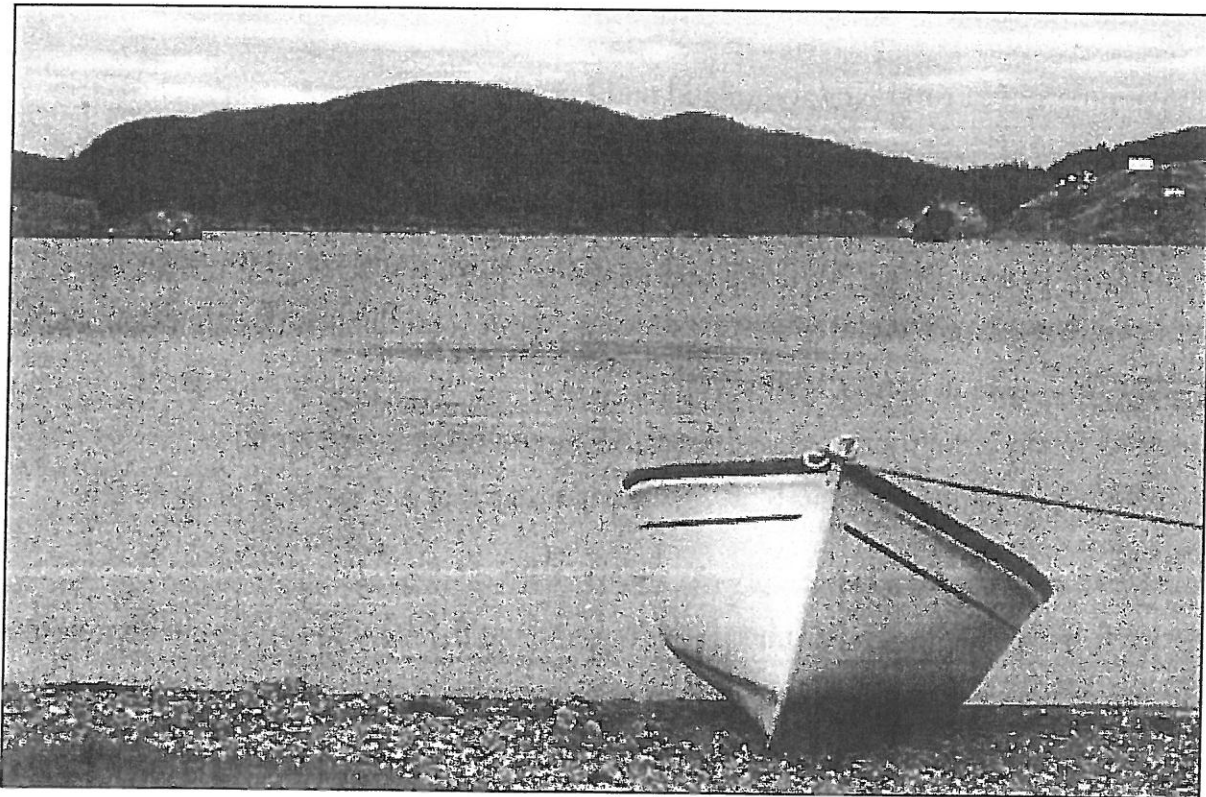


## Depopulation Impacts

After the 1992 cod moratorium, Newfoundland and Labrador entered a decade of almost continuous population decline. Out-migration occurred on a larger scale than ever before, the birth rate dropped, and the number of immigrants coming into the province did not offset the number of those leaving. Although urban centres also sustained population losses, it was in smaller communities that the most dramatic changes occurred. Between 1991 and 2001, rural settlements experienced a net loss of almost 48,000 people, representing an 18 per cent drop in population. Areas most dependent on the fishery experienced the greatest losses, including the Northern Peninsula, some parts of the Avalon Peninsula, and the island's northeast and southern coasts.



## Trinity, 2005

Trinity experienced increased out-migration following the 1992 cod moratorium.

Photographer unknown. Reproduced by permission of Image Services, Marketing and Communications, Memorial University of Newfoundland. © 2008.

