

OBSERVATIONS

Day of Mourning for Workers Killed or Injured on the Job

Following are the remarks from PC Caucus Labour and Workforce Development Critic and Victoria-The Lakes MLA Keith Bain, on the occasion of the Day of Mourning for Workers Killed or Injured on the Job, held Wednesday, April 28, 2010.

As the Progressive Conservative Caucus Critic for Labour and Workforce Development and MLA for Victoria-The Lakes, I am pleased to have been invited to say a few words this morning. – We should realize “The Day of Mourning is as much about a commitment to safer workplaces as it is about remembering those who were killed or injured on the job.” We can only hope that the annual observance of this day will strengthen the resolve to establish safe conditions in the workplace for all.

As workers in Canada and around the world join together to remember their colleagues who have been killed or injured on the job, they must also organize and mobilize themselves to continue to strive for safe jobs and working conditions.

As many individuals have said and are saying today - Our prayers are with the families and friends of victims. We share with them the loss of their loved ones and the loss of our fellow Canadians.

What can employers do?

Businesses should honour workers everyday by committing to make theirs a safe workplace.

Today is also known as Workers Memorial Day and it is great to see the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety play a leading role toward workplace safety.

Around the world, one person is killed on the job every 30 seconds

Here in Canada, it is estimated 1 worker out of 16 suffers an injury while at the workplace

This translates into one injury every nine seconds or 800,000 injuries annually including 750 fatal accidents and 16 million days of work are lost each year. The annual cost of occupational injuries to the Canadian economy is \$9.1 billion. Ladies and gentleman, some astonishing, yet grim statistics that we must think about not only today but every day of the year as we head off to the workplace. We must do anything and everything possible to make our work world safe and avoid debilitating injuries that we end up regretting forever.

Thank you to the Nova Scotia Federation of Labour for organizing this morning’s ceremony. Let’s make April 28/2010 to at least April 28/2015 fatality free to each and every worker employed in Nova Scotia. If we can do this, just think of the many wonderful family fun times that will not be interrupted with sadness and grief. Thank you and Good Morning!

Rural schools part of a much larger picture

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reviewing schools is the easiest mechanism for them to pursue.

“Boards to not appear to have a process that requires them to look at other aspects of financial accountability. During our last review process, our study committee was easily able to show thousands of dollars of waste and unnecessary expenditure, not related to actual school operation and education.

“The decision to put a school under review is always difficult,” said Education Minister Marilyn More. “These amendments will ensure communities have the opportunity to be fully involved in the school review process any time a public school is considered for permanent closure.”

The new amendments expand on legislation passed in 2008 that broadened opportunities for community engagement, expanded the time frame to one year, and required school boards to prepare an identification report to support the review,” she continued.

“Government is very supportive of promoting schools as community assets,” said Ms. More. “This legislation will allow us to develop regulations that will provide more input at crucial stages of the process to ensure informed and better decisions.”

Ms. Oland is hopeful this is the case. She sees small rural schools as integral to the sustainable growth of rural infrastructure.

She would like to see the Province pursue the following changes:

Enact legislation to limit the amount of time elementary-age children must spend riding a school bus.

Stop the ‘silo mentality’ that prevents the Department of Education (and Boards) from seeing community schools as being part of the bigger economic development and sustainability picture.

Consider creative funding across government departments that would recognize the multi-functional role of our community schools, and their importance to rural sustainability (i.e. our schools are CAP Sites, meeting cen-

ters, community exercise facilities, health delivery points... if they were funded in a way that reflected their multiple uses, then ‘bums in seats’ would become less important.)

“Look at other models,” Ms. Oland suggests. “What New Brunswick is doing appears to be revolutionary. The Maritimes once had a series of model rural schools that emphasized ‘rural education’ - agriculture and entrepreneurship. Ireland also does good things with its tiny, rural schools.

“Recognize that community schools are an integral part of a much bigger picture. Our Province (and planet, for that matter) faces the looming spectre of climate change, oil depletion, and food/energy insecurity. If we are to remain healthy and strong as a province into the future, we MUST ensure strong rural infrastructure is in place. Strong, healthy, food-growing local economies will become increasingly important - but only if infrastructure exists to allow people to live and work in rural spaces.”

The proposed changes to the act reflect feedback from school board and school advisory council representatives involved in school reviews since 2008.

Bookmobile Schedule

Wednesday, May 5: Baddeck Academy (9:30-10:45 am), North River at Church (11:45 am-12:15 pm), Barrachois Bridge at the Church (1-1:30 pm).

Thursday, May 6: Indian Brook at Leather Works (10:30-11 am), Little River at the Wharf Road (11:15-11:45 am), Wreck Cove General Store (1-2 pm).

Wednesday, May 12: Middle River at the churches, (10-10:15 am), Middle River School (10:30-11:45 am), Wagmatcook Preschool & Head Start (12:15-12:30 pm).

Thursday, May 13: Boularderie East at the Highway Garage (9:30-9:45 am), Boularderie School (10-11:30 am), Boularderie at Grant’s Store (11:45-noon), Ross Ferry (12:45-1:30 pm), Kempt Head (2-2:30 pm).

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