

Don't be fooled, more cuts to public education coming soon: funding fails to keep up with rising costs

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TORONTO, ON – The following is a statement from the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO) responding to provincial Grants for Student Needs (GSN) funding:

“The Ford government has once again failed to address the long-term funding gap in public education. The details in GSN funding and Priorities and Partnerships Funding (PPF) confirm the government's plan to continue to underfund public education.

The government went to great lengths to inflate the funding increase to education funding. Hosting two press conferences over two days to create an impression that they are investing hundreds of millions of dollars into meeting the 'basic needs' of students is completely disingenuous. While claiming that students are struggling in math, this government uses its own creative math strategies to portray that they are increasing student funding by remarkable amounts. However, after accounting for the reallocation of this existing funding and the elimination of the COVID-19 Learning Recovery Fund, the actual increase in per-student GSN funding from 2022-23 to 2023-24 is only 0.72 per cent.

This is happening at a time when inflationary costs are placing ever-increasing fiscal pressure on school boards. The nominal increase to GSN funding fails to keep up with rising costs facing school boards, with annual inflation at 6.8 per cent for 2022. This fiscal crunch is coming at a time when most school boards have limited to no funding reserves, after being forced to spend them during the pandemic to make up for the lack of provincial supports.

The phasing out of the COVID-19 Learning Recovery Fund will create additional pressure on school boards, with several of them already scrambling to deal with the defunding of thousands of staff positions that were supported by this fund. Despite the announcement of additional positions to support the Ministry's Math and Literacy strategies, the loss of staff positions will outpace the creation of new ones.

ETFO urges Ontarians to contact their member of provincial parliament to stop Ford's ongoing cuts to public education.”

[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.

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