



Leo Burke Academy Receives Inclusive Education Award

Date: June 7th, 2023

St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador

On June 5th, Inclusion Canada Newfoundland and Labrador presented its Inclusive Education Award to a school that has shown an exceptional spirit and commitment to creating a space that is welcoming and inclusive for students with an intellectual disability.

Inclusion is a way of thinking and acting that allows every individual has a sense of belonging and connection. Inclusive school communities are those with an open, welcoming attitude that respects everyone while celebrating differences and diversity.

This year, Inclusion Canada is thrilled to present the Inclusive Education Award to Leo Burke Academy, the “little school with a big heart” located in Bishop's Falls, Exploits Region. The school's application gave many examples of how they go above and beyond to appreciate each child. Leo Burke Academy provides effective support and accommodations to ensure equitable opportunities for students, allowing them to see and feel the encouragement of love, acceptance and inclusion within the school community.

Leo Burke Academy engages in RAD leadership...R-Respect, A-Acceptance, and D-Diversity. The young people who serve on this committee include individuals with intellectual disabilities who ensure a positive atmosphere of belonging and connectivity. Their purpose is to engage others with intellectual disabilities in school activities and the ability to be leaders as well as participants. Leo Burke Academy celebrates ‘Sea of Blue’ day, to promote autism awareness, and they encourage students to participate in Special Olympics events which allows for a great sense of pride in each athlete and their families. This year also saw Leo Burke Academy introduce their own inclusion award to a student in memory of a young man with an intellectual disability who the school community lost just a few short weeks ago.

Inclusion Canada NL believes that inclusion in education leads to a well-rounded and inclusive life in the community for all students. Each year, our organization is proud to honour a school that has embodied the spirit of inclusion by creating a welcoming environment and the organization is thrilled to present this year's award to Leo Burke Academy. Inclusive schools build inclusive communities that celebrate diversity and the unique contributions that we all offer.

QUOTE:

“I would like to send out Congratulations to the students and staff of Leo Burke Academy on being the recipient of this award. The students and teachers of LBA have certainly demonstrated their ability to grow together and demonstrate an inclusive, equitable and diverse learning environment. As MHA of Exploits, I am proud of the leadership and actions taken by staff and students to provide a space where everyone can be successful. Today's youth are tomorrows future and the future sure looks bright at Leo Burke Academy.” MHA Pleaman Forsey

Provincial Government Recognizes Recipient of 2023 Inclusive Education Award

June 5, 2023

Today, the Honourable John Haggie, Minister of Education, presented the Inclusion Canada NL 2023 Inclusive Education Award to Leo Burke Academy in Bishop's Falls.

The award is presented each year to a K-12 school in the province that has shown exceptional spirit in creating a school that is welcoming and inclusive for students with an intellectual disability.

Leo Burke Academy was selected for its leadership. The school's committee, RAD (Respect, Acceptance and Diversity) Leadership, exemplifies the three letters in its name. Young leaders, including those with intellectual disabilities, create inclusive opportunities for all students to take part in school activities. The committee stands firm on creating a positive atmosphere of belonging and positivity in their school. The Special Olympics Program is a highlight for students within the school whether they are participating or supporting their classmates. Each nomination letter focused on how students are never excluded at Leo Burke, but are all celebrated equally. Staff and students show up for each other and create an atmosphere of belonging and inclusion.

Inclusion Canada NL is a non-profit organization that works with and on behalf of the more than 15,000 people with intellectual disabilities in our province.

The Provincial Government supports a welcoming school culture where all members of the school community feel they belong, realize their potential, and contribute to the life of the school.

More information on the Inclusive Education Awards and a list of past recipients may be found [here](#).

Quotes

"When schools embrace the diversity of our communities and use collaborative approaches to teaching and learning, our entire province benefits. Leo Burke Academy has demonstrated leadership, innovation and most of all inclusion for all students. Congratulations on your dedication and work to ensure everyone feels safe and welcome at your school."

Honourable John Haggie
Minister of Education

"Inclusive Education is an attitude that embraces diversity and unique differences while promoting equal opportunities and the best educational decisions for all learners in Newfoundland and Labrador. Inclusion Canada NL is honored to name Leo Burke Academy as the recipient for the 2023 Inclusive Education Award for demonstrating this same attitude when meeting the unique needs of each student with intellectual disabilities."

Dennis Gill
President, Inclusion Canada NL

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