

May 12, 2008

Welcome to the Final Round of the 2008 CES Case Competition!

Your consulting firm has been selected to respond to the following Request for Proposals issued by the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador for the evaluation of the **Healthy Students Healthy Schools** initiative. Given that the initiative focuses on students, the decision was made to invite the three finalist 'consulting firms' for the 2008 CES Student Case Competition as bidders for this assignment.

Healthy Students Healthy Schools is a joint initiative of the Department of Health and Community Services and the Department of Education of the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador. The initiative has gained the attention and interest of the Ministers and senior management of these two departments. While the initiative is seen as having a positive impact, government is seeking more in-depth evidence of the results that can be expected before they decide on longer-term funding of Healthy Students Healthy Schools.

The Deputy Ministers of the two departments, along with the Assistant Deputy Minister of Evaluation (aka the judges for the final round) have requested a briefing from the firms that have been invited to submit proposals. Their interest is in learning about the overall strategy being proposed for conducting the evaluation. They are also interested in the kinds of evidence they can anticipate from the evaluation regarding the longer term results of the initiative and the progress being made towards these results. Based on the presentations they will make a decision on the 'awarding of the contract' and the winning team for the 2008 Student Case Competition.

Your firm has five (5) hours to prepare a presentation describing how you plan to meet the requirements outlined in the Request for Proposals. After the five hours of preparation time, your firm will receive a 30 minute break and then present your proposed approach. Your firm is expected to present for 20 minutes followed by a 5-10 minutes for questions from the Deputy Ministers and Director of Evaluation.

We look forward to your presentation later today.

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and Lisa O'Reilly
2008 Case Competition Working Group

Attachments:

**Provincial Wellness Plan
Canadian Consensus Statement – Comprehensive School Health
Profile of Schools – Newfoundland and Labrador**

Final Round Information

1. Organizers may interrupt teams briefly to take pictures of members at work preparing their presentation. Teams should consider recording themselves on film too!
2. Teams will be guided by organizers from the case preparation room to the presentation area.
3. Presentations should be no longer than 20 minutes. A time-keeper will give warning as the end of the presentation period approaches.
4. Judges and the audience will have five to ten minutes after the presentation to ask questions of the team.

Criteria for the final round

The following are the criteria for judging of the presentations, the awarding of the 'contract' for this evaluation and the 2008 case competition trophy:

Criteria	Weights
Demonstrated understanding of the initiative (logic model)	15%
Demonstrated understanding of the scope and objectives of the evaluation	10%
Appropriateness of evaluation questions	15%
Appropriateness of indicators/evidence	15%
Appropriateness of methodology	15%
Risk management - identification of potential challenges and solutions	10%
Overall quality of presentation (clarity, flow of information, persuasiveness, interaction with judges) and team approach (all team members are involved; collaboration in presentation and Q and A session)	15%
At the discretion of judges, to award teams for innovative ideas or detailed practical suggestions that go above and beyond the questions	5%
Total	100%

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

EVALUATION OF THE HEALTHY STUDENTS HEALTHY SCHOOLS INITIATIVE

1.0 Overview and Policy Context

1.1 Overview

In 2004 the Department of Health & Community Services and the Department of Education of the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador partnered in the development and implementation of the provincial Healthy Students Healthy Schools initiative. Healthy Students Healthy Schools is a complex, horizontal government initiative that aims to create, support and promote healthy school environments for children and youth and to foster healthy lifestyles that will continue throughout life.

The goal of the Health Students Healthy Schools initiative is to create school environments that support healthy living for children and youth by:

- enhancing opportunities for students to participate in healthy activities in both the school and community
- engaging and supporting youth to take action on health issues relevant to youth
- promoting and encouraging action around healthy living with school personnel, school councils, parents and the larger school community.

The initial focus of Healthy Students Healthy Schools is the development of policies, programs and supports for healthy eating, physical activity/active living and smoke-free environments. Other priorities will address social behaviours, safety and injury prevention, mental health, addressing the needs of vulnerable populations and immunization.

