



What OSSTF Has Said Over the Years in a Variety of Publications About the Issues Now Resurfacing in Bill 52:

The issue of non-certified personnel teaching secondary school credit courses, clearly a Tory idea, has now resurfaced in the Liberal's Bill 52. The OSSTF's position has been clear throughout the years: **Only certified, qualified secondary school teachers, with the support of qualified support personnel, should be allowed to teach secondary school credits/courses. To do otherwise, risks the quality of public education and harms the integrity of the secondary school diploma.**

Note: In each of the documents from which excerpts are quoted below, the most significant and relevant parts which relate to the current concerns with Bill 52 have been underlined. The first source is the executive summary of a longer piece written in the spring of 1997. That and the next four sources are all in response to the Tory government's proposed plans for "Secondary School Reform." The sixth source is the OSSTF's response to Bill 160. Sources 7, 9 and 10 all deal with the "contracting out" or "voucher" aspect of the issue. Source 8 is from the OSSTF submission to the Effective Schools Task Force and deals with both the necessity for qualified teacher and for better funding.

1. Source: *Falling Expectations*
Youth and employment: The transition from school to work (Excerpts from "Executive Summary")
By Jody Wildman for the OSSTF (Spring 1997)
<http://www.osstf.on.ca/Default.aspx?DN=1364,1347,595,Documents>

- Ontario schools should continue to offer a well rounded education, a balance between mathematics, science and computer skills, and languages and the arts, to ensure that graduates have the broad skills base necessary to adapt to the changing needs of society and the economy. All students should be helped to develop inquiring minds and problem-solving abilities, together with a sense of community. Extracurricular, intramural and sports programs should be maintained and expanded to help students develop the leadership, teamwork and analytical skills that are valued by employers.
 - Preparation for jobs, résumé writing and interview skills should be an important component of business and English studies.
 - Resources available to career counsellors should be expanded. Community involvement through co-op and volunteer programs should be encouraged, but diploma credits for job experience without a classroom component should be rejected.
 - To maintain access to high quality education for all students, adequate funding must be provided to ensure that class sizes are reasonable, that curricular and other materials are available to all, that classroom support is protected and that teachers have adequate time to meet individual needs.
 - Rather than downgrade essential educational services like libraries, the provincial government should ensure that they have adequate resources to meet students' needs. In particular, access to the Internet in libraries and computer labs should be an essential component of students' preparation for post secondary education and the job market. Telecommunications and electronic upgrading for rural Ontario to ensure
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broad access to the Internet should be a high priority for the provincial government and the telecommunications industry.

2. Source: *Ontario Secondary Education: 10 Steps to Renewal* (Excerpts) (Spring 1997)
<http://www.osstf.on.ca/Default.aspx?DN=1363,1347,595,Documents>

1. **Renew high school curriculum** - especially programs for non-university bound students
Curriculum should be reviewed to develop content and activities that reflect the learning styles of all students. Curriculum must be revised to be inclusive, remove the barriers to student success and build on current best practice.

 7. **Encourage teachers and students to make connections among high school subjects - encourage interdisciplinary initiatives**
There are numerous models that increase connections among subject disciplines and increase relevance for the students. Appropriate resource materials should be developed by teachers and made available to the classroom to achieve this initiative.

 8. **Increase opportunities for co-operative education, guidance and career education - teacher structured and supervised work placements should be available to students who choose them**
OSSTF supports co-operative education opportunities. By working with our educational partners including boards, communities and business, opportunities for co-operative education placements can be ensured for those students who choose this option. Subject teachers should be assisted in introducing aspects of career education into their disciplines.
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3. Source: *Response to the Government's Proposed Secondary School Reform Introduction and Overview* (excerpts) (Spring 1997)
<http://www.osstf.on.ca/Default.aspx?DN=3590,1347,595,Documents>

OSSTF supports educational change that will contribute to student success. The question is, however, what kind of change, and how it will contribute to student success? OSSTF put considerable thought and effort into positive educational initiatives in our submission to the Royal Commission on Learning.

The Question of Time

The reforms propose a complete overhaul of the credit system in secondary schools. Gone, on the basis of timetable expediency, are the 110- hour OS:IS and H.S. 1 credits. No research data supports this change. In their place are 90- hour credits offered in one hour period. These shorter credits pressure students to cram more subjects into the school day and to complete 37 credits, rather than 30, in four years. Educators will be left with no alternative, in the short term at least, to either eliminate 20 hours of materials from the courses or race



through programs to cover the same amount of material in less time. The cumulative effects of these losses of instructional time in individual courses will be devastating for many of our students. Opportunities for essential remediation activities will be eliminated.

