

To: ETFO Thames Valley Teacher Local Members
From: Mike Thomas, President, ETFO Thames Valley Teacher Local (ETFO TVTL)
Date: June 4, 2026
Regarding: **Queen's Park Advocacy for Public Education**

Yesterday, I had the privilege of joining a group of ETFO Thames Valley members at Queen's Park to meet with Terence Kernaghan, MPP for London North Centre, and discuss the ongoing impact of chronic underfunding on Ontario's publicly funded elementary schools.

I want to thank Hayley Van Alstine, Jillian Fleurie, Dawn-Marie Deagle, Jennifer Aston, Tracey Holmes, Cathie Rose, Jennifer Hillner, Mark MacLeod, Sue Varley, and Jen Smalley-Higgs, President of York ETFO, for taking the time to travel to Toronto and speak directly about the realities facing students and educators in our schools.

Throughout the session, your colleagues shared powerful stories about the impact of class sizes and complexities, the growing prevalence of violence in schools, the challenges surrounding special education supports, and the impact that years of inadequate funding have had on our ability to meet the needs of students.

What stood out most was the importance of hearing directly from classroom educators. Statistics and reports tell part of the story, but hearing firsthand accounts from those who experience these challenges every day brings those issues to life. When educators share their experiences, they help decision-makers better understand the consequences of underfunding and the urgent need for action.

Advocacy matters. Every conversation, every story, and every opportunity to speak truthfully about what is happening in our schools helps move us closer to the well-funded, well-supported public education system that students deserve.

Thank you again to these members for lending their voices to this important conversation and for continuing to advocate for public education, our students, and our profession.

And thank you to all members for everything you do, whether it is wearing Red4Ed, handing out brochures, having crucial conversations, or sharing social media posts, every action helps.

Link to CTV Video:

https://www.ctvnews.ca/london/article/students-have-been-abandoned-by-this-government-thames-valley-teachers-call-for-more-funding-to-support-children-with-needs/?fbclid=IwdGRjcASOTuZleHRuA2FibQIxMQBzcnRjBmFwcF9pZAo2Njl4NTY4Mzc5AAEe966ZpbhF9446A41IdPBndb5dfRAopc9AHmvNf0Eck06nCe0WjlX05M1avcl_aem_ENkabFsmu_LTi1hqn0YA

Link to YouTube Video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SZq5U5luHAo>

Creating Change – Together.



Mike Thomas, President
ETFO Thames Valley Teacher Local

For any questions, concerns, or simply a friendly chat, the Local ETFO Office is only a phone call away at 519-474-3150 or an email to etfotvtl@etfothamesvalley.com - we're here to help.

c. Released Executive, ETFO Thames Valley Teacher Local