

Year End Report 2017



Public Affairs / Public Relations Committee

**Nova Scotia Teachers Union
3106 Joseph Howe Drive
Halifax, Nova Scotia**

2016 - 2017 Committee Members Include:

- Neil MacIsaac - [Antigonish County](#)
- Paul Boudreau - Halifax County
- Jaylene Chase - Lunenburg County
- Colleen Scott - Provincial Executive
- Marc Breaugh - Provincial Executive (Resigned Spring 2017)
- Ian Kent - Lunenburg County, then Provincial Executive (Assumed Position Spring 2017)
- Jim King - NSTU Staff Liaison
- Angela Murray - NSTU PR Coordinator

Meeting Dates:

- Friday, September 30, 2016 (Half Day)
- Friday, November 4, 2016 (Full Day)
- Friday, March 10, 2017 (Full Day)
- Friday, April 13, 2017 (Full Day) *
- Friday, May 15, 2017 (Full Day) *

*Provincial Executive ratified the addition of two extra days given the challenges and need for consultation as a result of Job Action in 2016-2017.

Budget:

- The 2016-2017 budget was \$6 406.00 and \$10 318.11 was actually spent. This was a reflection of the need for extra meetings.

Communications Conference 2016:

The Member is the Message, the Communication Conference for 2016 took place on Friday, September 30th and Saturday, October 1st. Approximately 44 delegates attended the institute, comprised of Vice Presidents of Communication / Public Affairs and Public Relations from all the NSTU Locals, as well as second delegates.

The conference was broken into two components. On Friday evening the Public Affairs session saw representatives from two of Nova Scotia's four political parties present and engage with the members. Pat Dunn, Education Critic for the Progressive Conservative Party, Lenore Zann, NDP Education Critic, Gary Burrill, NDP Leader and presented first and answered member questions on such topics as Bill#148 and teacher workload. The Saturday morning session was dedicated to a workshop conducted by NATIONAL Public Relations, the successful firm hired to develop and roll out the public relations campaign ratified through Resolution 2016-24 at Annual Council 2016. The firm talked to the delegates about considerations for developing a public relations campaign and then proceeded into a working session which elicited responses to the following questions:

- What needs are teachers addressing?
- How do teachers uniquely address those needs?
 - What does success look like?

Public Relations Campaigns:

The PA/PR Committee provided much insight and support to staff and the public relations firms NATIONAL and the NOW Group at different points throughout the year. Beginning with the Communications Conference, the committee helped set the stage for the campaign that was developed which eventually took the NSTU into and through Work to Rule Job Action with the Act For Education campaign, which included a website, with stories from 11 public school members about the sweeping changes in public education and the realities of education teachers face on a daily basis and an MLA letter function. An animated 60-second video was also produced for the website and shared via social channels. It focused on valuing and respecting the vital role education plays for the future. A three-week media campaign, including television, print, digital and social (Facebook, YouTube & Twitter) took place. Two 30-second television ads were produced. A number of social media [shareables](#) were created, disseminated and promoted as part of the campaign.

As the campaign became direct political action and labour relations in the public domain NATIONAL had to step back somewhat as the public relations required during job action was not in keeping with the tendered assignment for which they had been contracted. At the April 13th meeting, the committee engaged in discussions with NOW

Group in the development of a public relations campaign to take the NSTU into the pending Spring Election. This campaign was run on both television and social media up until the election call on April 30th.

Work to Rule Job Action

Much discussion and planning was dedicated to communication to members during Work to Rule. The committee developed strategies to support the effective communication of updates, the development of a social media strategy and creation of talking points for members with MLAs. No meetings occurred during Work to Rule; however staff continued to act on advice from committee members in an effort to better meet the needs of those experiencing the job action first hand.

Political Engagement:

The committee provided input and feedback on the development of the following public affairs strategies:

- Letters and Talking Points for MLAs
- Talking Points for Rallies
- Election Pamphlet for NSTU members, entitled NSTU Guide for Political Engagement
- Booklet for VP's of PA / PR - NSTU Guide for Locals During Election 2017
- Election Updates communiques which provided media links for ongoing events and meetings.

Meeting with Political Parties

At the March 10th meeting, representatives from the Progressive Conservative Party and NDP met with the committee to discuss their positions on education in Nova Scotia. Jamie Baillie and Gary Burrill each had approximately one hour to engage with the committee outlining their policies and potential planks in their platforms for the pending provincial spring election.

Respectfully Submitted,

Neil MacIsaac

PA/PR Committee Chair, 2016-2017