

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

Date: Jan 24, 2024

For Release: Immediately

Contact:

**Mark Laventure
Angela Murray**

NSTU calls for restoration of in-person support for APSEA students

(Halifax-Kjipuktuk, NS) The NSTU is calling on the Atlantic Provinces Special Education Authority (APSEA) to fully restore programs that support students who are blind or visually impaired and/or Deaf or hard of hearing, that were first halted due to COVID-19.

Recently, students (past and present), teachers and their families have been speaking out about APSEA's decision to end in-person assistance that helps vulnerable students better navigate their lives. The supports, which include a residency program and specialized psychological assessments, were first moved on-line during the peak of the public health crisis caused by the pandemic, but will now remain virtual.

The residency program was first moved on-line during the peak of the public health crisis caused by the pandemic, but will now remain virtual, and support from specialized school psychologists has been removed.

"In person and hands-on support is vital to helping these students, develop essential skills they need to both navigate their education and their daily lives," says NSTU President Ryan Lutes. "When decisions are made to change student programming, every effort must be made to ensure that individuals who require the most support, don't end up receiving the least."

Lutes adds: "I've spoken to APSEA teachers in recent days and they are extremely concerned about the long-term impact this decision will have on vulnerable learners. It's imperative that APSEA listens to the experts and ensures blind or visually impaired and/or Deaf or hard of hearing students get the appropriate level of support they need and deserve in a timely manner."

The NSTU represents 75 APSEA teachers in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and PEI who support students who are blind or visually impaired and/or Deaf or hard of hearing.

-30-

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