



Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario
Fédération des enseignantes et des enseignants
de l'élémentaire de l'Ontario

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**ETFO- Ontario government continues to create chaos in education system
where none is warranted**

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Toronto, ON – The Ford government is continuing to create chaos in Ontario's education system instead of addressing real issues of underfunding in the public school system, according to the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO).

"This government is misrepresenting what is actually happening in public schools and manufacturing crises instead of examining real issues like an education funding formula that is underfunding schools," said ETFO President Sam Hammond.

"Teachers, education professionals and principals have regular communication and relationships with parents and students that have worked well. Having a Ministry of Education 'snitch line' that bypasses the systems already in place to deal with issues at the school level will prohibit parents and educators from addressing classroom concerns constructively. As we've seen from social media, anonymous portals and comment threads are toxic and counter-productive to improving any situation, in this case school culture."

"The government is being disingenuous in that the sex ed portion of the 2014 *Health and Physical Education Curriculum* is actually the 1998 version. That means students will be put at risk, receiving no information on sexting, consent and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) relationships and identity which are protected under the *Ontario Human Rights Code*", added Hammond.

"This regression will put a chill on the classroom and limit teachers' ability to meet the needs of students. It effectively asks educators to put their students' safety at risk."

On the topic of math, it is important to note that the previous government invested heavily in math training for teachers. Thousands have participated in additional qualification courses. Financial literacy has been taught for some time at the elementary and secondary levels. A very comprehensive public consultation on standardized testing was carried out last fall and winter with a report issued publicly this spring. Why is the government is spending taxpayers' dollars on more consultation?

"And why is the government creating unnecessary chaos at the beginning of the school year? Ontario has an internationally well-regarded education system that scores consistently well on science and math on international tests. Consultation is important, but it needs to be balanced with input with education experts in the field and research on successful practices," added Hammond.

ETFO is committed to building better schools. Its *Building Better Schools* education agenda can be viewed at buildingbetterschools.ca. It represents 83,000 elementary public school teachers, occasional teachers and education professionals across the province.

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