

From the NSTU President



Report to Council 2025

(excerpt from Peter Day's remarks to Annual Council 2025)

Welcome to Annual Council 2025!

I want to start by sincerely thanking each and every one of you for taking time out of your hectic schedules to be here this weekend. Your commitment to being part of this work, shaping the future of the NSTU, truly matters.

Seeing the round-table setup tonight made me think about Councils of the past, and just how far we've come. I think of some of the positive changes over the years: moving to electronic keypads, introducing the pre-council vote, and giving proper time to honor our service award recipients.

And it got me thinking about the broader changes we've fought for and achieved, improvements in our provincial and regional agreements that have made a real difference in the lives of our members.

This reminds us that progress doesn't happen overnight. Real, positive change is a continuous journey. One that takes perseverance, advocacy, and sometimes a little patience. It comes from moving forward, challenging the language, testing the boundaries, and never losing sight of what we're fighting for.

The strength of any union is its solidarity, and Nova Scotia's teachers have proven time and again that when we stand together, we are a force to be reckoned with.

I want you to know that I am humbled to address this Council for the first time as president. It has been an absolute privilege to serve as your president, to be your voice and advocate these past months.

While there has been minor progress made. Government has taken very small, early steps to address safety in schools and to start tackling the teacher shortage. While it's not enough, it does

show that our concerns are being heard louder and clearer.

But let me be clear, small steps **must** lead to meaningful strides. The current state of our schools is not sustainable. Our advocacy must continue, because students, teachers, teacher specialists and school communities deserve better.

I urge you to think about how we can continue promoting the urgent need to improve working conditions for our colleagues and learning conditions for our students. Let's also remember real change happens not just by speaking up for ourselves, but by building bridges: with parents, with families, with our communities, and yes, even with elected officials. We must keep in mind the perspectives of other stakeholders in our school communities, and how our advocacy could potentially be received by those outside of our profession.

We already know the challenges in our classrooms. Now we must find the words, and the actions, that help others understand them too.

Before I finish, I would be remiss if I didn't acknowledge and thank my predecessor, Ryan Lutes, for his leadership and service. Ryan played a major role in achieving our most recent contract. A contract that included more gains for members than we've seen in a long time. Ryan, thank you for everything you brought to your presidency and for the foundation you've left for us to build upon.

I'm excited to share ideas, engage in spirited and respectful debate, and hear from voices across this great province. Together, we can enrich our profession and improve the lives of our fellow teachers and teacher specialists.

Be passionate. Be vocal. Be respectful. And above all, be proud of the work we do together.

