

news



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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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NSTU hopes provincial budget can meet student needs

The president of the province's 10,000-member teachers' union says today's provincial budget has some investment for public school students in Nova Scotia, but needs to go further to meet student needs.

"The budget boasts \$20.4 million for public education. This includes a cap of 25 for Grades 3 and 4, but teachers at other levels are still dealing with class size and composition issues," says Morse. "We had hoped that the government would look at extending caps to the Grade 5, middle/junior and senior high levels."

Morse says the Government has stated that its most strategic investment is in its people. "We hope they will remember this and really start to recognize the value that teachers provide to the future of Nova Scotia," she adds. "Teachers are the front-line leaders in education and need autonomy, time and resources to deliver programs and services well."

The budget also outlines money for mental health clinicians, and early math and literacy programs. "Adding mental health clinicians to the system should help in alleviating the many concerns that our teachers have in supporting students with mental health issues," she says. "We hope that it will make a difference, for at-risk youth, but not undermine the primary role our school guidance counsellors play in meeting social, emotional and educational needs of students."

Morse wonders if today's announcement can meet the education reform on the horizon for Nova Scotia. "Many changes are coming with respect to the Minister's Action Plan for education," says Morse. "We hope the budget presented today will provide enough funding to adequately resource the coming changes, and that the implementation of the plan will not be placed on the backs of teachers."

The Nova Scotia Teachers Union represents more than 10,000 public school teachers, Community College faculty and professional support staff and teachers who work for the Atlantic Provinces Special Education Authority. Since 1895, it has worked to improve the quality of public education in Nova Scotia.

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