

# MEDIA RELEASE

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## **Cellphone Ban Should Be Matched with End to Mandatory E-Learning**

TORONTO, ON — The Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF/FEESO) is calling for any change in policy restricting cellphone use in schools to be supported by clear policies, consistent enforcement, real investment in student supports, and for the government to end mandatory e-learning.

"We all want students focused, safe, and able to learn," said OSSTF/FEESO President Martha Hradowy. "Clear expectations around cellphone use can be part of that. But rules alone will not address the real challenges facing students and schools."

Any effort by Minister Calandra to reduce distractions and support student learning must be matched by a consistent approach to how students are expected to learn across the system.

Mandatory e-learning was introduced as a cost-cutting measure and has resulted in larger class sizes, fewer supports for students, and reduced access to meaningful learning experiences. For many students, it does not support learning and can make it more difficult to succeed.

While some students may benefit from online learning and should have the option to choose it, making e-learning mandatory does more harm than good for most students. Mandatory e-learning can also undermine in-person student engagement, with some students questioning why they should attend class when they are expected to learn online.

"You cannot say you are focused on increasing attendance and limiting screen time in classrooms while requiring students to take courses online," concluded Hradowy. "If the government is serious about student success, it should end mandatory e-learning."

OSSTF/FEESO will continue to bring forward solutions to the government and at the bargaining table that focus on the conditions students need to succeed and ensure safe, healthy learning environments across Ontario.

*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: Caitlin Reid, Media and Communications Advisor  
Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation  
[Caitlin.Reid@osstf.ca](mailto:Caitlin.Reid@osstf.ca)  
416-576-8346