



Press Release, Public Update: Repurposing the Eastern Shore District High School

April 8th, 2026

Last fall the MHACCCA engaged the community to seek input on opportunities for the continued use of the ESDH school building and property. The Chamber, through its Infrastructure Committee, prepared a comprehensive report outlining many innovative and diverse ways to repurpose the ESDH School based on the needs and aspirations expressed by our communities. The report: <https://musquodoboitharbour.ca/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/ESDHS-Final-Report.pdf>

Mid January, the Committee presented the report to our representatives of the three levels of government. It was very well received. In early February, the committee, seeking broader support, sent letters to 18 provincial government departments providing a link to the report as well as identifying the positive, possible uses of the facility, the connection to their individual identified mandates, and benefits to the Eastern Shore community.

As a result, we received a number of positive responses, in particular one from the Premier's office *"The Premier values hearing feedback and practical solutions from Nova Scotians, particularly those that support the future growth of our communities."*

Additional government departments have expressed positive support and interest in the retention of the ESDH school for continued use:

"OAMH "Office of Addictions and Mental Health" will review the report carefully and make note of the community's recommendations, including the potential for the building to support mental health and addictions education, prevention, treatment, recovery programming, and broader wellbeing services in partnership with local organizations."

"I reviewed the online report you shared with interest, including ideas for how the property and building may meet a range of community needs, including workforce development and economic development. At your request I will share the report with staff in our Energy Planning branch and colleagues in the departments of Labour Skills and Immigration and Growth and Development."

The Chamber is committed to ensuring the community remains informed of our efforts. Many may be aware that the Birches have been considering the ESDH School property as a potential building site for the new Birches, necessitating the demolishing of the building.

Since mid February, the Chamber has been engaged in continued advocacy. Recognizing the ESDH School and property represents an unprecedented opportunity for our community not only as a valuable resource for the location of services, program delivery, recreation and economic growth; it also provides an opportunity to pursue central water, sidewalks, and other opportunities for growth in Musquodoboit Harbour.

The Chamber fully supports the locating of the new Birches in our community and has met with our MLA, the Birches, and other interested parties to encourage the identification and exploration of potential alternative sites for consideration for the new Birches build. We understand that a final decision regarding the property is fast approaching.

Conversations and advocacy continue. Unlocking the potential of this extraordinary asset, requires a thoughtful, coordinated approach. A business plan is being prepared for the long-term sustainability of the building and property should the opportunity be available for consideration of the retention of the building and property.

Your voice is genuinely important and we want to amplify it! If you believe that the school, with a proposed repurposing plan, would be a valuable asset for the Eastern Shore, we encourage you to speak up, NOW!

Please share your thoughts by emailing esdhs@mhacc.ca

All comments received will be compiled and forwarded to all 3 levels of government

HRM, Provincial and Federal.

Mike McKinnon
President
Info@mhacc.ca

