

Contact: Tom Wallace
President, Federation for
Scottish Culture in Nova Scotia
T: 902-252-2653
E: info@scotsns.ca
W: www.scotsns.ca

For Immediate Release

In recent days the Scottish cultural communities of our province have been focused on proposed adaptations to the direction, programming, and curriculum at the Gaelic College of Celtic Arts and Crafts (GCCAC). What began as a long-time instructor's expressions of concern over proposed curricular and staffing changes, all too quickly exploded into a vitriolic (and unfortunately public) exercise in vituperation and epithets between members of the Scottish cultural community and members of the Scottish Gaelophone community.

The Federation and its partners respectfully disagree with the position of Comhairle na Gàidhlig (the Gaelic Council of Nova Scotia) and other pundits that there is "no historical evidence" of a connection between the culture of the Highland immigrants and Highland dancing or military and pipe band traditions. This, however, is a discussion for another day. Regardless one's views, the fact remains that many Nova Scotians, of all ages, joyously express their contemporary Scottish identity and culture in many ways, whether through the arts, dance, music, sports or heritage.

"As in any family, siblings may not always agree with one another, yet it is imperative that they respect, value, and communicate with one another," Tom Wallace, the president of the Federation for Scottish Culture in Nova Scotia, said. "Over this past weekend direct communication was initiated between the Federation for Scottish Culture and Comhairle na Gàidhlig (the Gaelic Council of Nova Scotia) in order to reaffirm our shared commitment to open and honest communication, mutual respect, and cooperation for the good of the greater Scottish cultural family in all of Nova Scotia."

"In the New Year, the Federation will be calling together representatives from Nova Scotia's Scottish cultural stakeholders, namely interested parties from the Scottish and Highland dancing community, the piping and drumming community, Scottish heavy athletes, clan and regional heritage societies, festival organizers, the Gaelic language community, and any individual with an interest in perpetuating Scottish culture,

heritage and traditions,” Wallace said. “Dialogue and understanding are essential as we enter this exciting period of opportunity for collaboration.”

The mission of the Federation for Scottish Culture in Nova Scotia (FSCNS) is the protection, preservation, and promotion of the cultural, linguistic, literary, athletic, and artistic heritage and traditions of Nova Scotia’s Scottish cultural communities.

“We are a coalition of individuals, families, associations, and institutions that are passionate about celebrating and perpetuating all expressive forms of Scottish cultural identity in Nova Scotia,” Wallace said.

“It is within this context that the FSCNS and its partners wholly agree with the recent public statement issued by the Comhairle na Gàidhlig that the Gaelic language is ‘an extremely important platform that upholds our people’s values’. In addition, the Federation also concurs with the assessment that ‘cultural arts and identities are forever evolving, and that all are valid artistic expressions in their own right’.”

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The Federation for Scottish Culture in Nova Scotia, a non-profit society founded in 1982, is a coalition of individuals, families, associations, and institutions that is passionate about preserving, protecting, and promoting all forms of expression of Scottish cultural identity in Nova Scotia. It supports the cultural, linguistic, literary, athletic, and artistic heritage and traditions of Nova Scotia’s diverse Scottish cultural communities.