

Teacher/Occasional Teacher Central Bargaining Table Update May 16, 2023

OSSTF/FEESO met with representatives from the government and the Ontario Public School Boards Association (OPSBA) on May 15 and 16 at the Teacher/Occasional Teacher central bargaining table.

In an attempt to move negotiations forward, OSSTF/FEESO again tried to engage in productive conversations regarding the government's accelerated apprenticeship program that was announced in March. Unfortunately, the government remained unable or unwilling to provide any details about the program, claiming that those details would be determined following a consultation scheduled for the fall.

This approach is concerning for many reasons, especially because this government has a particularly poor track record on respecting the input from parents, students, educators, and other stakeholders with a vested interest in protecting Ontario's public education system.

During the last round of bargaining, the government engaged in massive public consultations and then completely ignored (and tried to hide) the virtually unanimous consensus against larger high school class sizes while trying to bargain for large increases to class sizes.

OSSTF/FEESO Members have long supported students in existing and successful programs that allow for early entry into apprenticeships. However, we have serious concerns on how this new program will be implemented. So far, the limited details that have been released appear to disregard building trade submissions on Ontario's apprenticeship system. A 2017 submission by the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Construction Council of Ontario (IBEW-CCO), plainly states that "someone with only grade 10 would have considerable difficulty completing the in-school portion of their trades training."

Also concerning are the delays in bargaining caused by announcing, in the middle of negotiations, significant changes to the education system without sharing the actual details of those changes.

Bill 98, the *Better Schools and Student Outcomes Act*, announced in April, was tabled by the Ford government without proper consultation with any education union, students, parents, caregivers, or communities. The Ford government seems to be using Bill 98 to give themselves broad new powers despite their alarming track record of poorly managing public education and public services in general. We cannot detail all the changes that Bill 98 could usher in as the government refuses to share specific details on how they plan to implement this legislation.

OSSTF/FEESO has shared our concerns regarding Bill 98 with the government and in the media and will continue to push back against the government's overreach and serious disruptions to the bargaining process. Additionally, we will continue to counter the Ford government's misinformation with accurate data about the ongoing short-changing and underfunding of public education.

We will also continue to provide regular updates to Members, and we encourage all Members to remain vocal in their communities and on social media regarding the failures of this government to properly invest in public education.

You can find general bargaining information on the [Bargaining 101 page](#) on the OSSTF/FEESO Update webpage as well as an [article on logging into myOSSTF](#) and ensuring your contact details are up to date.

The Bargaining Bulletins are now available on the *myOSSTF* section of the OSSTF/FEESO website. Please check *myOSSTF* for updates.