



New Brunswick Teachers' Association

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Education Plan Must Consider Key Issues

The New Brunswick Teachers' Association hopes that the Ten-Year Plan takes into account critical elements and pressures in our public education system.

NBTA President Guy Arseneault says teachers are being encouraged to give direct and frank feedback to the consultation process that is underway. However, the Association is concerned that major issues such as support for inclusion, student absenteeism and the downloading of responsibilities to schools and principals have not been identified as priorities in the discussion document. Members of the NBTA Board of Directors, all active teachers in schools, met in Fredericton last week and cited numerous instances where student learning needs are suffering due to inadequate resources.

Arseneault says teachers are giving their all, but the continued loss of teaching positions and budget reductions have really brought the system to the brink. "There is an enormous disconnect between what schools and teachers are being asked to do and the resources they are being given to deliver these services. For example, teachers have always supported inclusion, but the lack of resources devoted to the current model and the way this is being applied in schools, is adding major stresses to the system." Arseneault says there are cases where some individual students literally require thousands of hours of professional support. This year, however, many resource teachers and guidance counselors have less time to assist students.

"The recent reduction of 249 frontline teachers has created larger class sizes, fewer course options, more combined classes and less individualized learning support for students," Arseneault went on to say.

The NBTA President added, "We are worried that further cuts are still being considered. If the goal of the Plan is simply to justify reducing the Education budget, this would be disastrous for the students of NB and the future of this province."

The NBTA is a professional association of 6000 members that provides services to teachers and in support of public education in New Brunswick.

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