

GECD SB - OSSTF District 9 Media Release
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GECD SB Cuts Educational Support Staff and Professional Student Services

The GECD SB has informed the Educational Support Staff (ESS) and Professional Student Services Personnel (PSSP) Bargaining units that a number of positions will be eliminated in order to balance the budget.

The elimination of these positions represents a reduction in front line, direct service to our most vulnerable children. This reduction in service levels will mean that children lose support and wait longer for much needed psychoeducational assessments, speech and language intervention and mental health services.

"My members were devastated by the job loss and even more upset that front-line supports are being cut which support our most vulnerable students", stated Kristen Garrett-Spanswick, President of the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation Educational Support Staff in Greater Essex. "There is no doubt that the current government has thrown our education system into chaos and there is also no doubt that students will feel the largest impact."

Fewer students will have access to Speech and Language, Social Work and Child and Youth Worker support in their schools, leaving some of our neediest students without help. Early identification and intervention are critical to ensuring student success. These service cuts based on reduced government funding will be detrimental and disruptive to the education of students diagnosed or struggling with learning disabilities, autism, mental health, behavioural challenges, poor attendance, poverty, and other complex needs. The long term financial and social cost will outweigh any short-term financial savings. The current Provincial Government must act to ensure that our education system is fully funded so that services to students can be maintained. When the Ford government says it is "for the people," the "people" must include our most vulnerable students.

OSSTF District 9 represents Educational Support Staff & Professional Student Services Personnel working at the Greater Essex County District School Board.

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