

news



3106 Joseph Howe Drive
Halifax, Nova Scotia B3L 4L7
www.nstu.ca • pr@nstu.ca
Tel 902.477.5621
Fax 902.477.3517

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

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Parents deserve transparency about cuts to local schools

Halifax, NS -- Parents and school communities deserve to be consulted on staffing changes at local schools and shouldn't learn about deep teacher cuts through social media, says NSTU President Paul Wozney.

He is calling on the Halifax Regional Centre for Education to release a full breakdown of teaching cuts at Halifax area high schools to prevent further unnecessary speculation online. The NSTU fears that cuts are the result of an HRCE decision to eliminate Unassigned Instructional Time (UIT), which is used to support individual student and school learning and safety needs.

"Many teachers received notice yesterday that their positions were being eliminated for the upcoming school year," says Wozney. "This information is starting to trickle out through social networks which is creating anxiety for parents and students at a time when they are dealing with enough stress."

Wozney says it's devastating for a teacher to learn they won't be coming back to a school they love.

"Teachers are heavily invested in their students and their schools. At the best of times, this is difficult news for a dedicated teacher to receive, but given the year they've just been through, this is an extremely bitter pill to swallow."

The NSTU believes that whenever there is a reduction in teachers at a school, it has a detrimental impact. After two academic years disrupted by COVID-19, the HRCE should be augmenting supports wherever possible not making cuts.

"This will be a loss for these metro area schools and the quality of education will suffer," says Wozney. "Students who are struggling academically are going to lose a lunchtime tutor. Talented student athletes are going to lose a favourite coach. Aspiring young artists are going to lose a mentor or club leader. And there will be fewer people available to monitor hallways to prevent bullying and ensure safety protocols are being followed."

The NSTU has been raising concerns for weeks regarding a possible cut to UIT time in Halifax area schools and conducted a survey of teachers to determine the impact such a decision would have. The results of the survey clearly demonstrated the need, especially during the pandemic, for this additional school resource. The results have been shared with the HRCE.

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More info: Angela Murray, Cell: 902-497-0194, amurray@staff.nstu.ca, or Mark Laventure, Cell: 902-818-5010, mlaventure@staff.nstu.ca