To accommodate the increased time devoted to math, science, and technology, English instruction will drop from 550 hours to as little as 360 hours. How will this improve the literacy levels of our graduates?

Given the proposed increase in compulsory credits for students, the timetables for our young people may not accommodate remedial programs. Many students are already having difficulties succeeding in the current 16 compulsory credits. Once a credit is missed or found to be not appropriate for future plans, students will find it very difficult to make up the lost credit and still complete the compulsory program in the four-year limit. Professor Alan King, Ontario's leading educational researcher of secondary schools, notes the major reason for student drop-out is credit shortfall. When students see little hope of graduating they quit. Many students have great difficulty achieving Math and Science credits. Increasing this requirement, having students do so in 90 instead of 110 hours, decreasing hours of English instruction and reducing the importance of Physical Education, Arts, Family Studies, and other courses, will have disastrous effects on school retention rates. The government's reforms could well increase the dropout rate and reverse the trend of the last 70 years toward greater student completion of secondary school.

The Question of Work Experience

Ontario currently has 65000 students enrolled in excellent Co-operative Education programmes. This is one of the most progressive programs in the world. While it is a major accomplishment of our system, schools are often struggling to maintain placements for students. Adding shorter term work experience for all students will put further pressure on local businesses and employees, particularly in smaller communities. Work experience is hardly a new idea. In fact, the 1960s "schools without walls" were in practice "tamed into vocational programmes offering academic credits for students working as salespersons in stores." (Tyack and Cuban, 1995).

This "deschooling of society" as Ivan Illich called it fell into disfavour with the public thirty years ago. Students in the workplace pathway, who spend up to 40% of their time in Grades 11-12 at the workplace, will be deprived of an equitable curriculum, and will not, in fact, have an opportunity to develop the knowledge and skills they will need to be employable and to develop as good citizens.

Students not bound for university need, as the RCOL noted, "a serious, purposeful education... regardless of his or her post high school destination." Neil Postman observed in his recent book "The End of Education," that providing young people with more practical vocational skills "is exactly the wrong solution, since the making of adaptable, curious, open, questioning people has nothing to do with vocational training and everything to do with humanistic and scientific studies." But, our government seems to believe that having a summer job or taking part in unsupervised jobs in fast foods chains or stores will be more effective than formal programs taught by trained teachers.



- 4. Source:** *Issues in Ontario Education: Secondary School Reform: Recipe for Disaster?* (Excerpts) (Spring 1997)
<http://www.osstf.on.ca/Default.aspx?DN=1360,1347,595,Documents>

Government proposals to change our high schools, if implemented in their present form, will jeopardize our quality of education and hurt students by:

- compressing courses from 110 to 90 hours
- permitting student-arranged work experience courses without adequate teacher supervision
- allowing students to gain credit without taking existing courses
- forcing students to choose a career destination at age 14
- ignoring what courses should contain, and how they should be taught or assessed

Real change for the better in our high schools must include:

- changes to curriculum, particularly for students not going to university
 - more programs for students who need help
 - programs which engage all students from different cultures
 - new ways of teaching and evaluating all students
 - building on current success
 - pilot projects based on proven practice
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- 5. Source:** *Recipe for success: Implementing Secondary School Reform* (Excerpts) (Spring 1997)
<http://www.osstf.on.ca/Default.aspx?DN=1358,1347,595,Documents>

OSSTF believes the following policy initiatives will be effective in implementing secondary school renewal in Ontario.

- **Ensure a well-rounded education for students**
In the secondary school consultation, parents indicated programs should ensure students develop the knowledge, critical thinking skills, and a love of learning to become self-reliant, contributing members of society.
 - **Mandate and fund appropriate remedial and modified programs**
For students who are not initially successful in the regular program, opportunities must be available for remedial programs. These should be available through regular day school, night school and summer school. Modified programs must be offered to special education students and those who may be "at risk."
 - **Increase the opportunities for co-operative education and work experience**
Develop modules, through curriculum revision, to provide workplace experiences within existing courses of study. Co-operative education must be addressed within the new funding model to ensure
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teacher monitoring time is sufficient.

- **Develop curriculum with Ontario educators**

The Ministry of Education and Training, in consultation with the teacher federations and subject councils, should assume the lead to coordinate the curriculum development needed to implement the reforms. Ontario curriculum must be developed in Ontario by Ontario educators to meet the needs of Ontario students and society. This is consistent with the public response to secondary education reform.