As a result of such large-scale and sustained out-migration, the province's rural areas are today grappling with significant social and economic challenges. A shrinking labour force and tax base makes it difficult for many small communities to maintain roads, schools, medical facilities, and other public services, which in turn makes it difficult for small towns and villages to attract new immigrants or prevent current residents from moving elsewhere. Continued out-migration disrupts social ties by separating people from their friends or family and may eventually force some rural communities out of existence.

### *Decreased Tax Base*

As the population of rural Newfoundland and Labrador continues to contract, so too do the incomes of rural municipalities. With fewer people paying property and other taxes, many small communities have less money to spend on new roads, bridges, electricity lines, and other public services or to pay down their debts. It is also less economical for the provincial government to maintain schools, health-care facilities, and other resources in places with shrinking and scattered populations. Private businesses, including grocery stores, restaurants, and other commercial establishments, are also less likely to operate in areas that are isolated or have few residents.

As more resources withdraw from rural communities, the standard of living decreases. Residents often have to travel long distances to meet their educational, medical, and consumer needs, or adapt to living with limited access to goods and services often taken for granted in larger centres. At the same time, the populations of most rural

communities are aging and therefore in increasing need of medical attention and other public services.

Maintaining the quality of existing services is another problem in rural communities. With few tax dollars available to spend, many municipalities are unable to improve roads, public buildings, and other facilities that have fallen into disrepair. Keeping enough professionals within small communities to provide essential services is also difficult. Rural doctors, nurses, and teachers often have to service a larger number of patients or students than their urban counterparts, making it more difficult for them to provide the same level of care.

### *Shifting Demographics*

A major problem facing rural Newfoundland and Labrador is its seemingly chronic loss of young people to urban centres. Most people leaving small communities are either young adults, between the ages of 15 and 24, or families with young children. Although they leave for a variety of reasons, the most common are to find jobs or to have better access to educational and medical facilities.



**Bonne Bay, 2006**

A major problem facing rural communities is the chronic loss of young people to urban centres.

Photographer unknown. Reproduced by permission of Image Services, Marketing and Communications, Memorial University of Newfoundland. © 2008.

The loss of youth has far-reaching consequences for rural communities. Young men and women who would normally become community leaders, establish local businesses, or contribute to the overall vitality of rural places have instead exported their talents and energies elsewhere. Without younger generations to replace the older ones, it will eventually become difficult for many rural communities to exist.

The loss of so many young people has significantly altered small-town demographics. Depleted of their younger generations, rural communities are left with increasingly aging populations. Although Canadian society on the whole is growing older, the change is occurring much more rapidly in rural communities – and especially those in Newfoundland and Labrador – than in metropolitan zones. As rural populations continue to age and young people continue to leave, the labour force will likely shrink

and push local economies into deeper decline. At the same time, the aging population places greater demands on the already limited health-care facilities available in rural areas.

### *Social Consequences*

The depopulation of rural Newfoundland and Labrador affects the emotional and social well-being of those who remain as well as those who leave. Many people living in small communities have lost at least one friend or family member to out-migration. This disrupts social bonds and decreases the level of support – emotional, financial, or otherwise – that people often receive from those closest to them. Homesickness is also common among many who move away and it is not unusual for emigrants to return home after a short period away, leave again to find work, and perhaps continue the pattern indefinitely.



**Fogo, 2006**

Many people living in small Newfoundland and Labrador communities have lost at least one friend or family member to out-migration.

Photo by Jody Cairns. Reproduced by permission of Jody Cairns. © 2008.

At the same time, many young children in rural communities grow up knowing they may one day have to leave their homes to make a living or obtain post-secondary education. For generations, rural youth depended on the fishery for employment and looked toward older relatives and neighbours for training. In post-moratorium society, young people can no longer rely on the same fishery that for centuries helped define rural culture and identity. As young people lose faith in their community's ability to provide a prosperous future, pride of place decreases and sense of identity is altered. Some people leave because they want to, others because they feel they have no other option.



