



A Brief Word



March 24, 2017

Bill 75 Charter Challenge in the Works

Dear NSTU Public School Member

I hope you enjoyed a relaxing and enjoyable March Break and were able to spend some quality time with your friends and family.

First and foremost, I want to address the questions we've received about our Charter challenge against Bill 75. Preparation for this challenge is well underway. Given what's at stake, some time is required to ensure we get things right in developing an effective strategy. It would also be imprudent for us to discuss our legal strategy in public, which I know is frustrating when you have a vested interest in the outcome. I do want to assure you that a lawsuit is coming; it's being developed as we speak and I will provide you with more details as they become available.

It may take several years to overturn Bill 75, but we will do whatever is necessary to restore your right to a fair collective bargaining process. Thankfully it will be the courts that have the final say – not the Premier.

This week the Council to Improve Classroom Conditions held its first set of meetings and I want to take a moment to thank the NSTU members who took part. I've been told you brought a tremendous amount of passion to the three days of meetings along with numerous ideas to improve our education system. There are some positive recommendations that can help teachers focus more attention on their students. We also need to ensure that changes don't negatively impact teachers with administrative responsibilities and specialists. If this council is ultimately to prove

successful the McNeil government must be held accountable to ensure the proper recommendations are adopted. Right now that is our primary focus.

Of course while these recommendations can help, they alone won't fix the tremendous challenges facing our education system as a result of the government's neglect. Major improvements like reduced class sizes and increased support for students with special needs, are badly needed. These reforms will require more investment than what has been allocated to the Council, so it's crucial we remain #NSTUnited and keep the pressure on the government.

Our Public Affairs/Public Relations Committee met earlier this month to discuss a political engagement strategy for the coming months. With an election rumoured to be right around the corner we want to ensure that better education is high on the political agenda. The last election, the Premier made a lot of promises he didn't keep. He has not improved our education system, and his written commitment to respect the collective rights of public sector workers was badly broken. After the debacle that was Bill 75 and the lack of respect we've received in recent months, it is imperative we elect MLAs that will treat teachers fairly and work to improve our classrooms.

Ultimately, we need to be able to trust our MLAs to do what's required to make our education system better.

Have a great weekend.

Liette