The key messages of Healthy Students Healthy Schools are that:

- healthy students are healthy learners
- creating a healthy school environment is essential in supporting students on their path to becoming and staying healthy in the future
- partnerships among the home, school and community facilitates a coordinated approach and an integrated focus on health and education

1.2 Policy context

Health Students Healthy Schools is influenced by policies at the provincial and national levels.

Provincial policy

The initiative is a priority within the Provincial Wellness Plan. The Provincial Wellness Plan was launched by the Minister of Health and Community Services on March 8, 2006. The plan focuses on improving the health of the population and helping all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians achieve their optimal state of wellness. It is based on a Circle of Health framework which sets out a comprehensive approach to health promotion, incorporating the population health approach and the determinants of health.

The Provincial Wellness Plan calls for a coordinated and integrated approach to move Healthy Students Healthy Schools forward within the school system. A copy of the Provincial Wellness Plan is included with this Request for Proposals.

Healthy Students Healthy Schools is also integrated into the broader mandatory School Development Process of the Department of Education that is designed to guide and focus schools towards the achievement of their mission of enhanced student learning. Healthy Students Healthy Schools had input into two of the 15 criteria statements for school development.

The initiative is also informed by and contributes to the provincial Poverty Reduction Strategy – a horizontal government initiative which aims to alleviate and prevent poverty through a comprehensive and longer-term approach to policy development and programming.

National policy

Healthy Students Healthy Schools is based on the internationally accepted Comprehensive School Health model. The integrated approach set out in this model emphasizes multiple strategies and gives students many opportunities to observe, learn and experience positive health attitudes and behaviours. A copy of the Canadian Consensus Statement on Comprehensive School Health (revised 2007) is included with this Request for Proposals as background information.

Healthy Students Healthy Schools is informed by, and contributes to, the Pan-Canadian Joint Consortium for School Health. The Consortium was established in 2005 by provincial and territorial ministries and federal departments in response to the First Ministers' Health Accord (2004). The goal of the Consortium is to strengthen the capacities of health, education and other systems and agencies in school health promotion. It does this through research and facilitating sharing of ideas among jurisdictions.¹

1.3 School population and structure

The total population of Newfoundland and Labrador is 506,000, spread throughout 600 rural and urban communities. Approximately 35 percent of the population resides on the Northeast Avalon peninsula (in or close to the capital city of St. John's).

In 2006-07 there were a total of 74,304 students in the Kindergarten to Grade 12 school system in Newfoundland and Labrador. There are a total of 285 schools, located in rural and urban areas, and ranging in size from four students (in a remote Labrador community) to over 1000 (a high school in St. John's).

There is an aboriginal population in the province of 23,455 (Census 2006) consisting of Inuit, Innu and Métis in small, isolated communities in Labrador and Mi'kmaq located primarily in rural communities on the island portion of the province. Newfoundland and Labrador has a very small population of immigrants (8,385 reported in the 2006 Census); however a few schools in St. John's have students from many different countries who are newcomers to Canada – both immigrants and refugees.

¹ Joint Consortium for School Health website. Accessed at <http://www.jcsh-cces.ca/>

A map of the school districts and a statistical profile of the student population is included as background material for this Request for Proposals.

2.0 Approach to Implementation

2.1 Partnership Structure

Besides the two provincial departments which co-lead the initiative, Healthy Students Healthy Schools involves a number of key partners:

- the Department of Tourism, Culture and Recreation (in regard to the active living priority)
- five School Districts throughout the province (for based on geography, and one francophone district that covers the province)
- four Regional Health Authorities
- School Councils at each school (comprised of parents and other interested community members)
- Regional Wellness Coalitions (community-based coalitions which help with implementation of the Provincial Wellness Plan)
- a wide variety of other school health related community groups and organizations – described in the Approach to Implementation section below).

