



# NEWS RELEASE

## Future cuts will impact kids

**For immediate release**

**December 13, 2011**

**Halifax, NS** – Nova Scotia's education partners (representing teachers, school boards, parents and administrators) are warning further funding cuts to public education will impact classrooms and students.

"We're here to tell you today, there is simply nothing left to cut without significantly impacting our students," says Vic Fleury, President of the Nova Scotia School Boards Association (NSSBA).

The provincial government cut \$36-million from the 2011 budget based on declining student enrolment and more cuts to public education are expected in the next two years.

School boards responded by eliminating 553 positions – 128 of which were cut based on declining enrolment and the rest due to lack of funds. Eighty-two (82) teacher positions were cut to meet budget targets. One-hundred-thirty-six (136) program specialists and consultants were eliminated. Seventy-five (75) teaching assistants for students in the classroom were cut, and 132 non-teaching staff positions in support departments such as operations, maintenance and bussing were eliminated. School boards have deferred upgrades to technology, cut spending on library resources, and revised work processes to meet demands to ensure our students were not impacted.

"Further cuts to the education system will mean school boards will have to make some difficult decisions that will inevitably affect our students. Teachers will no longer be able to provide the programs, services and supports that families have come to expect and that students deserve," says Fleury.

The partners suggest a decline in student enrolment does not mean a decline in operating costs. Boards still have to deal with fixed costs such as transportation, utilities and fuel. In addition, over the last decade Nova Scotia has made strides in the programs, services, supports and interventions offered to our students, including programs for alternative learners and supports for students with disabilities.

"Teachers are telling us that with the continued cuts to education it is getting more difficult to meet the diverse learning needs of our students," says NSTU president Alexis Allen. "Our 11,000 members are very concerned that the cuts are affecting their students' ability to reach their full potential, while at the same time threatening the future of public education in Nova Scotia."

The partners are urging the public to contact their elected officials to ensure public education is a top priority in the provincial budget. The public is also urged to attend any upcoming meetings about funding in their school board district.

"Education should be viewed as an investment in our future," says Fleury. "It is the foundation to developing a society that is healthy, well-educated, community-oriented, and employable."