

August 24th, 2020

Member Update

We want to begin by acknowledging the significant contributions that many administrators have made throughout this summer to support the return to school. Some have taken on extra work within their role and others have volunteered their time, all in the best interest of students of Nova Scotia.

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Public School Administrators Association of Nova Scotia have continued to meet with the Deputy Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development, Executive Director of Labour Relations for the Province, the Regional Executive Directors/Superintendent, a number of Executive Directors from the EECD and met continuously with various tables such as the Learning Continuity Planning Committee and the Coordinating Table to support Nova Scotia's Back to School Plan. During these meetings, we have provided input to support the implementation of the Plan and to voice the concerns of administrators. Throughout the summer in collaboration with our educational partners, a tremendous amount of work has been done, or is in the process of being done, to support the successful implementation of the Back to School Plan. These series of meetings began with a meeting with Dr. Strang, that PSAANS attended, who set the parameters and guidelines for all planning tables and activities. For the latest documents (Music, Physical Education, etc.) to help you in your daily work to operationalize the Plan, please go to:

- <https://sites.google.com/gnspes.ca/elearning/support-documents>

In addition, we've been assured by the Deputy Minister that in the coming days, at all administrative meetings being held all Regions/CSAP, additional information will be provided on the following:

- lunch supervision
- lunch delivery
- sanitizing and disinfecting
- fire drills and lockdowns
- mask management - including recommended protocols for transitions from bus / common areas to the classroom for all grade levels.
- the administrators' role in the WellBeing agenda - guidance, resources, and direction on how to support staff and students and well as yourself.
- a mechanism such as a Google Doc in each RCE/CSAP, where questions, samples and sharing can be posted as they arise and all administrators can use. The goal is to have questions answered in a 24 hour turnaround.

In the coming days administrators across the province will be connecting with their regional leadership to take the next steps forward to operationalize the plans for returning to school. With the feedback that has been provided by countless administrators, system leaders, staff of the EECD, and the association, it is hoped that the information being provided this week will answer some of the outstanding questions that administrators have. As with the epidemiology of COVID-19, working in a pandemic means that best practices and responses are continually evolving. This means as an Association and the system as a whole, we have to allow time for the best and most up to date answers, aligned with Public Health, to be developed.

As the Association that represents the Regional and school-based public education leaders of Nova Scotia we will continue to advocate for consistent guidance, collaboration, and the resources necessary to safely open schools. When in place, we believe there is the capacity to safely open schools for the students of the Province. We remain in daily contact with the implementation planning for this school year and remain committed to the ongoing support for the work that school and regional administrators are doing in the service of students, staff and the communities they serve.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tim Simony', with a large, stylized loop at the end.

Tim Simony,
Chair