

ETFO teacher, occasional teacher members ratify central agreement

For Immediate Release – December 15, 2023

Toronto, ON – Teacher and occasional teacher members of the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO) voted 90 per cent in favour of accepting the 2022-2026 Teacher/Occasional Teacher (T/OT) Central Agreement reached with the Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA) and the Ontario government. The term of the four-year central agreement is from September 1, 2022, to August 31, 2026. OPSBA ratification is required for the agreement to take effect; their vote is scheduled for next week.

“While this round of bargaining was exceptionally lengthy and difficult, ETFO members stood firm in the face of cuts, pressed for improvements to working and learning conditions, and won,” says ETFO President Karen Brown. “This agreement is proof that the legal bargaining process works when it’s allowed to unfold as intended. I want to thank members for their strength, resistance and persistence.”

The pressure of conciliation and a strong members’ strike mandate assisted in applying pressure this fall, allowing ETFO’s bargaining team to achieve a central agreement that addresses many bargaining priorities. Highlights of the agreement include:

- funding for 401 FTE new specialist teaching positions for the 2024-2025 school year, and an increase in funding in 2025-2026 and 2026-2027 to maintain these 401 positions
 - specialist teachers will fully relieve all Year 2 of Kindergarten, and Grades 1 and 2 classroom teachers of their instructional duties while classroom teachers administer the first screener to students in their classrooms
 - specialist teachers will provide intensive reading support to students who need it and directly administer any additional screeners, as required
- preservation of the Support for Students Fund (SSF) that funds 432.7 elementary teaching positions who work directly with students in areas like special education, Indigenous student supports, English language learner supports, mental health/well-being, behaviour, self-regulation, and social-emotional needs
- several new and innovative measures to address violence in schools, including:
 - a revision of *PPM: 128: The Provincial Code of Conduct and School Board Codes of Conduct* to address behaviour, consequences, and safety
 - requirement for all schools to have publicly facing signage that communicates behaviour expectations
 - redirection of teaching positions in the SSF to support student self-regulation, behaviour, and/or social-emotional needs (as mentioned above)
 - new letter of agreement on paid violence prevention health and safety training
 - renewal of letter of agreement that ensures OTs will have the ability to lock and unlock classroom doors for safety reasons
 - renewal of the Provincial Working Group on Health and Safety, with a new mandate that this group prioritize violence prevention in its work
 - new violent incident debriefing training for ETFO members

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- preservation of sick leave and short-term leave entitlements
- preservation of professional judgement language
- referral of compensation increases (salary and daily occasional teacher rate) to arbitration
- a Bill 124 remedy for 2019-2020 and 2020-2021, with a referral to arbitration for a remedy for 2021-2022
- a meaningful increase in funding to maintain existing benefit levels for members

ETFO locals representing members who are teachers and occasional teachers will now work with their respective school boards to negotiate local collective agreements.

[ETFO](#) represents approximately 80,000 teachers and occasional teachers, and 3,500 designated early childhood educators, education support personnel, and professional support personnel. Details about ETFO collective bargaining are available at etfocb.ca.

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