

COLLECTIVE

ETFO



FEEO

BARGAINING



March 19, 2020

Central Bargaining Update

ETFO continues to engage in discussions with the Ontario Public School Boards' Association, the Council of Trustees' Associations and the government in order to reach agreements at our Teacher/Occasional Teacher and Education Worker Central Tables.

ETFO will keep members informed about bargaining developments as they occur.

ETFO Letter to Ministry of Education Promotes Collaboration During the COVID-19 Pandemic Challenge

Early this morning, some news outlets reported the government of **Quebec** had sent notices to teachers and education workers that their work assignments, schedules or workplaces might need to be modified as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Sonia Ethier, union president of the Centrale des syndicats du Quebec, put the notices in context in a CTV news report, saying that "It is really a ministerial degree to predict the worst, but unions were not notified and instructions have not gone out on all sides without a full explanation. It fuels fear and people react badly."

ETFO members should keep in mind that there has been no indication from the government of Ontario that it intends to do anything other than honour education sector and other public sector collective agreements.

In a letter to Deputy Minister of Education Nancy Naylor sent earlier today, President Hammond expressed concerns about the Quebec government's actions. President Hammond noted that "notwithstanding our recent collective bargaining disputes, both our members and your government are dedicated to the same end: the welfare of our students, their parents, our colleagues and the province in general."

President Hammond pointed out that any decisions impacting collective agreements would be "unnecessary and inappropriate" and urged Ontario's government to continue employing collaborative and constructive practices to deal with the pandemic. President Hammond emphasized that ETFO members "remain willing to work with you towards promoting a positive outcome to this unprecedented challenge."

A copy of President Hammond's letter to the Deputy Minister of Education can be found below.



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March 19, 2020

Nancy Naylor
Deputy Minister of Education
5th Floor, 438 University Ave
Toronto, ON M7A 2A5

Dear Deputy Minister Naylor:

The Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario has noted, with grave concern, reports from the Province of Quebec with respect to the potential of that government overriding teacher collective agreements.

As I am sure you appreciate, notwithstanding our recent collective bargaining disputes, both our members and your government are dedicated to the same end: the welfare of our students, their parents, our colleagues and the province in general. We are all committed to working cooperatively and constructively during this difficult period and we are open to meeting with you and any members of your government for this purpose.

Everyone is experiencing the stress of the COVID-19 pandemic. In our view, it would be both inappropriate and counterproductive for the government to add to that stress unnecessarily by taking any unilateral action to further exacerbate the situation.

While I recognize that there has been no similar statement from Ontario to date with respect to overriding collective agreements, I wanted you to know that we would consider any such action to be unnecessary and inappropriate. More importantly, however we also wanted you to know that Ontario's public elementary education workers remain willing to work with you towards promoting a positive outcome to this unprecedented challenge.

Sincerely,

Sam Hammond
President

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Copy: Andrew Davis, Assistant Deputy Minister, Education Labour and Finance Division