

June 29th, 2020

Dear Deputy Minister Montreuil:

The school year is quickly coming to an end and all of us, especially school administrators, are looking forward with anticipation to the summer that lies ahead. As an Association, our members in the education entities and schools of the province have gone above and beyond during these unprecedented times of COVID-19 and it is their leadership, in large part, which has been critical to the success of the emergency processes implemented. They have demonstrated commitment, innovation, persistence and resilience in the face of many unknowns and uncertainties. This success, however, is coming at a cost in terms of personal time, well-being and increased workload.

The Board of Directors has been very appreciative of the opportunities for collaborating with the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development during the emergency response to the COVID-19 pandemic. We believe that working towards the common goal of an effective system for all learners and their well-being is a shared responsibility and the province of Nova Scotia has demonstrated how government, entities, associations and unions can effectively partner to support that work in a crisis. As an association we are committed to supporting the response to the future challenges presented by the pandemic in order to meet the needs of the students of Nova Scotia with compassion and equity.

It is our perspective as an association that during the course of the emergency response the nature of teaching was fundamentally changed. From our involvement in the Learning Continuity Planning process we know that teachers, students and families were consistently advised that both teaching and learning would be significantly modified in terms of time, processes and expectations because people were simultaneously coping with the impact of the pandemic.

For administrators, however, there were few, if any, expectations which were modified or reduced, and the strategies to manage virtual schools and systems were often significantly more time consuming than typical in-school or regional processes. Layered on top of all the regular responsibilities these were carried through in order to maintain the commitment to ensuring as high a standard of education and support as possible within the constraints of the pandemic measures. The increased workload was barely sustainable for 3 months, and administrators are concerned about the impact moving forward over the course of a full year.

Following a Board of Directors meeting of the Public School Administrators Association of Nova Scotia on June 25, 2020, we are requesting an opportunity to meet with you to discuss how workload can be framed and managed so that administrators have the ability to maintain a high standard of practice as we work through the COVID-19 response in the 2020-2021 school year. There is undoubtedly a

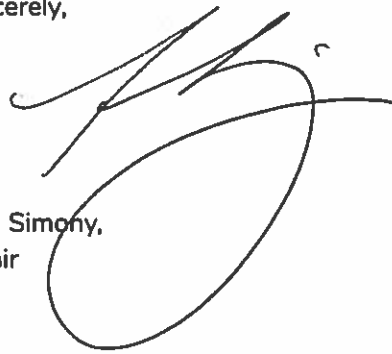
substantial amount of new work and new ways of working that will be layered onto the regular responsibilities.

Key areas of concern include:

- An expectation to report to work in August in excess of the 5 advanced reporting days.
- Receiving communication at the same time as the general public despite implications for school and entity operations.
- Issues regarding workload and employer directed professional obligations that are impinging on personal time extending well beyond the workday or work week.

On behalf of the association thank you for your time and consideration. We believe there is a shared concern on these matters and look forward to working with you to find solutions that are equitable and sustainable.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tim Simony', with a large, stylized flourish underneath.

Tim Simony,
Chair