



MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release
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Atlantic Teacher Organizations Give Failing Grade to Nova Scotia Government's Response to Flawed Glaze Recommendations

St. John's, NL...The Council of Atlantic Provinces and Territory Teachers' Organizations (CAPTTO) is meeting this week in St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador. CAPTTO, which is comprised of the provincial teacher organizations for Newfoundland and Labrador (NLTA), Nova Scotia (NSTU), New Brunswick (NBTA, AEFNB, NBTF), Prince Edward Island (PEITF) and Nunavut (NTA), is dismayed and concerned about how the Government of Nova Scotia has responded to the recommendations found in the "Raising the Bar" report, written by self-proclaimed international education advisor Avis Glaze.

The Glaze Report makes 22 recommendations, 11 of which the government of Nova Scotia has been quick to accept. These include the elimination of elected school boards, removal of principals and vice-principals from the Nova Scotia Teachers Union (NSTU), and the creation of a college of teachers.

All of the organizations who comprise CAPTTO agree that the NS government's decision to implement these recommendations is counter-productive to fostering a collaborative education system and is a regressive step, for the following reasons:

- removing principals and vice-principals from the teachers' bargaining unit (union) is not going to improve the quality of education - it will create a more adversarial education system;
- creating a college of teachers is another level of bureaucracy that is unnecessary and costly and will do nothing to improve the quality of education for students; and
- school district amalgamation has been used historically in the Atlantic region as a cost-saving measure, with little evidence that it actually works - especially when one considers that jurisdictions in Canada with the best educational outcomes utilize smaller, locally controlled elected school boards.

The CAPTTO members agree that these decisions are not in the best interest of students.

Of equal interest to the education leaders meeting in St. John's, NL were the major issues that the Nova Scotia government

decided not to address. Notably absent from immediate action are many items that might have led to meaningful changes and improvements in the education system. There was no action on:

- developing targeted strategies for problem areas in education such as rural education, French language instruction, and students living in poverty or in care;
- investing in additional school-based supports for health and mental health, justice, and family services;
- providing coherent support for emerging immigrant communities for students, parents, and teachers; and
- a workforce planning strategy to recruit and train teachers who work in marginalized and underserved communities.

These are all well-argued positive steps that would make a real and lasting difference for students and teachers.

Notably absent as well are any items that would add accountability to the provincial government such as an independent ombudsperson, or clear guidelines for school maintenance and construction. Government has still not addressed issues such as class sizes, having enough support for inclusive education, or providing sufficient specialists to support the increasingly complex needs of students in schools.

CALL TO ACTION

CAPTTO calls upon the Nova Scotia government to reconsider the decision to implement the recommendations in the Glaze Report. For years, Nova Scotia teachers have been trying to engage Government in discussing real issues like overcrowding, school violence, underfunding, and administration of the education system. Disappointingly the response from Government has been to accept recommendations aimed at saving money on the backs of students and teachers while weakening the professional organization that is in the best position to advocate on education matters.

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