

ETFO responds to school board collapse rumour

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TORONTO, ON - The following is a statement from the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO) President David Mastin responding to a rumour that the Ford government is considering replacing Ontario's 72 school boards with four:

"Collapsing Ontario's 72 school boards into four isn't just a bad idea, it's reckless, undemocratic, and an outright attack on public education. This move would silence parents, erase community voices, eliminate democratically elected trustees, and cut families off from decision-makers. Ford is manufacturing yet another crisis in education to tighten his grip on our schools.

It is not hyperbole to say that this unprecedented power grab would decimate public education. It would destabilize schools across the province and put student learning, safety, and well-being at risk. Premier Ford and Education Minister Calandra aren't reforming education; they are intent on dismantling a world-class public education system that educators have built and defended for generations.

The timing of this trial balloon is deliberate. As we head into central bargaining in 2026, the Ford government wants to undermine the collective voice of educators and weaken our ability to fight for smaller classes, improved supports, and safer schools. But that won't happen. Reducing the number of boards would wipe out local bargaining, concentrating even more power in the government's hands.

This backroom scheme isn't about students or educators, it's about control. Bulldozing local democracy and forcing communities from Kenora to Ottawa under mega-boards that could never meet their needs is reckless and unacceptable.

To be clear, this is American-style privatization creeping into Ontario. Their agenda is clear: sideline local voices, starve public schools of funding, and open the door to private interests. The last time a Conservative government tried something this drastic, educators and the public pushed back, and we know the impact that had.

Ontario families deserve strong, well-funded schools in local school boards with democratically elected trustees who are accountable to their communities, not the Ford government. ETFO rejects any proposal that removes power from people."

[ETFO](#) represents approximately 84,000 members, including public elementary teachers, occasional teachers, designated early childhood educators, education support personnel, and professional support personnel. Visit [BuildingBetterSchools.ca](https://www.buildingbetterschools.ca).

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