

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 calling for safer schools on World Teachers' Day

On World Teachers' Day, teachers across Canada are marking the occasion by raising awareness about the need for safer and more caring schools. This year's theme is *Addressing Violence, Building Respect*.

Data obtained by Michael Tutton of the Canadian Press in May of this year showed that there were 11,740 cases of violence in Nova Scotia schools in the 2015-16 school year or about 1,100 a month. In approximately 1,800 of these cases, the violence was directed at teachers. A violent act is defined as: "using force, gesturing, or inciting others to use force to injure a member of the school community."

NSTU President Liette Doucet says she hopes the Canadian Teachers' Federation's advocacy efforts are successful. She says that elected officials and policy makers across Canada need to be placing greater attention on creating safer learning environments for students.

"Teachers across this province will tell you that the level of violence in our schools has increased in recent years," says Doucet. "As a society more needs to be done to improve safety in the classroom. Nobody should walk into a school worried about their wellbeing. For students and teachers, schools need to be sanctuaries where people can learn, work and create without fear."

Canadian Teachers' Federation President Mark Ramsanker says a lack of resources has contributed to the problem across the country.

"Austerity measures in education have exacerbated challenging situations in schools and the reality is that too many now face diminishing resources and larger class sizes. Teachers' heavier workloads can result in less time to devote to the educational needs of students and/or an increase in work-related stress leading to burnout," he explains.

World Teachers' Day is an annual celebration of the valuable work of teachers in Canada and around the globe, which takes place October 5. Developed by former Canadian teacher leader Norman Goble, it was first recognized in 1994, and consecutive Nova Scotia governments have proclaimed the day since then.

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