



MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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VIOLENCE TRENDS IN SCHOOLS CONTINUE TO HEAD IN WRONG DIRECTION

St. Johns... The Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association continues to sound the alarm on the rising number of violent and aggressive incidents happening in schools every day in this province. The results of a recent Access to Information request for the 2023-24 school year show these occurrences are still trending upwards.

"Earlier in 2024, our Association shared some startling figures about the increasing frequency and severity of violent and aggressive incidents in our schools, and I'm disheartened to learn that things are not getting any better," said Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association President, Trent Langdon. "While we continue to analyze the data received from our ATIPP request covering the entire 2023-24 school year, what we do see is that our predictions 8 months ago were well-founded. The continued increase in violence and aggression is concerning."

The data received from various sources shows the total number of reported violent/aggressive incidents has risen from 3,659 in 2018-19 to 4,052 during the 2023-24 school year. This reflects an average increase in reported incidents per day in schools, from 20 per day in 2018-19 to 22 per day last year.

Following a record low during the 2019-20 school year, likely due to the pandemic-related suspension of in-school instruction, there have been year-over-year increases in reported occurrences of violence and aggression, with a 26% increase from 2022-23 to 2023-24. Incidents of physical violence or assault increased by 29% between 2022-2023 and 2023-2024. This is a disturbing, but often hidden, reality that students and teachers are faced with daily.

"We acknowledge government's willingness to participate in meetings of the NLTA initiated School Safety Coalition and recognize some initiative government has taken recently in an effort to improve school safety. However, the addition of six Teaching and Learning Assistant positions across over 250 schools is just not going to resolve this issue," said President Langdon. "We have already seen some serious incidents during the first couple months of 2024-25. The time is long overdue for government to make significant investments in our public K-12 education system to address this troubling trend. Students and school staff deserve safe and secure schools—the working conditions for teachers ARE the learning conditions for students."

Backgrounder attached – Analysis Results, School Violence Incidents Trends, 2018-2024

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Analysis Results
School Violence Incidence
Trends 2018–2024

Our education
system is *still*

**NOT
OKAY.**



BACKGROUND

In the Summer of 2024, the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association submitted Access to Information (ATIPP) requests to NLSchools, the Conseil Scolaire Francophone Provincial, the Royal Newfoundland and Labrador Constabulary and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

The ATIPP requests were for the total number of incidents of:

- physical violence or aggression by students and/or visitors to school(s);
- threats of physical violence or aggression by students and/or visitors to school(s); and,
- threats to the safety/security of students, staff and/or school property (for example, bomb or weapon scares)

which occurred in Newfoundland and Labrador K-12 public schools for the 2023-24 school year.

The Association previously received the same information for the 2018-19 to 2022-23 school years.

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- **Substantial decrease during pandemic:** There was a significant decline in the number of reported violence cases during the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years, which can be attributed to the reduced number of in-person school days due to COVID-19 closures.
- **Trend of increasing cases post-pandemic:** Following a low in the 2019–2020 school year, there has been a year-over-year increase in reported violence cases, with a 19% increase from 2021–2022 to 2022–2023, and an increase of 26% total cases (and 29% for cases of physical violence) in 2023–2024 compared to the 2022-2023 school year.
- **Potential exceedance of pre-pandemic levels:** The total number of cases surpassed pre-pandemic levels by 11% in the 2023-2024 school year.
- **Rise in daily incident average:** Analysis excluding the years impacted by COVID-19 closures reveals an increase in the average number of reported violence incidents per day, from 20 per day in 2018–19 to 22 per day in 2023-2024.
- **Emerging post-pandemic trend:** The higher average number of cases per day in 2023–2024 suggests a trend towards a generally higher incidence rate of violence per student, coinciding with normalization of school attendance rates.

The following table shows the total number of incidents reported across NLSchools schools, along with the behaviour categorization provided, and the consolidated categories associated with each used to combine data from multiple sources.

