

**Year End Report  
2010-2011  
Public Affairs Committee**

**a. Mandate**

**i. Political Action**

- A. The Committee shall maintain contact with all major provincial political parties through participation, as observers, in the annual meetings of each party. Following attendance at each annual meeting, the Committee shall report to the Provincial Executive.
- B. The Committee shall monitor the policies and practices of the major provincial political parties for the purpose of identifying issues impacting on education. The Committee shall then advise the President and Provincial Executive of these issues and recommend appropriate political action.
- C. During provincial elections, the Committee shall develop and implement a program focusing on the positive of the parties and their candidates with respect to education.
- D. The Committee shall develop NSTU member awareness and urge member involvement in election campaigns.
- E. The Committee will operate a hospitality suite at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of each of the political parties with representation in the N.S. legislature, as allowed by each party.

**ii. Process and Technical Support for Local Public Affairs Committees**

- A. The Committee shall publish a Public Affairs Handbook for Local committees.
- B. Subject to approval by the Provincial Executive, the Committee shall provide resource materials and training to assist Local committees in carrying out their mandate.
- C. Subject to approval by the Provincial Executive, the Committee shall provide opportunities for Local committees to network and share.
- D. The Committee plans, with Provincial Executive approval, an annual meeting of the Local leaders of Public Affairs.
- E. The Committee shall identify educational issues for political action by the Provincial Executive.

**iii. Information to Member Candidates**

- A. The Committee shall publish a handbook on conditions of employment for members interested in becoming political candidates.
- B. The Committee shall compile a resource file of information relevant to political action in education and maintain this file in the NSTU central office.
- C. The NSTU maintains its historical position of not attaching itself to any political party.

**b. General**

- i. Consider such resolutions as may be referred by Annual Council and make appropriate recommendations.
- ii. Participate as required in the NSTU Policy Review Process by providing recommendations for the Provincial Executive's consideration.

**c. Composition**

The Committee shall consist of three (3) Provincial Executive members selected by the Provincial Executive and five (5) NSTU active members chosen through the Nominating Committee process.

**d. Meeting Frequency**

It is anticipated that the Public Affairs Committee will be able to accomplish the mandated tasks through three meetings per year. The Public Affairs and Public Relations Committee shall have some common meeting times to allow for discussion and exchange of initiatives, concerns and objectives.

*Reference: Provincial Executive, April 1988, March 1990, May 1994, June 2001, October 2002, July 2007*

**Committee Members**

The Public Affairs Committee was comprised of the following members:

Susan Noiles (Chair), Halifax County  
Debbie McVeigh, Community College  
Redmond MacDougall, Cape Breton  
Graham MacLeod, Pictou  
Deborah Mitchell, Lunenburg County  
Mark Savoury, Provincial Executive Member  
Allister Wadden, Provincial Executive Member  
Paul Betuik, Provincial Executive Member  
Simon Wilkin, Staff Liaison

**Meeting Dates**

The Committee met on the following dates:

- October 29, 2010: while attending the Progressive Conservative Leadership Convention
- February 4, 2011: while attending the Progressive Conservative Annual General Meeting
- June 4, 2011: while attending the New Democratic Party Annual General Meeting

The Committee was originally scheduled to attend the Liberal Party Annual General Meeting however this meeting was postponed to the fall of 2011.

At the first meeting of the Public Affairs Committee on October 29, 2010, the following items were discussed:

- a) Welcome/Introductions
- b) Expense/Meeting Guidelines
- c) Selection of Recording Secretary
- d) Approval of Agenda
- e) Approval of Minutes from May 14, 2010
- f) Meeting Dates for 2010 and 2011
- g) Review of Public Affairs Mandate
- h) Review of Year End Report 2009-2010
- i) NSTU Curriculum Policy Review for Council 2011
- j) Under New Business – Progressive Conservative Leadership Convention

Following the meeting, committee members registered for the Progressive Conservative Leadership Convention. The Committee attended the convention on Friday evening and on Saturday. Our presence presented the opportunity to discuss issues of concern with party members.

The second meeting of the Public Affairs Committee was held on February 4, 2011 at the NSTU Building prior to attending the Progressive Conservative Annual General Meeting at the Westin Hotel. The PA Committee met, conducted business, and during part of the afternoon, held a joint meeting with the Public Relations Committee. The purpose of this joint meeting was the planning of the upcoming Communications Conference scheduled for April 15 – 16, 2011 at the Delta Halifax Hotel. The following items were discussed at the Public Affairs meeting:

- a) Communications Conference planning
- b) Role of the Public Affairs Committee at the PC AGM

Following the adjournment of the PA meeting, committee members registered for the Progressive Conservative Annual General Meeting and attended the evening session. Upon the close of the session Friday evening, the PA Committee hosted a hospitality suite and received delegates to discuss educational issues. On Saturday, the Committee members attended sessions and hosted a hospitality suite during the evening. On both evenings, the hospitality suite was a busy venue where Committee members engaged general delegates and members of the PC caucus in dialogue on educational issues and in particular, on the impact of proposed cuts to education.

The PA Committee co-hosted the Communications Conference held on April 15 – 16, 2011. The focus of the conference was on delivering our message to Locals, our members, and the public. Topics included “What the Polls Say: Nova Scotia’s opinions about Top Issues and Public Education”, 2010-11 NSTU/ViewFinders Public Service Announcement Workshops, and the NSTU Online. The presenters were Christina Waddy (CRA), Anna Moran (CRA), Angela Murray (NSTU), and Simon Wilkin (NSTU). The conference was well attended and the staff of

the NSTU did an excellent job of following through on every detail in the planning and execution of the conference, ensuring its success.

During Annual Council 2011, Committee Chairs were requested to be available outside Council Chambers on Sunday morning for a short time to field questions from delegates on the role of the committees. The Chair of the Public Affairs Committee spoke with a number of delegates about the role of the committee and encouraged application to become a committee member.

A third meeting of the Public Affairs Committee was held on June 4, 2011 prior to attending the New Democratic Party Annual General meeting at St. Mary's University. The following items were discussed at the Public Affairs meeting:

- a) Review of the Communications Conference
- b) Role of Public Affairs Committee at the New Democratic Party AGM
- c) Recommendations for the PA Committee for 2011-2012

The Public Affairs Committee attended the New Democratic Party AGM on June 4, 2011. Although the Committee was not permitted to host a hospitality suite at the New Democratic Party AGM, our presence presented the opportunity to discuss issues of concern with MLAs and party delegates.

As the out-going Chair, I would like to extend my thanks to the Committee for their dedication, time and efforts on behalf of teachers in Nova Scotia. It has been a pleasure to work with dedicated members on a committee that so effectively brings educational issues before the political parties. Additionally, I would like to offer a thank you to Simon Wilkin, staff liaison, for his assistance, guidance and support.

Respectfully submitted,  
Susan E. Noiles