

MEDIA RELEASE

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Ford Government Makes Significant Cuts to Funding for 2023-2024 School Year

TORONTO, ON – The Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF/FEESO) is calling attention to the significant cuts to public education funding following the release of the Grants for Students Needs (GSN) on Monday, April 17.

“On Monday, the Ford government tried to hide their release of the Grants for Student Needs, which reveal the government’s funding for school boards for the coming school year,” said OSSTF/FEESO President Karen Littlewood. “The reason the government tried to sneak them past everyone is that they include major cuts to funding for school boards. When adjusted for inflation, over \$600 per student has been cut compared to last year’s funding levels.”

As detailed in a recent [Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives article](#), the 2023-2024 GSNs show per pupil projected funding stands at \$13,133, down over \$600 compared to the \$13,747 per pupil funding for the last school year when adjusted for inflation. In fact, over \$1200 per student has been cut since the Ford government took office in 2018.

“This government loves to claim historic investments in public education when in reality, students and school board staff are dealing with repeated cuts to funding. As we have seen time and time again in the reports of the Financial Accountability Office, this government is deliberately choosing not to spend all the money allocated for education, so reduced funding is particularly concerning when we know the Ford government likely won’t even spend it all.”

“This GSNs for the coming school year are yet another example of how the Ford government is short-changing public education. They actually removed some of last year’s funding, including over \$300 million in funding for the COVID-19 Learning Recovery Fund, to make the funding numbers for the 2023-2024 school year seem artificially high by comparison,” shared President Littlewood.

“For a government that has repeatedly demanded more accountability and transparency in education, these futile attempts to hide their cuts to education funding are insulting. Students in Ontario deserve far better than these smoke and mirrors tactics from the Ontario Progressive Conservatives.”

“I can confidently say that I speak for everyone working in Ontario’s public education system that we wish the Ford government would finally keep their word and actually make historic investments

in our education system. We need these supports and not just more empty talking points from the Minister,” added Littlewood.

OSSTF/FEESO is also deeply concerned by Bill 98, the *Better Schools and Student Outcomes Act* tabled on Monday. Upon deeper analysis, it’s clear that the Bill includes several provisions that allow for greater privatization of our public education system.

“This Bill doesn’t even include the phrase ‘public education’ and I fear this is just the beginning of the Ford government’s agenda to increase for-profit interests in our public education system. We have already seen how this government likes to privatize health care and sell off public land to private developers, and Bill 98 sets up education to be next. Schools are not real estate assets to be sold off to wealthy developers – they are community hubs that should be protected for the benefit of the community,” concluded President Littlewood.

OSSTF/FEESO urges everyone to reach out to their elected representatives to demand that the Ford government stop short-changing public education. It’s time for true investments. It’s time to stop short-changing the students of this province.

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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