PROVIDED CATEGORIES	CONSOLIDATED CATEGORIES	2018–2019	2019–2020*	2020–2021*	2021–2022	2022–2023	2023–2024
	TOTALS:	3,562	2,152	2,248	2,624	3,109	3,874
Biting	Physical Violence or Assault	210	76	67	138	253	213
Bomb threat	Weapons and Serious Threats to Safety	5	1	3	1	10	3
Bullying -Physical	Verbal/Non-Physical Threats and Harassment	294	177	221	203	324	326
Choking	Physical Violence or Assault	9	8	8	6	9	11
Fighting	Physical Violence or Assault	975	718	674	696	825	912
Grabbing (Non-Staff)	Physical Violence or Assault	75	44	31	74	56	119
Grabbing (Staff)	Physical Violence or Assault	375	164	191	272	314	444
Hair Pulling	Physical Violence or Assault	58	31	41	64	57	115
Physical assault	Physical Violence or Assault	836	570	648	575	710	944
Striking (Non-Staff)	Physical Violence or Assault	149	87	48	137	80	178
Striking (Staff)	Physical Violence or Assault	538	253	298	433	445	596
Threat school property- Electronic	Verbal/Non-Physical Threats and Harassment	11	3	4	6	5	5**
Threat school property-Verbal	Verbal/Non-Physical Threats and Harassment	20	17	11	15	19	6**
Threat school property-Written	Verbal/Non-Physical Threats and Harassment	7	3	3	4	2	2**

* Schools were closed during 2019-20 (March-June) 2020-21 (December-January) due to COVID-19.

** Reported only for Sept-Oct 2023 for the 2023-24 school year.

There was some inconsistency between the format of data provided by the former NLESD for school years 2022-23 and earlier, and data provided by the Department of Education for NLSchools for 2023-24. To avoid inadvertently inflating incident counts, the following new categories have been excluded:

Damaging School Property: 291 incidents

Hazing: 6 incidents

Possession of a Weapon: 65 incidents

Self-Abusive Behaviour: 227 incidents

Other Inappropriate Physical Contact: . . 1,243 incidents

The following table shows the total number of incidents reported by the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary (RNC) in schools, along with the behaviour categorization provided, and the consolidated categories associated with each used to combine data from multiple sources.

