

ETFO condemns Ford government's ongoing underfunding of public education

For Immediate Release – October 30, 2024

TORONTO, ON—Today's fall economic statement provides no meaningful new investments to support public education. The Ford government has missed yet another opportunity to undo the damage caused by its ongoing cuts to public education. Premier Ford continues to sacrifice the success and well-being of Ontario's students and educators in order to benefit well-connected insiders.

"The absence of much-needed investments in public education in the fall economic statement extends a deeply concerning trend," says Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO) President Karen Brown. "While violence in schools increases, educators struggle to manage growing class sizes and workloads, and special education remains severely underfunded, the Progressive Conservative government is focused on expanding alcohol sales and funding vanity projects to benefit well-connected insiders. This is not fiscal responsibility; it's gross mismanagement and a deliberate attack on public education."

The Ford government's refusal to prioritize public education is irresponsible. This year alone, public schools are receiving \$1,500 less per student compared to 2018, when the Ford government was first elected. This is equivalent to \$3.2 billion in cuts for the 2024-2025 school year. Disturbingly, this is the estimated cost of the rebate cheques the Ford government is planning to send to all Ontarians in the new year.

"Sending out \$200 cheques to voters before an election is a sign the Conservatives are out of ideas and deserve to be out of office," notes Brown. "It is outrageous that the Ford government is choosing to cut funding for public schools while using Ontarians' own money to attempt to buy their votes. The message is loud and clear: public education does not matter to this government."

The Ford government's actions and commentary are nothing more than pre-election theatre aimed at securing re-election while diverting attention from years of underfunding and undermining public education. To stop their ongoing refusal to prioritize children's futures, Ontarians must make their voices heard and vote them out in the next provincial election.

ETFO will not stand by while the Ford government abandons Ontario's schools. Students and educators deserve a fully funded, equitable, and inclusive public education system. "Our future depends on adequately funded public education, and we will not allow this government to dismantle our high-quality public education system. They must be held accountable."

To find out how much funding has been cut to individual schools across Ontario, use ETFO's new searchable tool on [BuildingBetterSchools.ca](https://www.etfo.org/BuildingBetterSchools.ca).

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ETFO Media Relations: Carla Pereira | 416-962-3836 ext. 2332 | cpereira@etfo.org