

news



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N O V A S C O T I A T E A C H E R S U N I O N

Date: March 1, 2017 **For Release:** Immediately **Contact:** Angela Murray

NSTU raises concerns about Education Council selection process

NSTU President Liette Doucet is raising concerns about the selection process for the Council to Improve Classroom Conditions imposed as part of Bill 75.

There is only one member on the Council selected by NSTU and that is a co-chair. The panel will include nine teachers from across Nova Scotia selected by school superintendents, with no direct input from teachers through their union.

“We have serious concerns about the make-up of the Council. There is a strong possibility that the government will use it to co-opt and silence dissenting voices in an attempt to justify bad policies developed at the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development,” says Doucet. “Given that the government refused to reduce class sizes, limit data entry or provide greater support for students with special needs at the bargaining table for 18 months, it is unlikely to do so now.”

She adds, “The government has given itself only seven days to review almost 800 applications. It’s hard to imagine how this process will be completed objectively. As co-chairs we are also very concerned that the selection process was implemented without our input.”

NSTU has several questions about this process, including:

- What objective scoring system will be used to rate and select participants?
- When will interviews be held to select participants and will NSTU be allowed to monitor these interviews?
- If there is a dispute during the selection process how will it be resolved?
- Will council meetings be held in public, or will the minutes of council meetings be made public?
- Similarly will votes of the council be recorded and reported?
- If a member of the council disagrees with a decision, what recourse do they use to register this dissenting opinion?
- Will the staff from the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development be at these meetings to facilitate/influence the process?

“Teachers want to have their voices heard. It’s why so many signed up and unfortunately were turned away at Law Amendments. Given that the form literally took less than 5 minutes to complete and asked for very little information, I’m not surprised by the high number of applicants.”

-30-

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