

# MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release: Monday, April 13, 2026

## **Fix the Funding. Get to the Table. Stop the Chaos in Ontario Schools**

TORONTO, ON — The Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF/FEESO) is raising concerns following today's announcement by Education Minister Paul Calandra. The provincial government is failing students and their families, teachers, and education workers by ignoring the real issues in our schools: rising violence, growing class sizes, and chronic underfunding.

Instead of addressing these urgent concerns, the government is pushing education governance changes that distract from the real problems.

"Let's be clear—replacing directors with CEOs with no experience in education or shifting governance structures doesn't change who actually makes the decisions," said Martha Hradowy, OSSTF/FEESO President. "No matter who sits across the bargaining table, the government holds the power and the purse strings, and right now, they are choosing to underfund public education."

Since taking office, this government has underfunded Ontario's public education system by \$6.3 billion. That underfunding is showing up in every classroom: more students per class, fewer supports, and increasing incidents of violence that are not being adequately addressed.

Instead of fixing the real issues, this government is replacing Directors of Education with CEOs who may have no background in education. This move signals a troubling corporatization of public education at a time when they would be expected to lead central bargaining. Collective bargaining in Ontario's education sector relies on long-established processes and a deep understanding of how schools operate. Removing that expertise risks undermining stability and trust at the table, rather than strengthening it.

"You cannot ignore or separate these issues. Larger class sizes, fewer supports, and rising violence are all connected, and they are the direct result of this government's decisions," said Hradowy. "OSSTF/FEESO is ready to do the work on real solutions. What we are missing is a government willing to get to the bargaining table and put students first. It is difficult to see how putting CEOs with no background in education in charge of bargaining will benefit Ontario's students."

Hradowy added, "Write the regulation. Get to the bargaining table. Stop wasting students' and parents' time. Bargaining is where real solutions can happen, but only if the government comes prepared to invest in the system, not manage its decline."

Governance reform and the corporatization of school boards will not fix unsafe schools. It will not lower class sizes. And it will not put more supports in place for students.

Only real investment will.

“It’s time to stop the distractions and start fixing the problem. Fund our schools properly, address the conditions in our classrooms, and engage in meaningful bargaining that delivers for students and families,” concluded Hradowy.

*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.*

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