

Dear siblings,

Thank you for your ongoing commitment and patience during these turbulent times. With the arrival of Omicron and a renewed COVID outbreak, our public education system has once again been forced to shift dramatically at a moment's notice. We recognize that implementing the enhanced safety protocols announced Monday, December 13 adds more stress to schools that are already under considerable strain.

The NSTU is following the situation closely and we are in regular communications with the government and the education entities seeking clarification on Public Health and EECD announcements. While there are many challenges that still must be addressed, our primary focus is on protecting the safety of you, your students, and your family. Obviously, this is a rapidly evolving and fluid situation, so I caution that there could be additional announcements made over the coming days.

The NSTU has also been seeking clarity on the two days of professional learning and planning to follow the Holiday break that were publicly announced several days ago. It is our understanding that with the exception of Learning Centre Teachers, all other teachers are to focus on self-directed professional learning and planning at their schools. It is also our understanding that teachers requiring accommodations on these two days should discuss them with their principal. Learning Centre Teachers are required to be with their students on January 4th and 5th. In the Chignecto Central RCE, these rules will only apply for January 5th, as the already scheduled PL on January 4th, for all CCRCE teachers, will proceed as planned.

I want you to know that the NSTU has raised and will continue to raise with EECD that Learning Centre teachers be allotted two days later in the year to ensure they have equivalent access to opportunities to support their professional learning and planning. I remain overwhelmed by the resilience and compassion you have all demonstrated throughout this pandemic. I know everyone is fatigued and patience is low. Know that we are working on your behalf through these developments. Let's continue to support each other over the next several days so we can enjoy a safe, well-deserved holiday break.

Please stay safe.

In solidarity,

Paul

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.