

WHAT WE HEARD

ENHANCING LOCAL VOICE: PUBLIC CONSULTATION

NOVA SCOTIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development reached out to the school community to understand how local voice can be enhanced in Nova Scotia's education system.

LOCAL VOICE

Local voice refers to the values, opinions, beliefs, perspectives and cultural backgrounds of the people in a school community - including students, school staff, parents/guardians, and local citizens.

ENHANCING LOCAL VOICE

Enhancing local voice means:

- Increasing and improving opportunities for school community members to provide meaningful feedback and input based on their unique experiences and needs
- Maximizing opportunities for this feedback and input to inform education policy and decision-making to support student learning and well-being
- Information sharing to ensure school communities understand what happens as a result of that feedback and input



BIG IDEAS

Clear Communication Pathways

Ensure that parents, students, and community members know where to go when they have a concern.

Ensuring People Feel Heard

54% of the school community does not currently feel heard. When concerns or questions are raised by the school community, ensure they know they have been heard and share what action has been taken.

Increasing Transparency

Enhance public understanding of what is happening in the system, and what the upcoming priorities may be. Provide more regular opportunities, like these recent engagements, to give feedback.

People are looking for a single point of entry into the system, a body to advocate on their behalf, and public reporting on the actions within the education system, which some participants felt school boards used to provide.

Relationship Building and Trust

To increase local voice, trust and relationships need to be built. Suggestions for building trust included enhancing accountability, amplifying diverse voices, and "meeting people where they are". It is important to recognize that different approaches will be required to ensure the comments, concerns, and feedback of all members of the school community are acknowledged and addressed.

ENGAGEMENT

3,349 PEOPLE

participated in an online survey conducted through the regional centres for education and Conseil scolaire acadien provincial

1,401 COMMENTS

posted in a virtual town hall

25,635 RATINGS

were provided on comments that were shared in a virtual town hall

17 FOCUS GROUPS

were held with over 70 participants across the province

SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCILS

SAC members participated in a separate virtual town hall (111 comments, 1,785 ratings), online survey (151 completed), and 5 focus groups as part of the first phase of this research

SACs want to have an increased ability to impact change, clear communication and feedback pathways, and feel their priority areas for feedback include student issues, infrastructure, and school programming



WHAT'S NEXT

The Department is using this feedback to develop a governance model that will enhance local voice in the public education system. We will communicate next steps of this work to students, staff, and families early in the new school year.



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