

Year End Report 2018



Public Affairs/Public Relations Committee

2017 – 2018 Committee Members:

- Jaylene Chase – Chair, Lunenburg County
- Randy Lucas- Northside-Victoria
- Shane Goucher – Hants West
- Shari MacGillivray - Antigonish
- Luke Penney – Halifax County
- Wade VanSnick - Provincial Executive
- Nancie de la Chevotière – Provincial Executive (resigned Spring 2018)
- Jim King - NSTU Staff Liaison
- Angela Murray - NSTU PR Coordinator
- Mark LaVenture - NSTU Communications Specialist

Meeting Dates:

- Friday, October 13, 2017 (Full Day)
- Friday, December 11, 2017 (Full Day)
- Monday, April 23, 2018 (Full Day)
- Monday, June 18, 2018 (Full Day) *

*Provincial Executive ratified the addition of up to two extra days given the challenges and need for consultation as a result of government legislation, the Glaze Report, etc.

Budget:

2017-2018 Budget:

The 2017-2018 budget was \$6,406.00 and \$10,318.11 was actually spent. This was a reflection of the need for extra meetings.

Communications Conference 2018:

There was no Communications Conference held in 2017, as it is a biennial conference. The PA/PR Committee recommended that the Communication Conference for 2018 be entitled “Remember, Reconnect and Recharge” with a focus on how Locals can be engaged with social media and political action.

Public Opinion Polling

The NSTU regularly uses Corporate Research Associates (CRA) for public opinion polling. The PA/PR committee reviewed the results of polling and suggested that a news release on the impact of Bill 75 be issued. Questions focused on what Nova Scotians believe should be the government's spending priorities, the public's confidence in the government's ability to manage the public school system, importance of issues in public education, the impact of Bill 75 and recommendations of the Glaze Report. It also asked about voter intentions and tested recall, sponsorship, source and message link of NSTU's election readiness campaign.

Public Relations Campaigns

A motion was made by the committee that the NSTU retain the services of NOW Communications Group to create a Public Relations campaign for the 2017 – 2018 school year. Meetings were held to discuss possible themes. Points raised by the committee included the need to reunify our members so the NSTU can move forward. Other issues raised are that complex classrooms are still causing teachers a great deal of stress, and it's important to demonstrate how public education has changed over time so the public has a better understanding. The overarching goal is to keep public education as a top of mind concern.

Divide and Distract Campaign

After the release of the Glaze Report, the committee in consultation with staff and NOW Communications devised a campaign highlighting the issues with the report. Key messaging included: Government is new problems instead of fixing existing issues; Government and the Premier want to divide and distract away from the real issues; administrative changes in the Glaze Report will not help kids in classrooms, like taking away elected regional school boards, taking away parents' voice and dividing principals and vice-principals from teachers.

End of School Year Campaign - Light Bulb Moments

Continuing the early work with NOW Communications, this campaign offered an opportunity to take a step back and remember, reconnect with members and show the public that the NSTU's goal is, and remains – making classrooms better so students can get the best education possible.

“Light Bulb Moments” was the advertising tag line. The goals of this sustaining campaign include: building the NSTU as an advocate for better schools and outcomes for students; celebrating teachers and their commitment to students; and bringing teachers and parents together as partners and advocates for better schools and classroom conditions.

Back to School Campaign - No Limit

A back to school campaign featured the “No Limit” creative, continuing in the vein of advocating for changes that need to be made to Nova Scotia’s schools to make them better. The “No Limit” campaign built on the end of school year “Light Bulb Moments” campaign by continuing to show the NSTU as an advocate for better schools and outcomes for students.

Pathways to Progress

The committee recommended that Pathways to Progress should occur next summer to build on the present initiative. It was suggested that the format be changed to mixing up the Locals in the sessions.

Communication to VPs of PA / PR

Direct communication was sent on a couple of items in an attempt to inform and engage VPs of PA/PR. Meeting notes from the PA/PR Committee could be shared with Local VPs of PA/PR. These could feature highlights of discussion, as well as action suggestions for the Local PA/PR Committees to use in their local areas. It was recommended that future Council for Classroom Conditions communiqués be sent to VPs of PA/PR and PA/PR Committee directly even though it goes out to all members, as it was felt that a direct email would benefit the work of the VPs.

Social Media Plan

A Social Media plan and suggested strategies was presented, to help grow NSTU’s social media presence. The PA/PR Committee passed a motion that recommended acceptance in principle of the social media strategy, as prepared by staff.

Member Engagement

Discussion throughout the year centered on a member engagement focus in preparation for future rounds of negotiations and provincial elections. There was consensus that a day at the beginning of the school year is not enough in order to gain momentum. The theme for 2018 will be *Remember, Reconnect and Recharge*. It was recommended that the committee prescribe an activity this year.

NSTU Rapid Response

Concerns were addressed that during negotiations, the Minister of Education and Premier broke the rules, spoke out about negotiating items that were on the table, and this was never addressed. The committee made a motion which recommended guidelines be developed to support a rapid response protocol to respond to and manage media inquiries and issues year round affecting the NSTU.

Political Engagement

The committee regularly invites a representative from each political party to meet to discuss current educational issues. The committee recommended that the political parties not be invited this year to allow for a period of cool down given the challenges of the past year.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jaylene Chase
PA/PR Committee Chair, 2017- 2018