

news



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N O V A S C O T I A T E A C H E R S U N I O N

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Teachers approve tentative agreement

Nova Scotia's 9,300 public school teachers have endorsed a tentative agreement reached between the Nova Scotia Teachers Union and the provincial government on April 5.

"Our members have voted overwhelmingly in favour of this agreement," says NSTU president Shelley Morse. "The diligent work of the bargaining team and this vote result indicate it's a fair and reasonable contract for public school teachers in the province."

In a province-wide electronic vote held today, 73 per cent of teachers voted 92 per cent in favour of the tentative deal. The contract will give teachers a salary increase of 7.5 per cent (7.7 compounded) over three years, with two per cent increase effective August 1, 2012, a 2.5 per cent increase on August 1, 2013, and 3 per cent increase on August 1, 2014. The contract will expire on July 31, 2015.

The agreement also includes a Letter of Commitment that maintains existing class sizes for Grades Primary to 3 for the duration of the collective agreement. "Class size and composition continues to be a daunting issue for our members," says Morse. "We are hopeful class caps for other grades will come into effect soon."

An increase to *Individualized Program Plans (IPPs)* will mean that boards will have more funding for substitutes so teachers will have more time to attend program planning team meetings and prepare IPPs for students with special needs during the school day. The new contract also sees all teachers in the province receiving a guaranteed 10 per cent minimum of marking and preparation time, effective August 1, 2014.

"Demands on teachers' time continues to be an issue for our members," says Shelley Morse. "Guaranteed marking and prep time and more time to deal with children with special needs through IPP planning time during the school day will be a start in alleviating this issue."

The previous teachers' contract expired on July 31, 2012. The NSTU continues to negotiate a new contract for Community College members. The last round of bargaining took place April 8 and 9.

The Nova Scotia Teachers Union represents more than 10,000 public school teachers, Community College faculty and professional support staff in Nova Scotia, and teachers who work for the Atlantic Provinces Special Education Authority in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island. Since 1895, it has worked to improve the quality of public education for children and youth in Nova Scotia, while promoting and advancing the teaching profession.

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