

Education Week an opportunity to protect public education

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TORONTO, ON – Education Week, which takes place annually during the first week of May, is an opportunity to recognize the magic that happens in public schools across Ontario each day. It’s also a reminder that public education is worth protecting given its invaluable role in giving every child an equitable chance for success.

“The magic of teaching is challenging to describe, yet it is unmistakably special when witnessed in person, in schools each and every day,” says Elementary Teachers’ Federation of Ontario (ETFO) President Karen Brown. “Physical classrooms are environments where children are supported to thrive—where they can explore, take risks, and receive one-on-one attention and care from educators. The commitment and professionalism of educators are what continue to sustain our public schools.”

Educators design elementary classrooms with professional care to create spaces that foster inquiry, conversation, and collaboration. In-person learning means students are engaged, their well-being improves, and educators can adequately assess each students’ different and unique learning needs.

Children are the key to Ontario’s future, but the Ford government doesn’t recognize this and isn’t providing what students need and deserve. Adds Brown, “While the Ford government had significant fiscal room to make necessary investments in public education and other public services Ontarians rely on, it chose instead to continue its pattern of providing corporate tax giveaways and underspending in social programs.”

Since the Ford government came to power, per-student funding has fallen by \$1,200 when accounting for inflation. The latest budget contained only a marginal increase to school board funding, equivalent to 0.7 per cent on a per-student basis. With annual inflation at 6.8 per cent for 2022, this apparent increase will be easily outpaced by inflation. Unless additional funds are made available to school boards, many schools across the province will experience staffing reductions and the corresponding loss of critical student supports.

Notes Brown, “ETFO refuses to allow the integrity and quality of student learning to be underfunded beyond repair. Public education makes a difference for students, for families, and for our communities.”

[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](https://www.buildingbetterschools.ca).

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