

Frame your message. Points to include:

Bill 28 - The Public Services Sustainability Act

- This bill is unconstitutional as it undermines the process of meaningful, good faith bargaining. This is an infringement on collective bargaining rights that are protected in the Charter.
- Assuming inflation continues to increase by a rate of two per cent, the net effect of this loss to purchasing power will be compounded year-over-year to the tune of 6.2 per cent at the end of the legislated wage pause. For an average teacher across this province, this translates to approximately a \$15,464 loss to every single teacher.

Class Size

- As a teacher with more than 30 years experience, I can attest to the fact that smaller class sizes improve outcomes, reduce distraction and lead to more engaged students.
- Children learn better when they receive more personal attention. One on one time is key to helping identify strength and weakness in my students. (give an example wherever possible, without naming students)

BEF

- A fully functioning BEF is essential to the quality of French-language education that Manitoba educators, like me, and schools provide to students.
- French language education is not a translation of the English curriculum, and it is unique and representative of the proud history of Franco-Manitobans.
- French language programming has represented the fastest growing segment of Manitoba's K-12 education system with enrolment up nearly 40 per cent. All indicators point to the need for more investment to strengthen French-language education, not less.
- I urge you to restore government funding and resources to the Bureau de l'éducation française and to reinstate an assistant to the deputy minister to ensure that French-language education remains a priority.

THE MANITOBA TEACHERS' SOCIETY

LETTER WRITING TIPS AND MORE



How to Address a Politician

PROVINCIAL REPRESENTATIVES

POSITION	Premier
ENVELOPE	The Honourable Brian Pallister Premier of Manitoba
SALUTATION	Dear Premier

POSITION	Minister
ENVELOPE	The Honourable Ian Wishart, MLA Minister of Education
SALUTATION	Dear Minister

POSITION	Member of the Legislative Assembly
ENVELOPE	Mr. Mrs. John/Jane Smith, MLA
SALUTATION	Dear Mr. / Mrs. Smith

Guidelines for your drafted letter

- 1 Use this simple structure.
 - a. *Introduce yourself. A simple phrase such as "I have spent the last 20 years teaching at Gillis School" creates a mental image which brings you and your point alive.*
 - b. *Establish yourself as a constituent when writing to your MLA or MP. "I have lived in your constituency for X number of years.*
 - c. *Use phrases like*
 - i. *In my experience...*
 - ii. *I have seen...*
- 2 Be respectful. They are more likely to listen to your point if it is not accompanied by abuse. This is not an opportunity to vent.
- 3 Be concise. It's best to write about only one issue at a time. HOWEVER, since all of these issues affect the sustainability and quality of public education, you can write about more than one issue, but keep each issue to one paragraph. Try to keep the letter to one page.
- 4 Clearly state your point/concern early in the letter. "I am concerned that the government's removal of the cap for K-12 class sizes, the passing of Bill 28...(any other issues) will negatively impact our public education system.
- 5 Request that a particular action be taken. When writing to a politician, always have a solution to the problem. In this case, "I urge you to rescind Bill 28 and to reinstate the class size cap."
- 6 Aim for the public interest. Explain why you think your request will benefit the public as a whole, not simply you and your friends.
- 7 Get the facts right. You do not have to have all of the facts (much less recite them all), but the ones you put in your letter must be correct. Do not let the fact that you are not an expert prevent you from voicing your opinion.
- 8 Express yourself naturally. Remember that this is you expressing what is on your mind. You do not have to sound like Lincoln or Churchill.
- 9 Ask for a reply. The best closing sentence is "I look forward to receiving your response". As a rule, letters sent via mail will receive a response within 30 days.
- 10 Consider if you should send a copy of the letter to anyone else. If writing to your MLA, consider sending a copy to the Minister of Education, or the Premier.