
From: Perry, Rosemarie <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, December 15, 2015 8:56 PM
To: Office of the Legislative Counsel
Subject: Bill 148

Tuesday, December 15th, 2015

Dear Chair of the Law Amendments Committee:

My name is Rosemarie Perry and I am writing to oppose Bill 148. I wanted to come in to speak; however, I was told that the list was full this evening and the only time available to me would be when I am teaching.

Teaching has become an increasingly challenging as a career choice and this already difficult job will worsen with the conditions of the government's Bill 148. Not only has the government stripped us of our constitutional right to fair collective bargaining, but this bill also impedes our ability to advocate for funding that would improve our students learning environments which are our working conditions.

I teach visual arts in a classroom that comfortably seats 25 adult size bodies. I typically am jam-packed with thirty plus each semester, each class, plus IPP and adapted program students and often an EPA or two. I often have newly arrived international and EAL/refugee students (i.e. Students who read at grade one level and students who read at a grade 12 level in the same classroom; some who have severe mental health conditions; some who speak no English at all; some who are suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder and so much more) that I communicate with through charades. I am more lucky than others as I teach a very visual subject I can often use lots of visual examples but have to be extra careful when teaching lessons with knives and lino-cutters for example. My budget for classroom supplies is seriously lacking, not having increased in the last 5 years at my current school and having been downgraded several thousand from the previous school prior to this one. I am forced to order substandard materials and often subsidize out of my own pocket to the tune of hundreds of dollars a school year. I am not the only teacher I know that does this. We do it because we care about what we teach, but we shouldn't have to.

Class room sizes, diverse classroom composition, lack of human and physical resources (not enough Resource or EAL teachers, not enough supplies/tools for the class and so on), little to no consultation with active teachers on curriculum or assessment (ex. implementing provincial assessments that cost so much money and yet have no impact on learning), increasing demands for duplicate reporting and other types of redundant virtual paperwork, an expectation that teachers are on-call 24/7 via email, and never-ending and ever-changing direction on procedures and policies and protocols make me think about changing my career in the last eleven years I have left. At the beginning of my career I watched people ending their teach with such enjoyment, as they were relaxed and fulfilled. At my stage, I should not be run off my feet, stressed out weekly, and fighting to balance the excessive demands of my job with the needs of my family!!

I have been teaching for over twenty years and it is demeaning to see my chosen profession be forsaken as it also means that my students are being demeaned and devalued. I teach them the importance of standing up against bullies in many different contexts especially ones where they are in the majority. I urge all Liberals to have the courage to vote against Bill 148; to show Nova Scotia's youth who will build up our economy if we allow them an opportunity, that you support them and their educators. I expect all members of the Conservative and NDP parties to vote against Bill 148 because it is wrong and it violates workers' rights.

The only way for this province to develop to its full potential is for our government to invest in its future; its people. Build people first and everything else will follow.

With hope and respect,

Rosemarie Perry

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