

February 13, 2017

To All Members of the 'Elected Provincial Government',

My name is Leisa Cameron. I am a 'seasoned' teacher of 32 years. I have taught all grade levels from Primary through grade 8 including 8 years in a self contained 'TMH' class and 2 years in a deaf blind classroom at APSEA. I have seen a lot in my 32 years of experience. My first 20-25 years were wonderful. During those years the students came first. Professional development, collaboration and school improvement was part of our every day. It was never mandated, 'initiated' or shoved down our throat. These things happened with little, or no, extra cost to tax payers or the board. We were trusted enough to facilitate student programming, student assessment, and personal and student growth. We were empowered not bullied. We were respected not silenced.

Our children and their education is greatly at risk and is being put further at risk by the actions of Steve McNeil and the Liberal government.

May I beg, implore you, the MLA's; our elected representatives; the people elected to represent the voters of their constituency (and their children), to understand, and defend, our concerns. Balancing your budget at the cost of Nova Scotia's youth, our students, your future voters, is detrimental to the wellbeing of Nova Scotia. This legislation that Mr. McNeil is proposing severely diminishes our collective rights, ignores the concerns of teachers and parents, ignores the Supreme Court's ruling of 'bargaining in good faith'.

In Stephen McNeil's statement he states:

"I want to assure Nova Scotians that I have done considerable soul searching. It is clear: we must bring an end to this dispute so the lives of students and parents can return to normal."

Does Mr. McNeil not understand that returning to the old normal was NO GOOD for students and their families. If he does not understand that then he was NOT listening.

He also states that:

"The strike action by the union has impacted students and their families for too long. The union's actions and directives have caused harm to students -- to their learning outcomes, university and college ambitions, and athletic aspirations. This is not acceptable and can no longer continue."

This should read : "My actions of disrespect and the continued ignoring of teachers, parents and students has caused considerable harm to my constituent's confidence and respect."

Please remember that we, the teachers, have never stopped doing our jobs. In fact I have covered more outcomes this term than in past years due to the lack of 'new initiatives', the expensive use of Power School, Tinet, no data collection, no PD, no interruptions,...etc. There has been NO HARM done to the learning outcomes!!! **And** the harm done to University and college ambitions may have been caused by the realization that, at this rate, they, the students, will NEVER earn back enough money to live, and pay back the high student debt they will incur to get their Education degree. **Please** remember the only thing we teachers stopped doing was the work and volunteering that we **DO NOT get paid for!!!**

Sincerely,

Leisa Cameron

Grade 2 teacher (with all my heart and soul)