



October 31, 2016

Honourable Dwight Ball
Premier
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador
P.O. Box 8700
St. John's, NL
A1B 4J6

Dear Premier:

On Thursday, October 27 the Provincial Executive of the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association voted unanimously to call upon you to replace Dale Kirby as Minister of Education. This motion by Executive was unanimously endorsed by all NLTA Branch Presidents in attendance at a meeting of the NLTA Joint Council on October 28.

As you are aware, on September 27, I sent Minister Kirby a detailed letter and historical documentation outlining how his public comments on September 21, regarding me and the Association, were inaccurate, offensive, unworthy of a public official and contrary to the information he should have been aware of in his capacity as Minister. Specifically, Minister Kirby stated that I was, "on record from the very beginning of not wanting a full-day Kindergarten in this province." Minister Kirby went on to declare that I, "did not want to have a better education for children or better working environment for our teachers." In order to further undermine the NLTA in the eyes of the public, Minister Kirby announced that the NLTA was, "peddling in ignorance." Minister Kirby has been asked to publicly retract and correct the misinformation and offensive statements made with the intention of undermining public and teacher confidence in the NLTA. As you know, Minister Kirby has been in receipt of my letter for more than a month and has failed to reply. The NLTA can only interpret this complete lack of acknowledgement as a refusal to address the issues and set the record straight. Minister Kirby's initial comments and subsequent refusal to respond are not actions befitting a Minister of the Crown.

I remind you that, as per Article 4 of the Teachers' Association Act, the NLTA has the duty to:

Promote the cause of education in the province by

- (i) affording to educational authorities, teachers and the public in general the benefits of the collective experience and advice of teachers on practical educational matters,*
- (ii) circulating information regarding educational methods and movements in the province and elsewhere,*

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- (iii) *stimulating through the media of communication an interest in education among the people generally, and*
- (iv) *organizing and supporting groups for improving the knowledge and skill of teachers;*

I also remind you that in your mandate letter of December 14, 2015 you stated to Minister Kirby, “We shall, without fail, act **with integrity in all aspects of our service**, striving for excellence in discharging our responsibilities.” You went on to state:

*I take this opportunity to remind you that as you carry out your responsibilities, as a Member of the House of Assembly and Member of Cabinet **adhering to the Code of Conduct and the Conflict of Interest guidelines are mandatory**, to ensure you discharge your duties with the **highest ethical standards**.*

Having reviewed the Code of Conduct for Members of the House of Assembly, I wish to bring to your attention the following:

*Members of this House of Assembly respect the law and the institution of the Legislature and acknowledge our need to maintain the public trust placed in us by performing our duties with accessibility, accountability, **courtesy, honesty and integrity**.*

Principles:

- 1. Members shall inform themselves of and shall conduct themselves in accordance with the provisions and spirit of the Standing Orders of the House of Assembly, the House of Assembly Accountability, Integrity and Administration Act, the Members’ Resources and Allowances Rules, the Elections Act, 1991, the House of Assembly Act and this Code of Conduct and shall ensure that their conduct does not bring **the integrity of their office or the House of Assembly into disrepute**.*
- 2. It is a fundamental objective of their holding public office that Members serve their fellow citizens with **integrity** in order to improve the economic and social conditions of the people of the province.*
- 3. Members reject political corruption and refuse to participate in **unethical political practices which tend to undermine the democratic traditions of our province and its institutions**.*

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4. *Members will act lawfully and in a manner that will withstand the closest public scrutiny. Neither the law nor this code is designed to be exhaustive and there will be occasions on which Members will find it necessary to adopt more stringent norms of conduct in order to protect the public interest and to **enhance public confidence and trust.***

It is apparent to the NLTA Provincial Executive and Joint Council that Minister Kirby, through his inaccurate and offensive statements designed to undermine public and teacher confidence in the Association as it pursues its legislated duties, has violated both your mandate letter and the Code of Conduct for Members of the House of Assembly.

I regret to inform you that the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association has lost all confidence in Dale Kirby as the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development and ask that you do your duty and replace him as soon as is reasonably possible.

Sincerely,



James Dinn
President

JD/sbc
cc Steve Brooks – Executive Director