



Nova Scotia Teachers Union

Dr. Tom Parker Building, 3106 Joseph Howe Drive, Halifax, NS B3L 4L7 (902) 477-5621 Toll Free 1-800-565-6788 Fax: (902) 477-3517 nstu@nstu.ca www.nstu.ca

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT



Dear Colleague:

Welcome back! I hope you had a wonderful summer break, full of relaxation and rejuvenation. As always, September is a time of renewal and regeneration for both teachers and students. It is a time to embrace new challenges, while at the same time remembering the lessons learned in previous years.

This is a very special edition of *The Teacher*. It marks the first issue of the 50th year of publication and the 50th edition of *The Teacher*. Our organization's history is represented in the thousands of pages printed over the last 50 years in this newsletter. It is a crucial means of communication for the NSTU, but it is also a way to showcase the amazing things that our members are doing throughout the province.

This summer was particularly special for me as your President. As part of the Canadian delegation, I was privileged to represent NSTU members at the Education International 6th World Congress in Cape Town, South Africa. Delegates from teacher organizations around the world gathered to discuss the principles of quality education, publicly funded education, equity in society, and the achievement of solidarity. As members of the NSTU and the Canadian Teachers Federation, you are automatically members of Education International. It is sometimes easy to take for granted the education systems that we have in place in Canada. Seeing us through a global perspective fills me with so much pride for Canadian teachers and the amazing job they are doing in our system.

Our first priority this school year will be to reach a tentative agreement for the public school teachers' collective support staff asking package and will be negotiating over the coming months.

We will continue to pressure the government to maintain funding for the public education system. As your union, it is our job to further and maintain your rights and benefits, while at the same time raising the bar for all. As our members, we need you to be ready to take action. All of us need to fight for the good of our profession and for the public education system in Nova Scotia. If you haven't signed the petition demanding that the government provide full funding to the upcoming education budget, please visit kidsnotcuts.ca and add your name to the cause. Also, please take the time to send a letter to your MLA, reminding him/her of the importance of publicly funded education in Nova Scotia.

Other issues that continue to be of concern are cyberbullying, absenteeism, and workload. As you may know, the NSTU is involved with the Minister's Task Force on Cyberbullying. Recommendations from the Task Force on four key areas – intervention, education, assessment and policy – are forthcoming.

The NSTU will be offering a variety of professional development sessions over the coming year. Sessions to meet specific needs can be arranged. As usual, we are looking forward to October Conference Day, this year being held on October 28th. Please visit our website (www.nstu.ca) or call Central Office (477-5621 or 1-800-565-6788) for more information on any of our professional development opportunities and to view complete Professional Association conference program offerings.

We are here for you. If you have any questions related to the NSTU, please contact your NSTU representative at your school, talk to your Local President, or call/email Central Office. This is YOUR union. I encourage you to attend a Local general meeting and to get involved in union-sponsored activities.

As your NSTU President I am extremely honoured to represent you. I am looking forward to serving you to the best of my abilities over the coming year.

Welcome back and have a wonderful year!

Sincerely,

Alexis Allen