

January 17, 2022

## Message to members from the OSSTF/FEESO Provincial Executive

To the members of OSSTF/FEESO

Whether you are returning to in-person learning today or tomorrow, we want you to know we are here for you as we face uncertain days and weeks ahead. Our membership is diverse, and we know some of you, including many education worker members, are already working in-person and have been throughout the entire pandemic.

We are grateful to each and every one of you for your dedication to your students and to publicly-funded education in Ontario. You are the reason that students from kindergarten to post-secondary have had many of the supports they have needed throughout the pandemic.

Many members are feeling nervous and frustrated in light of the provincial government's actions the past several weeks, including the government making critical decisions last minute and then communicating them over social media, without sharing the reasoning behind them. We want you to know that your health and safety as well as the health and safety of your students and families continues to be our top priority.

As we have done throughout the pandemic, we have been advocating for improved safety measures, including smaller class sizes, physical distancing, better ventilation, high quality masks, increased testing for staff and students, better screening tools, and priority access to vaccinations for education workers. We have also been active in the media, with President Karen Littlewood regularly [speaking out](#) and [giving interviews](#), publicly [calling](#) for better safety measures for students and staff. As in the past few years, we continue to be a trusted voice advocating for our students, communities, and schools.

Our efforts have achieved some important results. This includes the provision of N95 masks for educators, better masks for students, and the prioritization of vaccines and boosters for education workers. However, while the government has responded to some of our demands, they need to do much more. We continue to call on the government to answer our many questions and increase widespread testing and tracing.

We encourage you to reach out to your local leaders with any needs or concerns you may have over the coming months. Your efforts and our collective strength will be critical over the next year for recovering from the pandemic. A strong and prosperous Ontario cannot be rebuilt without meaningful investment in publicly-funded education and its workforce.

We know the next few months will be a difficult time for our members but know that you are not alone. Together, as a united membership, with your dedicated local leaders, we will overcome the challenges that lay ahead.



Karen Littlewood,  
President



Paul Caccamo,  
Vice-President



Martha Hradowy,  
Vice-President



Jeff Denys,  
Treasurer



Hayssam Hulays,  
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Malini Leahy,  
Executive Officer



Colin Matthew,  
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