

IT'S ABOUT TIME:

A Study of the Impact of Workload
on Teachers and Students



**Press Statement
by Fred Douglas, President
Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association
June 10, 2004, 10:00 a.m.**

Good Morning,

It's About Time: A Study of the Impact of Workload on Teachers and Students delves into the invisible work of teachers and investigates how this work is impacting on the province's education system, and affecting the children of this province.

It is not my intent to review the full study. Dr. Dibbon has already provided an overview of many of the most important results. You also have a copy of the full report as well as the highlights and recommendations.

This study addresses the many misconceptions about what encompasses a teacher's work day. It discusses the intensification of work that has occurred in recent years and how this has impacted on teachers and their students. The NLTA has been making this case for years. This report provides the data that supports what teachers have been telling us about the conditions in the classroom.

It is clear that the many facets of teachers' work need closer attention in order to find ways to let teachers do their jobs, working a reasonable number of hours per week. Teachers must be given more time for encouraging excellence and personal growth among students, for giving students the individual and small group attention they need.

Considering the data presented in this report, imagine for a minute that you are a parent with a child in a large class. Think about the amount of one-on-one time or time in a small group your child actually has each day with a teacher, and think about how little time the teacher has to give thoughtful attention to that project your child has been working on. These conditions are not acceptable.

Close attention must be paid to the recommendations in this report. Given the diverse nature of teachers' work, no single solution will provide a remedy for all teachers. However, reasonable attempts must be made to achieve reductions in class size, increased preparation time, increased professional development and training, and the elimination of mandatory supervision.

The issues associated with the impact of teacher workload are real and serious,

much too serious to be dismissed as a collective bargaining issue. We are telling our members that, in the best interests of their students and for their own survival, they must put professional parameters around what they do. It cannot be business as usual in September. The health and well-being of teachers and the educational well-being of the children in the classrooms are of our utmost concern.

It is common knowledge that we are living in times of fiscal restraint, but the fact that we cannot change everything does not mean that we can or should do nothing. We want to partner with the educational stakeholders – to fix this situation. All stakeholders must take a leadership role to help address the significant issues raised in this study.

Because a one-size-fits-all solution is unlikely to be found, all of the partners/stakeholders – the NLTA, the Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Directors of Education, the Newfoundland and Labrador School Boards Association, the Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of School Councils, and the Department of Education – must work together to find appropriate ways to implement solutions that are sensible, timely, and meaningful to teachers and students. We will be approaching the Department of Education immediately to begin discussions on the findings of this study.

Thank you.

[back to main page](#)