6. Source: *Submission by OSSTF to the Standing Committee on Administration of Justice regarding Bill 160 Education Quality Improvement Act, 1997 (October 1997)*
OSSTF Research Library

p. iii under “Principles for Change”: #2 Every student in Ontario must have a qualified teacher.

p. iv under “There are Alternatives”: #2 Guarantee qualified, certified teachers in every classroom and learning program.

p. vii under “What Has To Be Changed?”: #2 Withdraw those sections of Bill 160 which would permit non-qualified and non-certified personnel to teach in Ontario schools.

pp. 24-26:

“Regulate Who Teaches and What Qualifications Teachers Should Have”

“designating positions that are not teaching positions and duties that are not teachers’ duties and prescribing the minimum qualifications for a designated position or for performing designated duties” {Section 170.1 (3) [e]; p. 87}.

In *The Road Ahead* the Education Improvement Commission recommended “that the *Education Act* be amended to allow instructors who are not certificated teachers to supervise students, under specific conditions and circumstances, and to deliver certain programs (e.g. guidance, sports, technology).”

OSSTF is adamantly opposed to this recommendation and any associated regulatory change. Qualified teachers are the foundation of a quality educational system. Ontario governments, teacher federations (including OSSTF), and school boards have long stressed the need for qualified teachers to provide instruction to students. In the 1970's, qualifications were changed to require at least a Bachelor's degree in order to gain entrance to a faculty of education, at least for academic teachers. The Royal Commission went so far as to suggest that teachers ought to have a Masters degree to teach. The practice has been to increase the requirements to be a teacher, not decrease them.



Recently this government passed legislation establishing a College of Teachers to deal with all matters related to teacher certification and qualifications. It seems strange that the government, having taken the trouble to establish a College, would now embark upon a course which would undercut its *raison d'être*.

Using unqualified personnel in classrooms also raises questions with respect to liability issues. This may be an area which could result in significant additional liability insurance costs to school boards.

Regarding this specific proposal the *Toronto Star* suggests that

“Even if he (Snobelen) offers a detailed and acceptable explanation of where he wants to replace teachers, Ontarians would still have reason to be worried. Bill 160 would allow the minister of education to change his or her mind at a whim, something Snobelen is particularly known to do. The bill prescribes no limits whatsoever on how the government can change the qualifications required to work in our schools. This or a future government could simply decide that a teaching credential is no longer necessary to take over a classroom.

This provision of Bill 160 just doesn't make sense...” (October 2, 1997)

OSSTF fully agrees. ***This proposal must be withdrawn. The issue of who teaches Ontario students and the question of teacher qualifications should be left to the College of Teachers.***

7. Source: *Privatization and Contracting Out: AMPA 2000 House paper* (March 2000)
<http://www.osstf.on.ca/Default.aspx?DN=3595,3594,3593,595,Documents>

“Members should be aware that there continues to be a sharp battle not only in Canada but in the USA, UK, New Zealand, Australia and many so-called third world countries over the privatization and contracting out of public educational services, – including classroom instruction and schools to private for-profit corporations. Teachers especially should not be complacent by assuming that privatization and contracting out doesn't and won't affect them.”

“Here's how vouchers could affect Ontario. They could:

- remove the responsibility for education from the public and give it to individuals and private groups;
 - divert public funds into private schools serving private goals;
 - encourage the growth of private schools and precipitate a flight of students from the public schools;
 - encourage selective admissions practices in publicly-funded private schools, which could foster ethnic, racial and socio-economic segregation;
 - promote uncertainty of funding for schools until students arrived, thereby negating advance preparation and planning;
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- make public schools the repository for students that private schools rejected but public schools could not;
- threaten the role of public schools in fostering equal educational opportunity, academic freedom, social tolerance and democratic values.

Moreover, voucher plans are based on the erroneous belief that it is primarily the individual or family and not society that benefits from education.

Voucher plans encourage negative qualities in our society – elitism and ethnic and socio-economic segregation, to name two. Those who urge the promotion of the concept may be ignorant of the fact that alternative schools and programs have been available under the public school umbrella for some considerable time in many areas throughout the province.

Special needs students may well be disadvantaged under any voucher proposal since proponents of a voucher system do not build into their system the additional costs associated with these students.