A Provincial Healthy Students Healthy Schools Committee coordinates school health promotion efforts across the province. The Committee is co-chaired by the Department of Health & Community Services and the Department of Education and includes the Directors of Health Promotion from each Regional Health Authority, a Program Specialist from each School District, five School Health Promotion Liaison Consultants (SHPLC) and other relevant health and education consultants. The committee meets face to face three times a year and holds monthly teleconferences.

Similar Healthy Students Healthy Schools Committees are in place in the school districts, which develop and implement a regional Healthy Students Healthy Schools workplan. These committees are instrumental in developing strategies and facilitating replication of initiatives that are working well.

2.2 Staffing and Resources

The Departments of Health and Community Services and Education have assigned consultants to co-lead the work on this initiative.

Five SHPLC positions in the School Districts are jointly funded by the Department of Health and Community Services and the Department of Education. (The Department of Health and Community Services pays for salaries and the Department of Education pays for travel and other costs). These consultants work from the school district offices, reinforcing the joint partnership of health and education at the regional level. The SHPLCs take the lead on Healthy Students Healthy Schools, help to strengthen partnerships, build capacity and facilitate health promotion activities in the schools districts. They are also a key link with the health professionals in the regional health authorities.

Funding has been allocated by the Department of Health and Community Services and the Department of Education for specific Healthy Students Healthy Schools action areas (described below). Healthy Students Healthy Schools is also supported by funding (including grants) from the Regional Health Authorities, Regional Wellness Coalitions, Provincial Wellness Grants, and the Alliance for the Control of Tobacco (ACT).

Healthy Students Healthy Schools also partners with the School Milk Foundation, Kids Eat Smart Foundation, School Councils Association, the Coalition for School Nutrition, the Department of Tourism, Culture and Recreation, ACT, as well as a variety of organizations in each school district. Healthy Students Healthy Schools is also collaborating with the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers Association to ensure that teacher wellness is addressed through supports in their work environment.

The Regional Health Authorities also play an important role through the involvement of professional staff (e.g. nutritionists) in supporting schools to implement Healthy Students Healthy Schools related initiatives.

At the provincial and regional levels, a wide variety of Healthy Students Healthy Schools communications materials and supports have been developed including a provincial school health website (www.livinghealthyschools.com) which has links to webpages of the school districts.

In total, it is estimated that over \$6 million has been allocated over the 2005-2009 period to support development and implementation of the initiative. There is also a considerable in-kind contribution of time and staff resources from the various partners.

3.0 Action areas

The following are the highlights of the three key action areas of Healthy Students Healthy Schools. For each action, the policy directions and the resources allocated are described.

3.1 Healthy Eating

Policies: School Food Guidelines were developed at the provincial level to help ensure that students were presented with healthy food options at school. Cafeteria equipment criteria were also developed to support implementation of these Guidelines. All school districts developed Healthy Eating/Nutrition Policies based on the School Food Guidelines which are being phased in over a two-year period, with full implementation targeted by September 2008.

Resources: Workshops were held with school cafeteria managers and front line cafeteria staff to include them as partners in making the transition to serving healthy foods. A needs assessment was carried out with all principals in the K-12 system to determine the equipment/infrastructure required to support the new School Food Guidelines. A total provincial allocation of \$1.056 million has been made for the purchase of this equipment over the 2006-08 period.

3.2 Physical Education and Health Curriculum and Active Living

Policies: A new physical education and health curriculum was introduced and government made physical education mandatory for high school graduation. The physical education curriculum now focuses on activities that appeal to a broader student base, moving away from a sports-only model, which in turn contributes to young people leading more active, healthy lives. A new Nutrition course for Senior High School was also implemented in September 2007.

