

ETFO files application with OLRB against Ford government for unfair labour practice

For Immediate Release – May 22, 2024

TORONTO, ON – The Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO) has filed an application with the Ontario Labour Relations Board (OLRB) initiating an unfair labour practice complaint against the Conservative government as a result of the Minister of Education's April 28 announcement of revisions to [Program/Policy Memorandum \(PPM\) 128](#): The Provincial Code of Conduct and School Board Codes of Conduct.

"We have begun a formal process to remind the Ford government of its legal obligation to bargain in good faith, and to respect and honour central agreements," says ETFO President Karen Brown. "The Ford government reneged on its commitments to ETFO at the central bargaining table; they simply cannot be trusted. We intend to fight these unprincipled actions—actions that, time and time again, attack workers' rights."

During the last round of central bargaining, addressing increasing violence and disruption in schools was a key priority for the Federation's 83,000 members. As a result of ETFO's strong advocacy at the bargaining table, several new measures were agreed to in central bargaining, including publicly facing school signage that communicates behaviour expectations for everyone, as well as jointly developed revisions to PPM 128 to address behaviour, consequences, and safety.

Notes Brown, "Despite having committed to a collaborative process and meeting with ETFO on two brief occasions and agreeing to a third meeting prior to the release of the revised PPM, the government acted in bad faith, proving again that they are not interested in partnering with educators to address violence in schools. We left the bargaining table committed to working together. True to form, the government was never interested in being a partner. It misrepresented its intentions, dismissed our expertise, and chose to ignore labour laws. The Ford government cannot be trusted."

During bargaining, ETFO had been clear with all parties that there could be no tentative agreement without improvements to address violence in schools. Collaboration on a revision to PPM 128 was one of several pieces of new language that met this objective. The government assured ETFO that it intended to work with the Federation to reach mutually acceptable revisions to PPM 128 and would not act on its own. Despite this, the Minister of Education unilaterally issued a revised PPM 128 on April 28. This is a clear violation of the government's requirement in the *School Boards Collective Bargaining Act* to bargain in good faith with ETFO.

Section 32 of the *School Boards Collective Bargaining Act* requires the government to bargain in good faith during central bargaining. This includes a duty to avoid misleading or misrepresenting its intentions with respect to contemplated initiatives. These duties were violated by the government's conduct.

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