PROVIDED CATEGORIES	CONSOLIDATED CATEGORIES	2018 –2019	2019–2020*	2020–2021*	2021–2022	2022–2023	2023–2024
	TOTALS:	97	69	76	83	111	178
ABDUCTION - SUSPECT UNKNOWN - IN PROGRESS	Weapons and Serious Threats to Safety	0	0	0	1	0	0
ASSAULT - ADULT - ALTERNATIVE RESPONSE	Physical Violence or Assault	1	2	1	1	2	5
ASSAULT - ADULT - IN PROGRESS	Physical Violence or Assault	0	0	1	0	1	0
ASSAULT - ADULT - JUST OCCURRED	Physical Violence or Assault	3	4	0	2	2	5
ASSAULT - ADULT - PRIORITY 3	Physical Violence or Assault	0	1	0	0	5	1
ASSAULT - ADULT IN PROGRESS	Physical Violence or Assault	2	0	0	0	0	0
ASSAULT - CHILD	Physical Violence or Assault	0	1	0	0	0	0
ASSAULT - CHILD - ALTERNATIVE RESPONSE	Physical Violence or Assault	0	0	0	2	3	14
ASSAULT - CHILD - IN PROGRESS	Physical Violence or Assault	0	0	0	1	1	3
ASSAULT - CHILD - JUST OCCURRED	Physical Violence or Assault	6	2	6	5	3	20
ASSAULT - CHILD - PRIORITY 3	Physical Violence or Assault	9	0	17	19	20	21
ASSAULT - CHILD ALTERNATIVE RESPONSE	Physical Violence or Assault	2	5	3	0	0	0
ASSAULT ADULT - PRIORITY 3	Physical Violence or Assault	0	0	3	1	0	0
BOMB THREAT	Weapons and Serious Threats to Safety	6	0	0	3	2	2
CRIMINAL HARASSMENT - ALTERNATIVE RESPONSE	Verbal/Non-Physical Threats and Harassment	1	1	0	0	1	2
CRIMINAL HARASSMENT - PRIORITY 3	Verbal/Non-Physical Threats and Harassment	0	2	0	0	1	2
DISORDERLY CONDUCT - IN PROGRESS	Disturbance or Disorderly Conduct	2	5	1	0	1	0
DISORDERLY CONDUCT - PRIORITY 3	Disturbance or Disorderly Conduct	1	0	0	0	0	0
DISTURBANCE - FIGHT	Disturbance or Disorderly Conduct	6	7	6	3	3	6
SUSPICIOUS - ACTIVITY - IN PROGRESS	Suspicious Activity or Persons	6	6	0	0	8	13
SUSPICIOUS - ACTIVITY ALTERNATIVE RESPONSE	Suspicious Activity or Persons	0	0	1	0	0	0
SUSPICIOUS - ACTIVITY IN PROGRESS	Suspicious Activity or Persons	0	0	13	5	0	0
SUSPICIOUS - PERSON -IN PROGRESS	Suspicious Activity or Persons	16	11	0	0	13	11
SUSPICIOUS - PERSON - JUST OCCURRED	Suspicious Activity or Persons	8	4	0	0	0	17
SUSPICIOUS - PERSON IN PROGRESS	Suspicious Activity or Persons	0	0	12	11	0	0
SUSPICIOUS - PERSON JUST OCCURRED	Suspicious Activity or Persons	0	0	5	3	4	0
THREATS - DEATH/BODILY HARM - ALTERNATIVE RESPONSE	Verbal/Non-Physical Threats and Harassment	0	1	0	2	1	0
THREATS - DEATH/BODILY HARM - JUST OCCURRED	Verbal/Non-Physical Threats and Harassment	5	6	0	3	7	10
THREATS - DEATH/BODILY HARM - PRIORITY 3	Verbal/Non-Physical Threats and Harassment	10	8	4	11	14	13
THREATS - DEATH/BODILY HARM - IN PROGRESS	Verbal/Non-Physical Threats and Harassment	0	0	1	1	1	5
TRESPASSING	Suspicious Activity or Persons	3	0	0	0	0	0
UNWELCOME PERSON - IN PROGRESS	Suspicious Activity or Persons	1	1	1	2	9	3
WANDERING PERSON - IN PROGRESS	Suspicious Activity or Persons	1	0	0	0	0	0
WEAPONS OFFENCE - ALTERNATIVE RESPONSE	Weapons and Serious Threats to Safety	3	0	0	1	0	0
WEAPONS OFFENCE - IN PROGRESS	Weapons and Serious Threats to Safety	2	0	0	3	4	8
WEAPONS OFFENCE - JUST OCCURRED	Weapons and Serious Threats to Safety	3	1	1	1	1	9
WEAPONS OFFENCE - PRIORITY 3	Weapons and Serious Threats to Safety	0	1	0	2	4	8

* Schools were closed during 2019-20 (March-June) 2020-21 (December-January) due to COVID-19.

The following data was provided by RCMP for 2023-24.

BEHAVIOUR	2023-2024
Aggression by Student	3
Physical Violence by Student	40
Threat of Physical Violence by Visitor	5
Threat to Safety of Students/Staff	9
Threat of Aggression	6
Threat of Physical Violence by Student	35
TOTAL:	98

The following data was provided by Conseil scolaire francophone de Terre-Neuve et Labrador (CSFP) for 2023-24.

BEHAVIOUR	2023-2024
Physical violence or aggression by students and/or visitors to school(s)	243
Threats of physical violence or aggression by students and/or visitors to school(s)	152
TOTAL	395

The following table shows the total number of incidents reported by consolidated behaviour category for NLSchools and RNC

SOURCE	BEHAVIOUR	2018-2019	2019-2020*	2020-2021*	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
NLSchools	Physical Violence or Assault	3225	1951	2006	2395	2749	3532
NLSchools	Verbal/Non-Physical Threats and Harassment	332	200	239	228	350	339
NLSchools	Weapons and Serious Threats to Safety	5	1	3	1	10	3
RNC	Disturbance or Disorderly Conduct	9	12	7	3	4	6
RNC	Physical Violence or Assault	23	15	31	31	37	69
RNC	Suspicious Activity or Persons	35	22	32	21	34	44
RNC	Verbal/Non-Physical Threats and Harassment	16	18	5	17	25	32
RNC	Weapons and Serious Threats to Safety	14	2	1	11	11	27

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