
From: molly hurd [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 16, 2017 11:03 AM
To: Office of the Legislative Counsel
Subject: to the Chair, Law Amendments Committee, Re: Bill 75

Hello,

This is some of what I will be presenting if I get a chance to appear before your committee:

I am a retired teacher and head teacher. I have taught in Africa, Britain, in First Nations communities in northern Canada and Nova Scotia, and also in public schools in Ontario and Nova Scotia. I am a parent of 2 children who went through the public school system here in NS.

But the majority of my teaching career was spent in a co-operatively run school - independent and run by parents and teachers. I have seen how when teachers are given autonomy over the curriculum, assessment and decisions affecting them, when they have plenty of time to collaborate, and above all when they are RESPECTED, they will go above and beyond their duties. They will love their jobs, and give their best to their students. While doing research for a book I wrote about education, I discovered that these 3 attributes are some of the most important contributors to good academic outcomes, according to the PISA studies and others.

Over the last 25 years, I have seen public school teachers in NS increasingly marginalized, discouraged and deskilled as topdown administrations piled more and more directives on them, and listened less. But at least up until now, teachers were reasonably compensated and respected for the work they do. By imposing this contract, and punishing teachers by not even giving them the measly gains they eked out after "3 rounds of negotiations with 2 different executives", this government is not only violating their rights, it is ignoring ways to make the education system better. And no, it is not about the money, although expecting highly trained public servants to take a pay cut (which is what this is after inflation) says DISRESPECT more clearly than anything else.

Congratulations government, on taking the lid off the Pandora's box of teachers' unhappiness with conditions in the classroom. At least since the start of this dispute, teachers have been talking publicly about all the problems. Now they just need someone to listen - and if you listen, you will find that teachers have the solutions. Because they have always had the best interests of their students at heart, give teachers the power to do something about it. The lid will not go back on this box easily.

Thanks for listening,
Molly Hurd