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**From:** Todd Pellerine [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 16, 2017 7:03 PM  
**To:** Office of the Legislative Counsel  
**Subject:** Not allowed to speak sent this in my stead

I will preface my time with a statement, politicians who feel like they are not accountable to the tax paying citizens of Nova Scotia are well and truly in the wrong job. My own MLA whom I met with before Christmas (Margaret Miller), claimed to not be aware of the concerns that were taking place in the classrooms of the province. She had an opportunity to look into the issue and admitted that it was important to "some" of her constituents. She has not seemed to have done her homework, and as a teacher that is disappointing. I'm a front line teacher and I'm blessed to be in a wonderful community and in a wonderful school. I have the privilege of working with a caring and supportive staff and an amazing group of our Nova Scotian youth who I am very proud of! However even with my situation there are setbacks, teaching has changed in the last ten years and especially the last five. Each year there are more challenges and less built in supports to handle them, each year more new initiatives are put in place but nothing is removed. Excessive amounts of time are wasted, when teachers could be planning, marking or collaborating with each other to better help the students we serve. I voted against the latest tentative offer, not because I thought holding out would bump my wages, I predicted legislation and punitive action on the Liberals part (thanks for proving me right I guess?). I voted against it because of the unwillingness of the government to guarantee funding to classrooms. Please don't insult the intelligence of Nova Scotians by telling us that 20 million was promised, the education minister would not directly answer questions related to this exact point when asked at her conference on Monday. Instead the government wants to assuage it's citizens by reassuring us that yet another committee will be struck in the name of furthering education in our province. The Premier gladly spends millions on committees while students suffer. I say enough! The building is on fire and teachers have been ringing the bell! We are in a state of crisis within our schools and we need the people of Nova Scotia to help us help our youth! I'm not looking for a dime and in fact if you look at the contract being voted on it's easy to figure the math out. Teachers in this province are

losing money in this, why....? I will give you a glimpse behind the curtain, we have classes of students with varied needs, there are different levels of IPP's , adaptations and the "regular" students in a typical classroom. This means a variety of lessons and practice work for each group/ individual. That kind of planning takes time, lots of it! Then you have to try to deliver the best experience for each student when you teach it, blending your delivery so that you are hitting different styles of learning (tactile, auditory, visual, etc.). This is truly difficult even in a well run class because we need to try to spend time with as many students as possible, while knowing that they could all benefit from more. I supply students with paper, pencils, binders, food and time. I give them as much of these as I have and know that I have it better than most. I personally know of teachers who go home at night and cry at the end of the day, with behaviour problems and challenges that keep them up at night and leave them stressed. We all take our students home in our heads and especially worry about the most fragile and damaged. We deal with everyone, all of the youth. Those with personal trauma, mental health concerns, abuse issues, learning challenges, violent behaviour and physical challenges. We do so to the best of our ability and we're hanging on by our fingertips in a profession that we see becoming more challenging, with fewer supports in place. The reason for this, it's too hard for us to look into the eyes of our students and decide which ones we can save and which ones fall through the cracks. Unfortunately that's the bet that McNeil and Casey are wagering on. That we will go back to normal and extract a cost from our personal and professional lives because we can't stand to see children suffer. If only they felt the same. I know many parents in my community and I hope I've helped their children grow into productive, caring and responsible adults. Please help out, parents are sending us the best children they have, help us to mold them into the citizens that this province will be proud of.

Thank you,  
Todd Pellerine,  
Teacher

Sent from my iPhone