

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: December 28, 2021 **For Release:** Immediately **Contact:** Mark Laventure or Angela Murray

Statement by NSTU President Paul Wozney

(Halifax, NS) Providing a few extra days before returning to in-person learning is a prudent approach by government. That said, if COVID-19 cases persist at their current level, we have deep concerns about the operational viability and sustainable safety of our public school system.

We also have questions about the “additional layers of protection” that were referenced today without any specific information. Contact tracing has been suspended in school settings and a large number of classrooms are without adequate ventilation. Many school staff have reported that more needs to be done to ensure enhanced cleaning occurs on a consistent basis.

Schools were unable to stay open prior to the holiday break due to incredible COVID-19 pressures created by the Omicron variant and unprecedented spread in the wider community. Without significant additional layers, we are unsure how safe, in-person learning can be sustained in January and beyond if widespread transmission of the virus persists across communities.

We agree with Minister Druhan and Dr. Strang that the best place for kids is in the classroom, but remote learning that also provides a critical circuit break to community spread is preferable to rolling school closures and lengthy shutdowns and disruptions due to illness and isolation.

We will continue to monitor the situation closely and expect to have further discussions with EECD about how we can keep students, teachers and their families safe from COVID-19.

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