

Robert Green for MTA President

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<http://rgreen.freeshell.org>

A passion for public education:

The main reason I am running for this position is that I believe strongly in high quality public education. This means that **I believe in you!** Teachers are literally the lifeblood of public education. It is no coincidence that countries like Finland that support and empower teachers consistently produce higher achieving students. I believe that I have the knowledge, the activist experience and the media contacts to be a passionate and effective voice speaking out on behalf of teachers and public education.

A time for choices:

Three years ago when I last ran for MTA President I challenged Mr. Sutherland on the exorbitant salary he intended on receiving as MTA President. His response was to state that "you have to pay for quality". It's now time for MTA members to assess whether we have received the kind of quality leadership we were promised. Here's an overview of what the last three years have meant for our union and its members.

Members that are poorer:

- Despite union leaders having misled the public about teachers receiving 10.25% in salary increases over five years, **the reality is that we only got 5.25%**. Even if one includes the amount received due to salary relativity, the most one can truthfully claim we won is 7.65%, far from the 10% needed to keep up with inflation. Because the public was given the false impression that we received a very generous deal, it will be that much harder for us to catch up in the next round.
- Teachers having babies are now learning that the previous round of negotiations resulted in a **5% reduction in maternity benefits**. Not only were teachers not informed about this at the time of voting, they have not been informed since. A single mother at my school had to discover this from her pay stub.
- We will also be poorer because instead of cutting spending the current leadership chose to increase **our union dues**.

A union that is weaker:

- Two of the MTA's most valued employees, **John Winrow and Peter McKelvie, have recently both submitted their resignations**. This is a major loss for the MTA and its members who have come to rely on John and Peter's extensive knowledge. The fact that John is not even staying on to train his replacement raises serious questions about his treatment as an MTA employee.
- Despite being informed by a member whose child suffers from autism about **the absence of a clause in our contract on work-family balance** enjoyed by almost every other public sector union in Quebec, Mr Sutherland 'forgot' to ensure that it was included in our new contract. Oops!
- As members have been reading in the media about **investigations by UPAC in the EMSB's Voc Ed sector**, the only action our union has taken was to write a letter to the School Board. Despite the serious implications this potentially illegal activity has for MTA members, our President has not even bothered to go into these schools and speak directly with the members affected.

A union that is poorer:

- Thanks to the decision to pursue **an unfounded and morally questionable lawsuit against a member**, the union has wasted tens of thousands of dollars of our money. Had the lawsuit succeeded the MTA would have been awarded close to \$200,000. Instead it now must pay \$120,000 in addition to what it paid its lawyer. The result will be a drastically depleted contingency fund.

Priorities I have for the union:

- Favouring **pressure tactics that cost government not teachers!** Next time we must work-to-rule!
- Working to ensure that if **international exchange students** are entering our classes, they have the basic skills and resources needed to succeed.
- Doing more outreach and **visiting schools regularly**.
- Taking a much harder line in **defending teachers from abuse by administrators**.
- Demanding in local negotiations that the **schedules of adult education centres be harmonized** in order to help contracted teachers have more choice in their workloads.
- Working to **improve the recall and assignment process**. Other unions do this online. We need to explore such models and find ways to make our own process more transparent.
- Holding an extensive consultation aimed at addressing the **widespread dissatisfaction with our health and dental insurance**.
- Fixing a **grievance process that is broken**. The School Board's consistent pattern of stonewalling our grievances for years must be addressed. Local negotiations are a perfect opportunity to do this!
- Working to **build alliances with parents**. The interests of teachers and parents are the same on many issues. We need to do much more to build powerful alliances that can push for real change.

If teachers at your school have questions, contact me at green4mta@gmail.com to arrange a meeting either in person or via Skype. Together we can make this a union we all feel proud to be members of!