

November 15, 2017

The Honourable Dale Kirby
Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development

Dear Minister Kirby:

It has been my pleasure to work with you in Cabinet since December 2015. I am honoured that you are continuing to serve the people of our province in your capacity as Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development. I am placing my trust in you to provide a high quality early learning and K-12 educational system for the children and youth of our province.

As we approach the mid-point of our mandate, we have a strong Cabinet. We are guided by our plan for sustainability and growth, The Way Forward. It focuses on strengthening our economy and creating private sector jobs, delivering better services, improving outcomes to promote a prosperous Newfoundland and Labrador, and improving public sector efficiency. I am asking you to deliver on this plan by leading the following:

K-12 Education

- Leading the development of an Education Action Plan based on recommendations from the Premier's Task Force on Improving Educational Outcomes and the Task Force's nine areas of focus:
 - Inclusive education;
 - Student mental health and wellness;
 - Mathematics;
 - Reading;
 - Indigenous education;
 - Multicultural education;
 - Early years;
 - Career and co-operative education; and
 - Teacher education and professional development;
- Ensuring that the province's education system is positioned to take full advantage of new educational technologies and that schools have the resources and training required;
- Engaging schools to create settings that support healthy living and learning in partnership with the Minister of Children, Seniors and Social Development;
- Implementing child health risk assessments for school-aged children in collaboration with the Minister of Health and Community Services and Minister of Children, Seniors and Social Development;
- Offering wellness coaching in schools beginning with Kindergarten children in partnership with the Minister of Children, Seniors and Social Development; and
- Developing potential models for international education.

Early Learning and Child Care

- Completing a review of the Voluntary Operating Grant Program for child care centres;
- Partnering with local child care providers to extend opportunities for before school and after school child care programs; and
- Working with the federal government to provide for a national approach to Early Learning and Child Care, including funding to grow the early childhood educator profession and reduce costs to families.

Together, Cabinet is responsible for achieving the targets set out in The Way Forward. Achieving these targets is critical to attaining inclusive growth, improving employment levels and reducing poverty and realizing financial sustainability. To support reaching these targets, I ask all Ministers to consider the impact of their decisions on the health of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians through our Health in All Policies approach. You must also consider whether your decisions are best positioning our province for economic and private sector job growth.

As Premier, I expect you to be open and transparent. We must use evidence and research and engage with the public, stakeholders and our Indigenous partners to inform our decisions. We must ensure that we are focused on service excellence. I have asked all Ministers to reduce red tape, adopt Lean continuous improvement principles and publish business standards for all major programs by March 31, 2018. I also expect all Ministers to work together to support our commitment to being a government that is digital-by-design.

In fulfilling your responsibility as Minister, you must ensure collaboration, in a positive and constructive manner, with your Cabinet colleagues. I take this opportunity to remind you that, as you carry out your responsibilities as a Member of the House of Assembly and Member of Cabinet, adhering to the Code of Conduct and the Conflict of Interest guidelines are mandatory to ensure you discharge your duties with the highest ethical standards.

Deputy Ministers are your key source of support and will provide you with advice in meeting your responsibilities. I expect you to develop a positive, respectful and trusting relationship with your Deputy Minister and the public service.

At the end of the day, Newfoundlanders and Labradorians want to see results. You must track and report on your progress towards completing the work outlined in this letter. We will continue to highlight our progress in our annual Way Forward report cards and annual performance reports. Together, we will improve health, social and economic outcomes and deliver high quality services for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.

Sincerely,



DWIGHT BALL
Premier