



Teachers of English as a Second Language in NS  
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To the Government of Nova Scotia,

The TESL Nova Scotia Advocacy Committee, on behalf of the TESL Nova Scotia executive and all of our members, wishes to express our deep concern over the ongoing conflict between the Nova Scotia government and the public school teachers. In light of the current impasse, we urge the government to re-commit to conducting meaningful and productive contractual negotiations with teachers. This starts with acknowledging the legitimate right of teachers to introduce and negotiate classroom conditions, as well as other curricular issues at the bargaining table. This right has been well-established in jurisdictions throughout North America. There can be no reasonable objection to the claim that the working conditions of teachers are the learning conditions of students.

As an organization of teaching professionals, we argue that the government needs to recognize the essential importance of involving teachers in leadership roles in all areas of curriculum design and implementation. Teachers are trained professionals who have years of experience informed by a solid foundation in pedagogic theory for today's learning environments, and are therefore integral to the process of informing, guiding and shaping education in the province of Nova Scotia. Any efforts to modify curricula without the full and energetic participation of teachers are counterproductive at best, and catastrophic at worst.

Finally, while we acknowledge that Nova Scotia faces many fiscal challenges, we encourage the government to continue to support our public education system since investment in our children is an investment in our future as a community, a society and a culture. In particular, as the provincial organization of English as an Additional Language professionals, we would urge the government to look at ways of expanding its commitment to promote literacy and English language skills of new Nova Scotians by continuing to invest in support services needed to help newcomers of all ages to adjust to their new home.

Sincerely,

Kris Mitchell  
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