



490 Woodward Avenue
Saint John, New Brunswick
E2K 5N3

January 8, 2020

Hon. Dominic Cardy, Minister
Education & Early Childhood Development
Place 2000, 250 King Street
Fredericton, NB E3B 9M9

Dear Minister Cardy:

At the December 11, 2019 District Education Council meeting concern was raised with regard to the continued availability of a fluoride rinse program in our elementary schools.

We are writing to you today to express our concern that the fluoride mouth rinse (FMR) program is in jeopardy due to a supply chain issue in obtaining the fluoride powder which is reconstituted to make the rinses at elementary schools (kindergarten to grade 5) throughout the province. We have many vulnerable youth in ASD-S and do not have fluoridated drinking water. The FMR program is a safe and very effective way of preventing tooth decay in children. Tooth decay is the most common childhood disease. Having healthy teeth is important for our student's growth, development and self-esteem. Fluoride makes tooth enamel stronger and interferes with the bacteria's ability to produce acid. Research has shown that fluoride mouth rinse programs are effective in reducing cavities by as much as 20 to 30 percent.

Over the past several years the number of students participating in the FMR program in Anglophone South has steadily increased and stayed consistent and all elementary schools now offer the program:

2015-16 - 67% student participation rate - 82% of schools offering program
2016-17 - 81% student participation rate - 100% of schools offering program
2017-18 - 84% student participation rate - 100% of schools offering program
2018-19 - 83.35% student participation rate - 100% of schools offering program

We would ask that the province work toward finding a source for the fluoride rinse powder as this preventive program is very effective, especially for those most vulnerable in our schools.

Should you require further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rob Fowler'.

Rob Fowler
Chair

Copy: Zoë Watson, Superintendent, ASD-S