Insufficient support staff: There is a critical shortage of special education support staff leading to reduced one-on-one support and individualized attention for students who may require it. The role of an Instructional Resource Teacher (IRT) is an important one as their focus is on developing and implementing individualized education plans. At this point, many students are only receiving 20 to 40 minutes of IRT time per day; and
- (iii) Limited training for educators and community partners: Teachers often report feeling unprepared to address diverse needs of students. As well, reports from Speech Language Pathologists have been that their time has to be split between multiple schools with limited to no resources or permanent spaces. Educators, although not teachers, are paying for their own professional development due to lack of funding ;

Therefore, we petition the hon. House of Assembly as follows:

We, the undersigned, call upon the House of Assembly to urge the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to:

- (i) Increase funding by investing in additional resources and support staff to better serve all students;
- (ii) Enhance professional development with comprehensive and ongoing training for all educators to equip them with the skills needed to support quality inclusive education effectively;
- (iii) Improve equitable access to services to ensure all students throughout Newfoundland and Labrador have access to specialized services and interventions that meet individual needs; and
- (iv) Implement regular policy review to evaluate the effectiveness of inclusive education and make necessary adjustments based on feedback and outcomes from educators and families.

Date	Name (please print)	Address	Signature

This petition may be tabled in the House of Assembly. If tabled, the petition will a document of the House of Assembly and the name and address of every person who signs it will be available to the public.