Resources: A total of \$3.2 million in funding was provided over the past three years to purchase equipment to support implementation of the new curriculum. The consultant at the Department of Education responsible for Healthy Students Healthy Schools coordinated a comprehensive central tendering process for this equipment (based on needs identified by school districts). Schools have been provided with such items as elliptical machines, spinner bikes and commercial rowers. Outdoor equipment includes snow shoes, cross country skis, compasses and a GPS. A Physical Education and Physical Activity School Survey was also conducted province-wide to inform work on this action area.

An Active Schools Program has been piloted in selected schools in three school districts. This started as a grass roots initiative in Nova Central School District where it is now in place in upwards of 67 schools. The program aims to incorporate 20 minutes of Daily Physical Activity (DPA), mostly in the classroom setting, and during days on which the students do not have physical education. The Active Schools Program also supports the schools to implement other active living initiatives. School districts have assigned different levels of dedicated resources to support the coordination of the Active Schools Program. Eastern School District, in partnership with the City of St. John's Parks and Recreation, implemented the program on a pilot basis in 2006 in three schools and is now expanding it to an additional fifteen schools. Memorial University conducted an evaluation of the initiative in Nova Central and Eastern School Districts. Western District is also piloting an Active Schools Program in six schools.

3.3 Living Smoke-Free

Policies: School District Smoke-Free School Ground Policies have been developed by each school district.

Resources: Indoor and outdoor signage and other support materials have been produced and distributed to all schools across the province. Several support programs have been implemented including Smokers' Helpline School CARE Referral Program, Kick the Nic. Two mass media campaigns have been implemented: Be Free Tobacco Free and the You Are a Target prevention campaign.

3.4 Other initiatives

The following are highlights of other initiatives implemented through Healthy Students Healthy Schools:

- To engage schools Healthy Students Healthy Schools a series of one-day District Living Healthy Workshops were held in 2006 with all school principals. These workshops focused on the Healthy Eating, Active Living and Living Smoke-free action areas. Informants indicate that this was a powerful sharing of ideas to help

move Healthy Students Healthy Schools forward and to overcome potential challenges. Living Healthy School Teams are being developed in some school districts to build capacity for implementing Healthy Students Healthy Schools. Participating schools decide who will form the teams, which may have representation from students, teachers, health professionals and/or other community volunteers. Regional Healthy Living Student Summits (planning sessions) have also been held in some schools districts.

- Annual Living Healthy Commotions are organized by all K-12 schools across the province. These one-day events celebrate the creation of healthy school environments and promote awareness among the school community and parents of the kinds of activities underway. On September 29, 2007, all 285 schools in the province participated, tying this in with the Terry Fox Run. Schools are provided a small grant to support activities by the Departments of Education and Health and Community Services. Schools are asked to send in a short evaluation report after each Commotion.

Examples of specific initiatives of each school district include:

- Labrador: A partnership with Voisey's Bay Nickel Company and PAL Airlines has been established to deliver fresh milk to schools in the isolated Inuit communities on the north coast of Labrador.
- Western: Western School District issued a tender for the provision of healthy food for its schools, with a view to improving access to healthy food while keeping costs down in implementing the new School Food Guidelines in rural areas of the district. Deliveries are being made weekly to about 36 schools within a specific region covered by the supplier; other suppliers are being sought for the remainder of the district.
- Nova Central: The Active Schools Program (DPA) and workshops for caterers were initiated in this district.
- Eastern: The SHPLC made contact with an Ontario-based Everyone Jump Concert Tour which promotes awareness of type 2 diabetes; ten schools in the district were included in the 2006 tour.

4.0 Early indications of progress

A formative evaluation of the Provincial Wellness Plan was conducted in 2007-08. This included a case study examination of Healthy Students Healthy Schools, and in particular the factors that are seen as helping and hindering implementation. The highlights are presented below.

4.1 Factors which have helped implementation of the initiative

Informants noted that the timing was right for Healthy Students Healthy Schools as everyone recognized there were increasing health issues among children and youth due to poor eating and inactivity.

