

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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NSTU President accuses Minister of shirking responsibilities

NSTU President Alexis Allen today accused Education Minister Marilyn More of shirking her ministerial responsibility to deal with a labour dispute that threatens to close the Nova Scotia Community College.

“The Minister of Education seems more interested in establishing a new bargaining pattern for upcoming negotiations with other public sector unions than dealing fairly with a union that began negotiating 16 months ago,” Allen says. “We requested the opening of these talks way back in April 2008.”

Negotiations between the Nova Scotia Teachers Union representing faculty and professional support employees and the Community College broke down late Friday following a last-ditch effort to avoid a strike.

“It should not be necessary to remind the Minister that her primary responsibility is to the students, staff and the industry partners that rely heavily on a stable Community College system,” Allen says. “It is not about setting a new pattern for future negotiations.”

Allen expressed regret that the resulting turmoil might endanger the education of some 25,000 full- and part-time students enrolled in programs at the College. “We still believe a fair and equitable settlement is within reach and regret that the Minister has so far been unwilling to commit to wage increases and benefit packages comparable to other public servants.”

Allen says talks have been at a standstill since June, when a conciliator appointed by the then Minister of Labour failed to reach an agreement between the College and the two NSTU bargaining units. All outstanding issues except salary, the term of the agreement and medical benefits have been agreed to.

The Union has been in a legal strike position since September 25.

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