

Year End Report, 2015



**Public Affairs/Public Relations  
Committee Meeting  
Nova Scotia Teachers Union  
3106 Joseph Howe Drive  
Halifax, Nova Scotia**

**2014-2015 Committee members include:**

Keli Brewer, Chair  
Andrew McIntosh  
Grant Frost  
Paula Landry  
Rolland Hannem  
Tim MacLeod  
Louis Robitaille, Provincial Executive  
Simon Wilkin, NSTU Staff Liaison  
Angela Murray, NSTU PR Coordinator

**Meeting Dates:**

October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2014  
December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2014  
March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2015

**Throughout all meetings the committee received updates on and discussed the following:**

- The Member Engagement / Satisfaction survey
- The Teachers Make a Difference Campaign
- The NSTU's response to the Recommendations of the Report on the Minister's Panel on Education
- Education Week Awards and Activities
- Prime Minister's Award for Teaching Excellence

## **Communications Conference 2014**

The Communications Conference 2014 was held October 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> at the Delta Halifax. The opening session, given by executive staff officer Betty Jean Aucoin, focused on the ABCs of selling. The emphasis of the presentation was the importance of selling public education and the teaching profession both to the public and within the profession.

The second speaker, Taylor Gunn from CIVIX Canada, gave an account of how his organization, along with the outcry of teacher organizations, led to changes of Bill C-23 in order to keep the Student Vote program alive.

Conference participants reviewed the priorities for the NSTU Annual Action plan and gave input on how to meet the priorities related to public affairs / public relations and communications within the locals. An opportunity was also given for participants to share best practices and effective initiatives implemented at their local level.

The conference speakers were well received and the conference was deemed an overall positive experience.

### **Meeting with Political Parties**

An invitation was extended to all three political parties to meet with our committee. In March two of the three political parties accepted the invitation. The committee had the opportunity to meet with:

PC Party:	Education Critic, Pat Dunn
NDP:	Leader, Maureen MacDonald and Education Critic, Denise Peterson-Rafuse
Liberal Party:	There was no timely response from the Liberal party.

The committee began with asking each party 3 specific questions:

1. What does your party feel is the largest challenge facing public education today?
2. The Minister's Action Plan for Education contains a wide variety of initiatives. What does your party see of value in this plan that you would look to implement?

3. Lack of teacher voice in the decision making process is a pressing one for teachers, how would you ensure that initiatives impacting student learning would be informed by front line educators?

The discussion and insight from these meetings was reported back to the provincial executive.

It is recommended that this be a continued practice for the committee.

**Other topics discussed during meetings of this committee include:**

1. Professional Development Days / Weather Days
2. Certification
3. Public Relations Cycle and Budget
4. Committee Member Terms

The 2014-2015 budget for the Public Affairs/Public Relations Committee was \$6,300.00 and the total amount spent was \$3,714.02.

Respectfully Submitted,

Keli Brewer  
PA/PR Committee Chair, 2014-2015