

Dear Parents and Guardians:

A key focus of the strategic plan of the Newfoundland and Labrador English School Board is to improve literacy and numeracy skills of students. To achieve the objectives of the plan, District staff have undertaken a number of important initiatives.

Recently, a website has been established to help families of high school students learn about and understand the importance of the upcoming Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). We invite you to take some time with your child in the coming weeks to review this information and discuss the importance of these assessments. You can review the page here: <https://www.nlesd.ca/programs/pisaforparents.jsp>

Issued by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), PISA tests the skills and knowledge of 15-year-old students in mathematics, reading, and science. Assessing all three subjects every three years allows countries to have a consistent source of achievement data in each of the three subjects. For 2018, the primary focus will be on Reading.

The Programme for International Student Assessment is important as it helps the Newfoundland and Labrador English School District understand where our students rank amongst other provinces and countries and how to allocate resources accordingly. While PISA does not impact final course marks, we want to ensure students choose to actively engage in the test as it helps the District focus and direct resources to areas of determined need. We ask that you discuss these assessments as a family and make a commitment to challenge the tests and help us with our goal of improving our education system for the benefit of all students.

We believe in our teachers and feel a critical aspect to changing PISA results for our province is to support our educators as they work to engage students in the tests. Acknowledging that, the District is also providing resources to educators specific to PISA. Sample tests and other important resources are being provided that help teachers become more familiar with the tests and the types of question techniques used.

Should you have any further questions on PISA or your school's approach to this assessment, I strongly encourage you to speak with your child's teachers or school administration. I thank you for your time in reviewing this correspondence, and most importantly, discussing the PISA information available on our website.

Sincerely,



Goronwy Price
CHAIR