

news



3106 Joseph Howe Drive
Halifax, Nova Scotia B3L 4L7
www.nstu.ca • pr@nstu.ca
Tel 902.477.5621
Fax 902.477.3517

N O V A S C O T I A T E A C H E R S U N I O N

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Laid-off Cape Breton Teachers File for Board of Appeal

Permanent Cape Breton teachers who have been terminated have requested the Minister to appoint a Board of Appeal.

On May 3, 14 teachers appeared at a hearing before the Cape Breton-Victoria Regional School Board to request the Board to rescind their terminations. They were all denied.

“It’s a very emotional experience for these teachers to stand before their employer and to request their jobs not be cut,” says NSTU president Alexis Allen. “The loss of these teaching positions and the other cuts at the Board will have a direct impact on students in the classroom.”

Under the Education Act, permanent teachers have the right to have their cases heard before a one-person panel appointed by the Minister of Education under the Public Inquiries Act. They will hear from the teacher and the employer and make an order confirming or revoking the termination of the contract.

The teachers are being laid off as the Cape Breton-Victoria School Board deals with funding cuts ordered by the Department of Education. Between the layoffs and attrition, 63.2 positions will be lost from the system.

The Minister of Education has said the loss of the positions is part of “right-sizing” the Board due to the declining enrolment. But the superintendent of the Board, Ambrose White disagrees. According to his figures, declining enrolment should only amount to 22 positions, not the 63.2 that are being cut.

“The Minister of Education has said time and time again that the layoffs and cuts to positions are the results of declining enrolment,” continues Allen. “Clearly this is not the case, because in the Cape Breton Board alone, over 40 positions are being cut because of the decreased funding to school boards.”

The laid-off teachers have decades of combined experience with the Board and bring a high level of expertise and dedication to the classroom. All have strong roots in the community. Allen is meeting with the affected teachers early next week.

“The “back to balance” strategy the government asked of school boards is decimating the system and the future of our students is severely jeopardized,” Allen says. “Teachers, parents and students are looking to the Minister and this government to restore the balance of funding of education in favour of students and learning.”

The Nova Scotia Teachers Union represents 10,900 public school teachers in Nova Scotia and Community College faculty and professional support staff. Organized in 1895, its programs are directed towards improving the quality of public education in Nova Scotia.

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More info:

Angela Murray

NSTU Public Relations Coordinator

Phone: 902-479-4708 Cell: 902-497-0194

Email: amurray@staff.nstu.ca