

Ontario budget shortchanges public education, fails to fund supports students need

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TORONTO, ON – Below is a statement from the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO) following today's provincial budget announcement:

"ETFO continues to sound the alarm on the provincial government's ongoing refusal to address the chronic underfunding of Ontario's public education system. Following another provincial budget announcement that failed to allocate any new funding for education, these persistent cuts are forcing school boards to reduce services, stripping students of the essential supports they need to succeed.

This budget ignores rising costs school boards are facing due to inflation. It exacerbates issues caused by large class sizes, further abandons students with disabilities, dismisses violence in schools, and fails to adequately address the teacher recruitment and retention crisis across the province. This isn't just inaction; it is negligence.

Adding to the challenge, the Ford government expects school boards to balance their budgets or risk being taken over by the Ministry of Education – an expectation that is unfair in the context of deliberate and ongoing provincial underfunding that does not meet the actual needs of students or school communities.

We recognize the economic challenges facing Ontario and Canada, but protecting public education must be a priority. As families experience financial hardship, schools will see a growing demand for mental health services, nutrition programs, and learning supports. Students, especially those who are most vulnerable, will feel the effects of this strain in their daily lives at school. Without increased investment, schools will be left without the resources needed to support students when they need us most.

We invite Education Minister Paul Calandra to engage in genuine, transparent dialogue with education partners, educators, families, and communities who are directly impacted by his government's decisions. Building a robust and prosperous Ontario is unattainable without substantial investment in our high-quality public education system. Public education funding should be adequate, equitable, and focused on students' needs."

[ETFO](#) represents approximately 83,000 members, including public elementary teachers, occasional teachers, designated early childhood educators, education support personnel, and professional support personnel. Visit BuildingBetterSchools.ca.

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