The policies on nutrition and smoking, and the new curriculum on physical education and health, create the “push” for action while the additional funding, SHPLC positions and other supports create the “pull”. Policies have been implemented from the center but are informed by local level input, including the perspective of students. Students have been involved from the beginning in helping shape Healthy Students Healthy Schools.

The commitment and collaboration of the Departments of Education and Health and Community Services at the provincial level, which is mirrored at the regional level by the Regional Health Authorities and school districts, have created effective partnerships. This ‘co-chair’ approach of the two departments in addressing school health is unique among the provinces and territories, and informants indicate it is seen as being among the most effective across the country. Informants commented that there has been a tremendous and enthusiastic investment of time and energy by all the partners to make Healthy Students Healthy Schools happen.

Housing the SHPLC positions in the school districts has helped create a comfort level within the districts around their role, and has facilitated opportunities for health professionals to be engaged in activities in the schools. The partnerships developed provide access to a broad array of expertise to support activities.

Healthy Students Healthy Schools has emphasized the *positive* – as challenges are encountered, demonstrated supports are provided at either the provincial or district levels to overcome them. For example, early on it was recognized that the school districts were interested in the concept of Healthy Students Healthy Schools but lacked the time and resources needed to make it happen – the SHPLC positions were developed as a response. As well, the School Food Guidelines were phased in over a two-year period to facilitate transition. The decrease in revenues in cafeterias was offset by a different way of funding schools and elimination of school fees by the provincial government. To help with Active Living, school budgets for maintenance were increased to help make schools accessible after hours, and provincial funding was provided for liability insurance for schools to support the community use of the schools.

4.2 Factors which have hindered implementation of the initiative

The SHPLCs are temporary positions, and this status has led to turnover in four of the five positions. This temporary status and high turnover creates the risk of losing momentum and continuity in implementing Healthy Students Healthy Schools. Efforts are being made to try to make these permanent positions. Informants throughout the province stressed the importance of sustained and permanent funding of these key positions to support the leadership being demonstrated by the schools.

The geography and number of schools covered by the SHPLCs is a challenge. They are receiving more requests for their help as Healthy Students Healthy Schools takes hold. The role of these staff does not include direct delivery of activities in schools as there are too many to cover in this manner. Rather, the focus is intended on working with the school system to empower schools to take ownership of the work.

Active Schools (or Daily Physical Activity (DPA)) is sometimes not an easy sell as there is a full curriculum already, some classrooms lack space for activity. Some informants felt that - if this is important - it should be included in the health curriculum. Other

concerns include ensuring that 'DPA' complements and does not substitute for the physical education curriculum. Support is critical for DPA and there is a concern that the resources allocated for coordination are not adequate. One informant noted that, in schools where this is working well, there is active support for physical activity, and a structured approach to physical education and extracurricular activities.

Some informants felt that the School Food Guidelines needed a longer period for implementation and more input from schools to ensure they would be relevant to the school environment. Others noted that schools will require ongoing assistance with the guidelines as new products come on the market.

Some informants felt that improved promotional materials (relevant to youth) and a more user friendly website are needed for Healthy Students Healthy Schools.

5.0 Evaluation Requirements

The provincial government requires an evaluation to ensure that Healthy Students Healthy Schools is on track towards achieving clearly defined longer-term results. The evaluation will be conducted in 2008-09. The evaluators will be expected to develop a framework for the evaluation, including evaluation issues and indicators, methodologies and an analysis plan.

As a preliminary step in assessing proposals, bidders are requested to make a presentation to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the program activities and intended results through a logic model
- Demonstrate an understanding of the scope and purpose of the evaluation
- Provide examples of questions you would pose to assess results of the initiative, along with indicators of the results for each question
- Describe the proposed methodology. Also justify your methodology using one of your proposed questions to illustrate the appropriateness and feasibility of your methodology for gathering information and arriving at conclusions
- Identify key challenges you anticipate in the evaluation and how you would address these.