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**From:** Sherry Williams [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 16, 2017 2:28 PM  
**To:** Office of the Legislative Counsel  
**Subject:** Nova Scotia Education

As a teacher of 26 years in 2 different provinces I can honestly say that I am experiencing and witnessing things in classrooms which I have never seen before. Some are positive but the majority is disheartening and even frightening. It is a basic right of children to receive an education and be safe while doing so. Unfortunately this is not always the case. With the rise of behavioural and mental health issues in our classrooms our students are not always safe. In the past few years I have seen objects thrown, desks turned over, people kicked or hit, students (and teachers) personal property destroyed, bad language being used and name calling becoming routine. ( and this is an elementary classroom). This is not right or safe and results in increased anxiety for the other students. Support is requested, and meetings are held but several years later the same issues are still happening. What happened to the Labour Standards of a "safe workplace"? Even if another student isn't injured how can they possibly concentrate and learn? The teacher's focus is often on the behavioural issue because of safety, and who suffers, the other students. Students are not always getting their basic right to an education.

This year I am lucky not to have a serious behaviour issue but the many academic issues make up for it. I teach a combined class so that is already 2 sets of outcomes. I then have 5 individual plans to teach, many adaptations to apply and reading levels from pre A (non reader) to W (middle school and beyond). All of that in a class 3/4 class. How can I possibly teach all of these programs and reach all the outcomes? It is a juggling act and even though I have 26 years of experience and strategies to draw upon, it often feels like a losing battle. I do have a TA in my classroom but she works mostly with an autistic child ( who by the way is NOT one of my IPPs). I am writing to ask for your help. We need more support. OUR STUDENTS DESERVE BETTER.