

**Elizabeth Smith-McCrossin**  
**MLA Cumberland North**



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**Députée Cumberland North**

**Nova Scotia Legislature**

January 11, 2022

Hon. Becky Druhan  
Department of Education and Early Childhood Development  
4th Floor, Brunswick Place  
2021 Brunswick street  
P.O. Box 578  
Halifax, Nova Scotia  
B3J 2S9

Dear Minister Druhan:

Greetings from Cumberland County. I hope you had a safe and enjoyable Holiday Season.

Thank you for your service to the people of Nova Scotia, especially your leadership for the Department of Agriculture.

As the Member of the Legislative Assembly for Cumberland North, I am always looking for ways to improve the lives of the people I represent. We had spoken in the fall session about a meeting to discuss issues under your department, and I am once again following up on that commitment. I would like a meeting with you to discuss the needs and priorities identified below.

The Capital Plan has not yet been released and budget consultations are underway for all departments and agencies. I see this as an opportune time to communicate some of the needs of Cumberland North. It is a critical time in our province, and it is very important to acknowledge the difference in needs in each community.

I think your department has a unique opportunity to lead the way in creating cooperation and collaboration between our maritime neighbours and advancing our region for our mutual betterment.

I am looking for your assistance to advance priorities related to your department including:

- Implementing a provincewide School Lunch Program. Cumberland County has a society in place for cafeteria services that is willing to be a pilot site for the testing of this program. PEI has a successful school lunch program that we could use as a basis for creating an NS-focused model. The Premier communicated support for this initiative in the fall legislative session after I tabled a Notice of Motion.
- Curriculum changes are needed to adapt to the evolving priorities of climate change. The Cumberland Forestry Advisory Committee have advocated for accurate forestry information to be added to school curricula.

- Curriculum changes are needed to foster positive changes in sexual behavior. Specifically, we must strive to reduce sexual assault and violence. Clear measurables should be regularly made available so we can best measure progress outside reported incidents of sexual assault.
- Curriculum changes are needed to foster healthy social media behaviors and reduce cyberbullying. The department's own statistics showed an increase of more than 100 incidents of cyberbullying in 2020-2021.
- Daycare is needed for Nova Scotians working shift work. This need has been identified in Cumberland especially by health care workers such as our nurses and CCA's.
- The parents of the EB Chandler Junior High School have been asking for repairs to the parking lot and driveway for years. The pavement is in very poor condition often leading to damage to vehicles. Can these needed repairs be completed?
  - EB Chandler Junior High School will need to be replaced due to age of the physical structure. Can an assessment be done and this school be placed on the replacement capital plan?
- The elementary school in Wallace has unused physical space. A local entrepreneur has been asking for the department to allow her to place a business there that would benefit the community (including children). Would the department be willing to explore innovative uses for the extra unused space? I would be happy to communicate further details in a meeting with you.

Your department will play an integral role in advancing Nova Scotia and our Maritime Region toward becoming competitive internationally and achieve economic independence in our own. Nova Scotia will be less reliant on federal transfers as a result. Cooperation among all elected officials in all levels of government will strengthen our ability to adapt post pandemic.

I know how passionate and active you are in your role as Minister of EECD, and I am looking forward to sitting down with you to discuss the various issues listed above, as well as the unique challenges faced by those being educated in Cumberland. I would love to share some ideas about how to approach bettering their experiences in school. This can be arranged by contacting my office 902-661-2288.

Thank you for your leadership as Minister and I look forward to working with you in these important areas.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth Smith-McCrossin

Cc: Dr. Stephen Ellis, MP Cumberland Colchester; Mayor Murray Scott, Cumberland County; Mayor David Kogon, Town of Amherst