

MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release: Thursday, October 15, 2020

Lecce's announcement ignores what is most important to Ontarians

(Toronto)—In the middle of a global pandemic, the priority for all of us in education should be to safeguard students, educators, and the families they go home to. However, today's announcement by the Minister of Education speaks to a distraction that does absolutely nothing to address the most critical issue of safety in schools.

Regulation 274 was brought in to address the nepotism rampant in the hiring of teachers in Ontario. While Lecce has couched this repeal of the regulation as an effort to pursue diversity in hiring, our fear is that it is likely to result in the opposite as nepotism comes roaring back to life. In the absence of a transparent and fair hiring system, biases can continue unchecked. As a [report by Ruth Baumann and Charles Ungerleider](#) commissioned by the last government demonstrated categorically, the Regulation did nothing to prevent diversity in hiring.

Despite Lecce's deliberate mischaracterization, Regulation 274 never required hiring on the basis of seniority alone. School boards have never lost their complete discretion regarding who was hired into the occasional teacher pool and who was eligible to be hired into long-term and permanent positions. Qualifications, experience, and knowledge were all elements of Regulation 274.

Having failed to do anything but sow confusion and anxiety among parents, students, and educators, and having failed to use the time from March to September to consult with educators and devise an effective plan, Minister Lecce would do well now to quit engaging in cheap, opportunistic politics and address issues that Ontarians actually care about.

OSSTF/FEESO, founded in 1919, has over 60,000 members across Ontario. They include public high school teachers, occasional teachers, educational assistants, continuing education teachers and instructors, early childhood educators, psychologists, secretaries, speech-language pathologists, social workers, plant support personnel, university support staff, and many others in education.

Contact: Harvey Bischof, President
Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation
416-751-8300

Paul Kossta, Media Relations
paul.kossta@osstf.ca
416-751-8300

-30-