Alongside high unemployment rates, other factors contributed to the depopulation of rural communities. North American entertainment and consumer products became more widespread after Confederation and helped change rural values and attitudes. Young people could suddenly compare their own living conditions with what they saw on American television shows or read in magazines and newspapers. Some felt their communities could not offer the variety of services and opportunities available in urban centres and decided to move away. Families with young children also moved to larger centres to have better access to educational, medical, and other facilities.

As a result of depopulation, rural residents are dealing with much uncertainty while adapting to a rapidly changing way of life. Many do not know how long they will continue to live in their communities, while others wonder how many more neighbours and relatives will move away. Young people often have to choose between staying where they are, which often limits their employment options, and pursuing an unknown future in a strange city or town.

*Article by Jenny Higgins. ©2008, Newfoundland and Labrador Heritage Web Site*

#### Bibliography

## **Minister's Message**

Dear parents and guardians:

I'm pleased to inform you that the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development has released its Reports on Achievement for the 2014-2015 school year. I encourage you to view these documents, which are compiled and released annually to show how New Brunswick's more than 300 public schools stand in relation to provincial achievement targets. This information can be useful to you in your ongoing support of your children's learning.

As Minister, I want to take this opportunity to thank you for your involvement in the education of your children. I appreciate your work on their behalf in partnership with teachers, school staff, home and school associations, parent school support committees, district education councils and the department.

Our common purpose is to support each child to reach his or her full potential so each will have a brighter future right here in New Brunswick. Together, we can provide that support by continuing to build an enhanced culture of excellence and innovation in our school system.

I look forward to working with all of you as we raise the bar and close the gap in all we do to provide our children with a quality education in our province.

Sincerely,



# Serge Rousselle introduces new triggers for school closure reviews

**Under 100 students, or population below 30% capacity will trigger sustainability studies**

By Jacques Poitras, [CBC News](#) Posted: Mar 27, 2015 2:05 PM AT Last Updated: Mar 27, 2015 2:05 PM AT

Cbc.ca (CBC news)

The Gallant government is bringing in new criteria that will trigger more studies of possible school closures.

Education Minister Serge Rousselle says from now on, school districts will have to study the future of any school with fewer than 100 students, or that has a population below 30 per cent of its capacity.

The new triggers "seem to me to be quite reasonable," he said

Those existing criteria are enrolment, health and safety, quality of education, the time and cost of transportation, the cost of the school, community impact, impact on other schools, and economic development.

\*\*\*\*\*The following are articles, etc that have information and research on the above list of criteria. Sources included\*\*\*\*\*



- [HOME](#)
- [ABOUT US](#)
- [PEOPLE](#)
- [CURRENT ISSUE](#)
- [DISCUSSION FORUM POLICY](#)
- [BACK ISSUES](#)
- [SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS](#)
- [CALL FOR PAPERS](#)
- [OJS \(OPEN JOURNAL SYSTEM\)](#)
- [LINKS](#)

## JOURNAL OF NEW BRUNSWICK STUDIES RELEASES ISSUE EXAMINING SUSTAINABILITY OF SMALL COMMUNITIES IN THE PROVINCE

**Published: Thursday, Jul 2, 2015**

The first of two special issues of the *Journal of New Brunswick Studies* examining the issues, prospects and risks faced by small communities in New Brunswick has been released at [www.stu.ca/jnbs](http://www.stu.ca/jnbs).

Professor Tony Tremblay, Canada Research Chair in New Brunswick Studies at St. Thomas University, worked with the research office at Mount Allison University to coordinate publication of the issues on the fate and sustainability of small communities in the province.

“Altogether, these studies constitute an important contribution to research on the topic of small communities in New Brunswick,” writes guest editors Christina Ionescu and Lauren Beck of Mount Allison University.

“They highlight ways in which individuals work effectively as collective entities to enact change that does not fundamentally damage the social and cultural fabric of the province, raise awareness of the unique challenges faced by those suffering from mental illness or living with disabilities in small constituencies, reflect upon the cultural integration of newcomers, and underline what makes this part of Canada special? a deep appreciation for nature and landscape, great resilience in the face of hardship, widespread creative fervour, cemented links to a layered past and a prevalent sense of community.”

