

**New Brunswick Department of Education
and
The New Brunswick Business Council**

Vision

The New Brunswick Government is committed to making this Province self-sufficient within 20 years. To help achieve this objective, we must better adapt to the demographic and economic changes that are impacting our communities by providing innovative ways for our schools to deliver quality educational services and for our students to achieve their potential.

The school is a fundamental and integral part of the community and is enhanced when a community shares responsibility for its development and for the educational experience of the students. A Community School creates a different way of supporting students and is open to the community beyond regular school hours to meet community needs for preschoolers, youth, adults and seniors. The Community School strives to make our education system more responsive, better allowing parents and communities to contribute to the education of their children, thus ensuring higher educational outcomes.

One of New Brunswick's greatest strengths is that our communities are close-knit and co-operative. We need to build upon that strength and that desire to bring a community together to expand learning opportunities.

Purpose

The New Brunswick Department of Education is committed to launching and supporting the Community School concept in up to 75 Community Schools within 5 years.

The New Brunswick Business Council has committed to a Business/Education Partnership program to guide and promote the practice of business and community working together to enhance educational outcomes. Both parties enter into this Memorandum of Understanding with the overall goal of bringing these two initiatives together to enrich the community School concept.

Background

In 2000, a pilot partnership project involving business, the community and one school was initiated in School District 8 in Saint John. The project aimed to break the cycle of poverty for students at one of the district's inner city's schools by combining a focus on academic achievement with a positive school environment supported by the local business community.

Working with all the stakeholders, strategies were developed that would complement the goals of improving the school's climate, curriculum, and relationship with their community. Over the years, the partnership has grown to now include 7 schools and over 20 committed partners from the private, public and volunteer sectors with new ones being added weekly. The initial model is now expanding, through the support of the New Brunswick Business Council in cooperation with the New Brunswick Department of Education and community partners to include other school districts, schools and business partners.

The Department of Education is also piloting community schools models in other areas of New Brunswick.

Objectives

Under this agreement, the New Brunswick Business Council and the New Brunswick Department of Education will work together to achieve the following objectives:

Objective 1: Establish a working relationship between the New Brunswick Business Council and the New Brunswick Department of Education to provide support to the Community Schools concept and initiative.

Objective 2: Establish a dialogue and forum between the New Brunswick Business Council and the New Brunswick Department of Education which can facilitate specific school-business partnerships.

Objective 3: Ensure that the New Brunswick Business Council and the New Brunswick Department of Education work in partnership with the school districts to involve other business and community partners to create a comprehensive support system both for and by the community.

Guiding Principles

- Contributions and/or resources on behalf of the New Brunswick Business Council should be a supplement to, and not a replacement for efforts by the Department of Education, School District, or other organizations working in support of schools.
- Contribution of resources from the community should be on an as- requested- by- school- officials basis.
- The knowledge and experience of the educational leaders in the schools, school districts and the Department of Education shall be respected and shall guide any and all collaborative efforts.
- Collaborating partners and the community are entitled to activity and progress reports which will indicate impact on student achievement and other progress indicators.

- Relationships formed that provide support to Community Schools should be for a minimum of 3 years to ensure that adequate time is given to allow the relationship to have positive effects for the partners, the schools and the students.
- Initiatives should proceed on a measured pace in order to avoid creating expectations that can't be met.
- Records will be kept for all financial donations, tangible contributions and services which have been assessed a monetary value in order to meet acceptable evaluation and auditing requirements.
- School districts and the Department of Education will make every effort to ensure the greatest need schools receive priority.
- It is recognized that individual supports will reflect the needs of the individual schools and that the "one size fits all" model is not applicable due to the diverse needs and natures of the schools.
- Each School District will establish a centre of responsibility for coordination in cooperation with each participating school.
- The Department of Education will identify a central coordinating responsibility to be the principal contact with the New Brunswick Business Council and with the School districts.

Signatures

Original signed by

The Honorable Kelly Lamrock
Minister of Education
Province of New Brunswick

Original signed by

Mr. Ed Barrett
Chair
New Brunswick Business Council

Date: September 28, 2007