

Year End Report 2016



Public Affairs / Public Relations Committee

2015 - 2016 Committee Members Include:

- Andrew McIntosh - Chair
- Grant Frost
- Paula Landry
- Rolland Hannem
- Neil MacIsaac
- Paul Boudreau, Provincial Executive
- Colleen Scott, Provincial Executive
- Simon Wilkin, NSTU Staff Liaison (August - December)
- Jim King., NSTU Staff Liaison (December - July)
- Angela Murray, NSTU PR Coordinator

Meeting Dates:

- Friday, November 6, 2015
- Friday, February 19, 2016
- Friday, April 15, 2016 (Cancelled due to storm)
- Friday, May 13, 2016

Throughout all meetings the committee received updates on and discussed the following:

- NSTU Annual Action Plan
- Teachers Make a Difference Campaign
- Education Week Awards and Activities
- Negotiations Updates
- Member Engagement Survey and Preparations - Theme #NSTUUnited
- Invitations and Meeting with Political Parties
- Policy Review and Governance
- Enhancement of Member Communication Platform
- Meeting Norms and Restorative Practice

- Planning for the 2016 Communication Conference.
- Networking with Dunn and Associates, PR Firm
- Tendering Process and Funding for PR Campaigns

Communications Conference 2016

A Communication Conference was not held this year, as it is a biennial event. Planning took place for the Communication Conference in the fall of 2016. It is scheduled for September 30th and October 1st at the Lord Nelson Hotel.

The proposed theme for the conference is “The Member is the Message”. It will combine Public Affairs and Public Relations as its focus. On Friday evening, the four political parties of Nova Scotia will be invited to attend a forum dedicated to discussing educational issues, policies and platforms for their respective parties. This will be a key session for delegates with a pending election call in the fall or spring. On Saturday, delegates will network with a Public Relations firm chosen for the new campaign and engage in a brainstorming / possible direction session.

Meeting with Political Parties

An invitation was extended to the four political parties of Nova Scotia to attend a PA / PR meeting. Originally scheduled for April 15th, but cancelled due to a storm, the meeting was rescheduled for May 13th. The committee had the opportunity to meet with the following:

- PC Party – Jamie Baillie, Leader
- NDP – Lenore Zann, Education Critic
- Liberal Party – No representative was available to attend
- Green Party of Nova Scotia – Contact was made, but no response was received.

The committee presented the party representatives with the following three questions:

- What does your party feel is the greatest challenge facing public education today?
- One of the initiatives in the Minister’s Action Plan is to introduce Teaching Standards. What are your Party’s thoughts on the implementation of Teaching Standards.?
- Traditionally, all governments have focussed on the negative impression of Public Education. The message is often what government will do to improve the system. Recognizing the tremendous positive impact of a strong education system on such issues as immigration and economics, how would your

government change the dialogue to present Public Education in a more positive light?

The discussion was reported back to Provincial Executive.

It is recommended that this practice be continued as part of the committee's mandate.

Meeting Norms:

The committee also discussed the adoption of meeting norms that introduced a more restorative approach to how sessions are conducted. Meeting norms will continue to be studied in 2016-2017 for adoption.

2015 - 2016 Budget:

The 2015-2016 budget for the Public Affairs / Public Relations Committee was \$6510.00. The actual amount spent was \$8631.70. The overrun can be attributed to two areas:

- The cancelled meeting in April still resulted in mileage and accommodation expenses as members were already in Halifax.
- Five of the committee members traveled from significant distances in Nova Scotia resulting in increased mileage and accommodation expenses. (\$4307.16)

Respectfully Submitted,

Andrew McIntosh,

PA/PR Committee Chair, 2015-2016