



MESSAGE FOR PARENTS:

WE'RE STANDING UP FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING CONDITIONS

Negotiations aren't just about salary and benefits. Unions negotiate with the Ontario government and school boards to seek improvements to teaching and learning conditions.

Teacher Negotiations include System-Level Improvements

Education sector bargaining is key to addressing system level improvements. Since our agreements last for three years, teachers and other education workers have limited opportunities to make gains on important classroom issues that affect both educators and students, such as class size, supports for students with special needs, and workload issues that determine the amount of time teachers and other school staff have to spend with individual students.

Employer Organization demanded Strips to Teacher Working Conditions

Once bargaining rules were agreed to, the Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA) tabled proposals that would take away more than a decade worth of hard-fought gains that were won through bargaining and working with the government. These proposals included giving teachers more supervision assignments outside the classroom, reducing teachers' ability to determine how to use their preparation time, and limiting teachers' ability to decide the most appropriate assessments to use with their students.



Government seeks to Impose Other Union Settlement on ETFO Members

ETFO participated in seven days of negotiations in September once OPSBA agreed to remove most of its contentious demands. At the end of those discussions, the government and OPSBA refused to continue the talks. They insisted that ETFO accept the same contract deal as other education unions.

This ignores our right to negotiate contracts that address the unique needs of our members and students. Elementary classes are, on average, larger than secondary classes. Elementary education is more affected by Ontario's standardized testing and prescriptive curriculum expectations, which determine teacher workload and teachers' ability to develop engaging lessons and cater to students' natural curiosity. Elementary educators face classrooms with wider ranges of student ability, which results in increased workload.

Austerity Agenda means No Improvements for Elementary Schools

The government is imposing an austerity agenda on education sector bargaining. The government's "net-zero" bargaining doesn't just affect salary and benefits for education workers. It means there is no real opportunity to negotiate improvements to elementary classrooms, like smaller classes, increased supports for students with special needs, and more time with each student.

That's why ETFO members – teachers, occasional teachers, designated early childhood educators, education support personnel and professional support personnel – are taking a stand.