**ACER-CART REPORT - EASTERN REP**

**March 23, 2018**

**RTO - NSTU**

On October 11,2017 Minister of Education Zach Churchill announced that the government of Nova Scotia was hiring Dr. Avis Glaze, a well-known educational consultant from Ontario, to provide an administrative review of the Nova Scotia educational system. The four areas of focus were the following:

1. Roles, responsibilities and administrative structure within the education system including governing school boards, school board central office administration and the Department of Education.

2. Process and management structure in all areas of administration and operation (eg; human resources, finance, transportation programs) to ensure effective and efficient use of resources.

3. Increased accountability, transparency, effectiveness and efficiency in decision making including budgetary decisions and resource allocation.

4. Strengthening interagency service delivery for children, youth and their families.

Dr. Glaze commenced her task immediately and from October 17 – November 11 she had 91 separate interviews, speaking with over 500 people from all walks of education. She also reviewed 1,500 online surveys responding to following questions:

1. What administrative changes should be made to the education system to ensure the focus is on the needs of the students?

2. What changes should be made to the Department of Education?

3. What changes should be made to the administration of schools?

On December 29, 2017 Dr. Glaze presented “Raise The Bar – A Coherent and Responsive Education Administrative System for Nova Scotia” to the Minister of Education. Dr. Glaze attended a news conference on January 22, 2018 when she made the document public and answered questions on the 22 recommendations.

On the following day the Minister of Education, without showing the document to fellow caucus members and staff at the Department of Education, announced government was accepting the Glaze report in its entirety and would be preparing legislation to affect changes in the Education Act in the spring session of the Legislative Assembly.

Of the 22 recommendations the following 5 brought outrage from the Nova Scotia Teachers Union (NSTU):

1. Eliminate the 7 English School Boards and replace them with a 15 member Provincial Advisory Council appointed by the Minister of Education. The province wide French School Board would remain due to federal government Charter rights.

2. Remove principals and vice-principals from the NSTU and into a new professional organization. Seniority and pension benefits would not be impacted and there was an option for those administrators who might want to return to the classroom and NSTU.

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3. Create a provincial College of Educators, an independent body to license, govern, discipline and regulate the teaching profession, helping to improve public confidence in the education system across the province.

4. Ensure teachers have the mobility and choice to work in any region in Nova Scotia by removing barriers in the 7 regional collective agreements while maintaining seniority rights.

5. Create an independent Student Progress Assessment Office to develop high-quality student assessments, reporting directly to the public on province-wide results and ensuring the assessments are aligned with the curriculum.

The NSTU sought reaction from members by having province-wide meetings with teachers and separate meetings with school administrators. On the basis of reactions from members at these meeting the Provincial Executive decided to mount a full scale campaign to have government reject the Glaze Report. Teachers were still smarting and upset from the previous school year disastrous rejection of three tentative agreements which led to a one day strike and the imposition of a four year collective agreement though Bill 75.

On February 6, 2018 I was asked to attend a meeting with NSTU President Liette Doucet and NSTU staff officers and she made it very clear that the RTO would be heavily involved in this campaign, unlike last year when the NSTU Executive Director rejected our input. Liette indicated I would be provided, and the ability, to review all written materials that NSTU members would be receiving and would also be made available to RTO members. I was also asked to work with the public relations department in providing materials to members wishing to lobby their Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLA’s).

A very impressive grassroots mobilization came into play very quickly with active and retired teachers attending rallies, meeting their MLA’s, writing letters and signing petitions. The NSTU provided written material for parents showing that the recommendations would not benefit their children in the classroom as these recommendations would destroy the collegial model of principal and teachers working collaboratively and cooperatively.

The action culminated in an illegal strike vote on February 20, 2018 when 82.5% of active teachers voted to strike and possibly face a $300 fine for each day on strike. On the following day the Premier offered to meet with the NSTU President and indicated he was prepared to make reasonable compromises before introducing legislation.

The following week the government introduced Bill 72 – The Education Reform Act. The Premier did in fact compromise by deciding not to go through with a College of Educators and Student Progress Assessment Office. The government eliminated the 7 English School Boards effective March 31, 2018 and made some changes to the position of school administrators in the NSTU.

The Act established the Public School Administrators Association of Nova Scotia in which school administrators will pay dues, instead of being part of the NSTU. The Association is not a

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bargaining unit, but can negotiate and enter into memorandum of understanding respecting terms and conditions of employment.

Members will have access to all NSTU benefits (for which they will also continue to pay Union dues), but will no longer operate under a contract. The Act guarantees that school administrators will receive the same raises as teachers, but also allows the government to pay them more. The Act forbids members of the Association the right to unionize, take job action or file formal grievances. In two years Association members have the right to evaluate the model and seek alternatives if so wished.

On March 1, 2018 President Liette Doucet announced that changes proposed in Bill 72 had done enough to avert job action. She indicated that while school administrators would keep their affiliation with the NSTU, the collegial model would now be damaged and lead to conflict in the schools. She also stated that teachers were genuinely fearful of the chaos that would ensue due to the elimination of the 7 English School Boards.

On Thursday March 8, 2018, one day before the beginning of March Break the Liberal majority passed Bill 72 with a vote of 25-21.

My prediction is that there will be a shortage of school administrators next year and non-educators will be hired as “managers” of the schools. As well, I predict an interest in forming Charter Schools in selected parts of the province beginning in 2020 due to the Education Reform Act.

**RTANL**

Doreen Noseworthy reported that her association is very concerned over the privatization of health care, contrary to the provisions of the Canada Health Act. Her members feel that without some accountability or transparency that money from the Health Accord could end in private businesses. She also indicated meetings are planned with government with the hope there will be increased funding for home care and nursing home care in the upcoming budget. She indicated that she will be attending the Canadian Labour Congress town hall meeting on the National Pharmacare Plan on March 20, 2018.

**PEIRTA**

Cynthia MacDonald reported that her members continue to lobby their Members of Parliament on a National Pharmacare Plan. She also indicated her members are becoming very frustrated in the lack of negotiations between the Pharmacists Association and the P.E.I. government on extending the 30 maximum allotment per prescription to 90 days.

**NBSRT**

Margaret Urquhart reported that an Ad-Hoc Committee on Membership has developed an extensive report on how to get more members involved in the organization. One of the

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recommendations is universal suffrage for all contested positions on the Executive. The Scholarship Committee is recommending two $2,500 scholarships at the provincial level to deserving graduates from New Brunswick secondary schools. She indicated her members are gearing up for a September Provincial election and are starting to questions how the $75 million Healthy Seniors Pilot will be allocated.

**SERFNB**

Jacques Albert reported that members are becoming concerned about the purchase of community based nursing homes by the private sector and the potential increase in costs. He also stated that there is a concern in the francophone region about the lack of bilingual ambulance paramedics.

**QPARSE**

Jan Langelier reported that her members continued to be concerned about the privatization of health care in Quebec, without interference by the provincial government. She also indicated members want a National Pharmacare Plan and are hopeful the federal government will implement such a plan as soon as possible.