## Government of New Brunswick News Release

Education and Early Childhood Development

### Investment of \$95.9 million to build and improve schools

19 December 2014

FREDERICTON (GNB) – New Brunswick’s public school system will be strengthened through capital investments totaling \$95.9 million by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development in 2015-16.

#### Media Contact(s)

Leah Fitzgerald, media relations, 506-453-3030.

Education and Early Childhood Development Minister Serge Rousselle made the announcement today when tabling the department’s capital budget in the legislative assembly.

“New Brunswick’s public schools must continue to offer safe and healthy environments that meet the needs of students, teachers and staff,” Rousselle said. “This significant investment in educational infrastructure will result in new and enhanced schools that will support students as they continue their journey of learning.”

The department will be investing in 10 new projects and three studies in 2015-16 as part of a multi-year infrastructure spending plan. The multi-year plan will enable the construction industry to anticipate the department’s infrastructure needs. The plan also supports the government’s work to ensure spending continues to be managed responsibly.

The plan aims at addressing health and safety requirements, capacity deficiencies and the rationalization of infrastructure.

“Our government supports projects involving the consolidation of infrastructure to provide better learning environments while reducing operating costs,” Rousselle said.

Rousselle also announced that work will continue on 14 existing major capital projects.

In addition, Rousselle announced the Mid-Life Upgrade project, which is a new component of the department’s capital program. The aim of the project is to identify schools with significant deficiencies due to age and size. This process will enable the department to carry out upgrades and modernize schools.

“As the government continues its work to improve New Brunswick’s fiscal situation, it is important that we invest strategically and make every effort to optimize public infrastructure, including schools,” Rousselle said. “The Mid-Life Upgrade project is a great way to avert costly school replacements while ensuring students are in safe and appropriate educational facilities.”

The department’s capital budget also includes \$23 million for a series of capital improvement projects which are each under \$1 million. The amount includes funds supporting programs to ensure all schools meet basic health, safety and maintenance requirements. These include:

- radon mitigation;
- roof replacement;
- lighting retrofit;
- air quality;
- security; and
- structural review.

The 10 new projects and three studies to receive funding **this fiscal year** are:

- Woodstock High – upgrading of fire security system (**\$1.1 million**);
- Lower West Saint John Elementary – addressing closure of St. Patrick’s building (**\$2.6 million**);
- École Marie-Gaétane, Kedgwick – school upgrading (**\$400,000**);
- Secondaire Assomption, Rogersville - school upgrading (**\$600,000**);
- Grand Bay School – education facility requirement study (**\$50,000**);

- Miramichi East – a new school to replace inadequate facilities (**\$1.2 million**);
- Fredericton High – mid-life upgrade (**\$2 million**);
- Northrop Frye, Moncton – education facility requirement study (**\$50,000**);
- W.A. Losier, Tracadie-Sheila – mid-life upgrade (**\$1.7 million**);
- Harrison Trimble, Moncton – mid-life upgrade (**\$1.6 million**);
- Leo Hayes, Fredericton – education facility requirement study (**\$50,000**);
- Dieppe Grades 3 to 8 – new school to address capacity requirements (**\$2.3 million**); and
- Samuel de Champlain, Saint John - expansion to address capacity requirements (**\$1.2 million**).

The 14 existing major capital projects are:

- École le Sommet, Moncton (**\$133,000**);
- Moncton High School (**\$50,000**);
- Townsview School, Woodstock (**\$564,000**);
- Meduxnekeag Consolidated School, Bedell (**\$123,000**);
- École des Pionniers, Quispamsis (**\$200,000**);
- Polyvalente Thomas Albert, Grand Falls (**\$1.8 million**);
- Fredericton North, new school (**\$7.9 million**);
- New Quispamsis Elementary (**\$2.9 million**);
- Gretna Green K-8 elementary, Miramichi (**\$6.8 million**);
- New Miramichi West School (**\$13.1 million**);
- Riverview High addition (**\$3.8 million**);
- Restigouche Centre, Campbellton (**\$1.2 million**);
- École Envolée, Shippagan (**\$1.2 million**); and
- École Champlain, Moncton (**\$15.7 million**).

19-12-14

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