

Email message to all members (with attachment)

Subject: COVID-19 Update: May 25, 2021

***The following message, send on behalf of NSTU president Paul Wozney
will be sent to all NSTU members with email accounts.
Please share with your networks.***

Dear colleague,

Thank you for your continued efforts to ensure the needs of students are being met under these unusual and challenging circumstances. While remote learning is far from ideal, right now it is keeping communities safe, which is why the NSTU supports the decision to keep school facilities closed to students for the remainder of the academic year.

I understand the next few weeks could look somewhat different for members depending on your current assignment. Regardless of your situation, this is a stressful time for all teachers, so please be mindful and considerate of the needs of your colleagues, your students and their families. We need to stand in solidarity and support each other as we navigate through the next few weeks. Ultimately, as your president I am grateful that steps have been taken to keep you and your students safe. If you are feeling frustrated please keep in mind that the end of the year is in sight and there are better days ahead.

That said, we are aware that there are some lingering questions that need to be addressed immediately, so I want to take this opportunity to provide you with some guidance.

How do I plan for assessments given that we won't be returning to in-person learning?

Recently you received a document from EECD called "Assessment of Student Learning When Learning at Home," which is attached to this email for your convenience. This document outlines how you should prepare for assessments and strongly encourages you to lean on your professional judgement when deciding what's appropriate. If you have reviewed this document but are receiving contradictory direction from your administrator, which you have been unable to reconcile, please contact your executive staff officer immediately.

Will there be graduation ceremonies this year?

According to EECD, the goal is to have some sort of ceremony to honor the 2021 graduating class. What ceremonies look like will depend on the individual circumstances at each school, the level of COVID-19 within various communities; and subsequently, the public health restrictions that are in place later in June. Planning is currently underway at the local, regional and provincial levels to determine potential options. We've been told more information will be forthcoming soon. If you have any specific questions or concerns you should communicate these directly with your school's administration.

As always, if you have a concern I have not addressed in this email, do not hesitate to contact your executive staff officer. I remain incredibly impressed by the resilience and dedication you have all maintained over the past 18 months. Thank you for your continued dedication to your students, families and colleagues that is unquestionably helping to bring the Third Wave under control. Let's remain united in our efforts, so the school year to come looks much more like the experience we all hold dear.

All my best,

Paul

Paul Wozney (he/him),
President, Nova Scotia Teachers Union