



## OPEN LETTER

### FOR RELEASE ON MAY 9, 2016

May 6, 2016

### **RRDSB Chair's open letter to OSSTF leadership and our Rainy River District School Board secondary teachers**

It is because of our students that I am writing this open letter, as a parent, a teacher, a former OSSTF member and as Chair of the Rainy River District School Board, to ask you to join with me to resolve this serious and most unfortunate labour situation.

The students, our youth, are truly innocent in the process, undeserving of missed opportunities; the effects on students, of this labour unrest are real and will become even greater the longer it drags on. It is time to stop pointing fingers at who is or who is not responsible for our lack of a local agreement, and instead, put our students first, put their interests before ours, ahead of our roles as politicians or elected federation representatives, and first before the public exchange of who is or is not 'serious' about reaching a local deal.

The current state of affairs is doing nothing to move us forward. To move us away from this impasse, something has to change. That is why, here and now, I am proposing a change, one that is fair for teachers and the Board, as well as for students and their parents to whom we are both accountable. On behalf of the Board, I recommend that we move forward together by allowing an arbitrator to resolve our differences. We clearly need to have a neutral outside party impartially decide what is fair, in order to bring back a peaceful, supportive environment for both staff and students.

I can personally attest to the fact that the Board is ready and willing to act in the interest of labour peace and sincerely hope you are ready and willing to act in that interest as well. I therefore ask the Federation leadership and members to agree to binding arbitration and to pause the disruption of student learning while we go through the process. At the end, we will all continue to work and live in our communities together.

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Mission: *"Together, we empower all students to believe in themselves, to achieve, and to dream."*

Vision: *"The Rainy River District School Board is an innovative community, nurturing hearts and minds, to build a foundation for tomorrow, today."*

*This publication is available in accessible formats upon request.*