

NEWS RELEASE

December 10, 2020

Chromebook Delivery Begins as District Proactively Prepares for 2021

The Newfoundland and Labrador English School District has started to distribute Chromebook devices to students in Grades 7-12. The first 1,500 Chromebooks to arrive in the province are on the ground in Labrador and, after being configured by District staff, will move into the hands of students, beginning early next week.

“I am pleased to see this process unfolding for our students,” said Goronwy Price, Chair of the District’s Board of Trustees. “Since the Provincial Government provided \$20 million to support digital learning, we have been working with suppliers and distributors, and determining the best approaches to getting these resources into students’ hands. Despite the challenges, as distribution networks throughout the world have been impacted by Covid-19, we are seeing devices arrive and are moving forward with distribution efforts before the curtain closes on 2020.”

In July 2020, the Provincial Government funded the purchase of more than 5,000 laptops for teachers and in excess of 30,000 Chromebooks for Grades 7-12 students. The distribution of teacher laptops is near completion. The distribution of Chromebooks will involve multiple rollouts of devices as shipments arrive in the province. All devices must then be appropriately configured, catalogued, and prepared for shipping to schools. These resources will be provided for student use, but will remain the property of the District and be used to benefit all students as they move through the province’s K-12 public education system.

Meanwhile, the District is being proactive in preparing for any Covid-related circumstance over the holiday season.

“In recent weeks, we have become acutely aware of how quickly the Covid-19 virus can impact a school community,” said Tony Stack, CEO/Director of Education, Newfoundland and Labrador English School District. “As such, we are preparing to switch to virtual learning, in consultation with Public Health, in any school community or region where new, localized instances of the virus might create the need to alter normal school operations.”

Mr. Stack emphasized there is no expectation at this time of any suspension of in-class instruction in January. However, the District is being proactive in its preparation to switch to online teaching and learning if the need arises. Communication has been sent to schools and families with respect to preparations for the holiday break. That communication includes the suggestion that Grades 7-12 students take home resources that may be important for virtual learning in January should the need occur, and that Grades K-6 students take home school supplies (e.g., pencils, rulers, crayons, notebooks) they might need to engage in virtual learning - again, in case that is required.

As the District awaits arrival and configuration of the remaining Chromebooks for Grades 7-12, families are also being advised to contact their school if they do not have access to the Internet or a personal technology device at home.

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Media contact:

Heather May | Director of Strategic Planning, Policy and Communications | O: 709-758-2371 | M: 709-690-0056 | heathermay@nlesd.ca | [@NLESdca](https://www.nlesd.ca) | www.nlesd.ca