



Ontario Council of Educational Workers (OCEW) Bargaining Update

Dear Members:

The Ontario Council of Educational Workers (OCEW) is a partnership of unions committed to achieving a strong central collective agreement for its constituent members who do critical work in Ontario's education sector.

Seven unions belong to the council: the Ontario Public Service Employees Union (OPSEU); the Canadian Office and Professional Employees Union (COPE) Ontario and its locals 103, 429, 454, 527 and 529; the Educational Resource Facilitators of Peel; the Essex and Kent Counties Skilled Trades Council; the Labourers International Union of North America, Local 837; the Maintenance and Construction Skilled Trades Council; and Unifor locals 229, 302 and 2458.

OCEW will begin discussions and bargaining with the Council of Trustees' Association (CTA), which represents workers at the Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA), the Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association (OCSTA) and the Ministry of Education on Friday, September 13. This follows up on our June 24 update, which OCEW issued as notice to bargain to the CTA and the ministry.

OCEW also had a conference call with the Honourable Stephen Lecce, Minister of Education, on August 14. The council raised concerns about the unfairness of Bill 124 and its impact on bargaining. Specifically, we raised the issue of the benefit plan funding being part of the overall compensation increases allowed under the bill.

OCEW also raised the constitutionality of Bill 124, the question of the overall funding of the system, and how it will impact the classroom. Further, we discussed social services funding (e.g., autism) and its impact on the education system. While the minister would not commit to anything, OCEW indicated we would always be available and willing to have further discussions.

The parties will use the September 13 meeting to determine central and local table issues, as well as schedule additional bargaining dates. Further updates will be provided when more information is available.

In solidarity,

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