



ETFO responds to passing of Bill 98, *The Better Schools and Student Outcomes Act*

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TORONTO, ON – The following is a statement from the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO) on Bill 98, *The Better Schools and Student Outcomes Act*:

"Earlier today, despite strong opposition from education stakeholders, the Ontario government pushed through legislation that sets public education back decades, undermines student outcomes, diminishes accountability and transparency, and lays the groundwork for further privatization of public education.

During committee hearings on Bill 98, ETFO called on the government to withdraw Bill 98 and engage in a meaningful consultation process with education stakeholders. That never happened.

The legislation provides broad regulation-making powers to the government, and includes significant amendments to the *Education Act*, the *Early Childhood Educators Act*, and the *Ontario College of Teachers Act*. A refocusing of the education system should not include government overreach.

Granting the Ministry of Education unlimited authority to establish provincial priorities for the public education system without the obligation to meaningfully consult with stakeholders is not only short-sighted, but will be incredibly damaging to Ontario's public education system.

The level of authority that Bill 98 grants the government, with regard to the new provincial priorities framework, is unprecedented and could all but eliminate the ability of school boards to respond to the specific needs of the communities they serve. The potential abuse of this power alone should concern everyone.

Instead of working in partnership to improve our world-renowned education system, the Ford government continues to focus on creating a crisis in public education where none exists."

[ETFO](#) represents approximately 83,000 members, including public elementary teachers, occasional teachers, designated early childhood educators, education support personnel, and professional support personnel. ETFO's government submission on Bill 98 can be found [here](#).

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