In addition to affecting society as a whole, vouchers would have a direct effect on all educational workers. If public school enrollments decline more sharply as a result of voucher schemes, many teachers, professional student support personnel, educational assistants and other educational support staff could lose their jobs and be forced into the job market already glutted.”

8. Source: *Effective Schools Task Force: Submission* (Excerpts) (April 2001)
<http://www.osstf.on.ca/Default.aspx?DN=3597,3596,595,Documents>

“We believe in the full service school team. Qualified teachers, administrators, educational assistants and professional student support personnel work together to provide a program to meet the needs of all students.

Qualified teachers are essential to student success. The teacher shortage and shortage of qualified supply teachers has made it more difficult to find qualified teachers to deliver program. Teachers already in the system require professional development on the new curriculum and new assessment methods. Continuous improvement depends on adequate professional development, particularly in times of rapid curriculum change. "The Essential Guide" to the Toronto District School Board (2001) shows that, of a total budget of more than \$2 billion, only \$6.3 million is allocated to staff development for all employees. Clearly, the government is not providing sufficient funds for the training of staff, especially in a time of rapid change.”

“These professionals [EA’s and PSSP] can also provide early identification of student strengths and weaknesses and recommend strategies that will result in significant cost savings later in the student's career. One obvious area for focus would be early diagnostic testing of students' literacy skills.”

“Clearly it is the responsibility of school boards to provide a sound and inclusive curriculum which



depends on support from the government. Students require a sound curriculum that is responsive to a diversity of needs. The other key is to ensure that subject specialists are assigned to teach in their area of expertise. Given the new curriculum, consideration should be given to creating Grade 7-12 high schools staffed by subject specialists. Government cutbacks in English as a Second Language and Adult Education have an impact on school and school board effectiveness because this has a direct impact on students. Curriculum is strengthened by resources that students need - be that text books, computer hardware and software, and materials and equipment for shops, art and music classes. The lack of government funding for materials and equipment in schools is shameful. Care must be taken to provide a broad-based program for students and not one channeled for only a few. The cutbacks in technological education are one example. School boards do not have the funding to provide up-to-date equipment in shops so they are relying more and more on computer programs for curriculum delivery. No one needs a virtual mechanic or carpenter - and it is not the school board's fault that this is occurring.”

9. Source: *School choice - accountability for private schools* (2001)
<http://www.osstf.on.ca/Default.aspx?DN=1344,1337,595,Documents>

- Public school teachers must be qualified and hold valid Ontario teacher certificates. There is no such requirement for private school teachers.
 - The College of Teachers reports certified teachers in only 130 private schools. Only 2,012 or about 30 percent of private school teachers are qualified and subject to the public protections offered by the College.
 - Last year, only 90 private schools were inspected by the Ministry of Education.
 - Private religious school advocates expect to be given money with no strings attached. They refuse to be held accountable to the government for curriculum, teacher qualifications, testing, or any other standard which applies to the public school system.
 - The Ontario Human Rights Commission confirms that private schools are at least partially exempt from the Human Rights Code. For instance, private schools are permitted to discriminate in their hiring practices.
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10. Source: *Finance and Economic Affairs on Bill 45 : Submission to the Committee* (June 2001)
<http://www.osstf.on.ca/Default.aspx?DN=3599,1337,595,Documents>

“The Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF) is now and always has been adamantly opposed to "direct or indirect funding of private or religious schools" (Policy 7.4.1 OSSTF Handbook), to the use of vouchers to fund schools (Policy 7.4.3 OSSTF Handbook) and to the "introduction of charter schools in Ontario" (Policy 8.2.1 OSSTF Handbook). These policies have been strongly supported by our members.”



“Because public education advances the common good of our society, it merits public funding. In turn, the public good is protected. Public education is accountable to local and provincial laws, regulations and publicly-elected governments. All public schools must hire qualified teachers subject to the standards and discipline of the College of Teachers, offer approved curriculum and participate in provincially mandated testing. Public education provides the only common forum where children of different ethnic, religious or economic backgrounds and academic abilities can come together to learn, work, laugh and play on an on-going basis over a long period of time in their formative years – a crucial function to producing good citizens in a pluralistic society.”

“OSSTF believes that the proposed tax credit for private schools not only undermines public education by diverting hundreds of millions of taxpayers' dollars to non-public schools, but is, in fact, encouraging a two-tiered education system for Ontario. The proposal to extend public funding to students at all private schools and religious schools is the most sweeping privatization proposal to date in all of Canada. Public funds will now be made available to anyone with something to preach or something to peddle.”