

## Education Week highlights educators' impact, urgent need for action

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TORONTO, ON – The Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO) is celebrating Education Week, May 4 to 8, by recognizing the dedication and professionalism of Ontario's public elementary educators who deliver high-quality learning experiences despite mounting pressures and challenges.

"ETFO members bring skill, dedication, and unwavering care to their students every day," says ETFO President David Mastin. "Whether they are teachers, occasional teachers, designated early childhood educators, or education and professional support personnel, their work is the heart of Ontario's public education system. But that system cannot function on our members' dedication alone. It requires real, sustained investment and a clear commitment by the Ford government to supporting the people who make public education work."

Classrooms across the province are experiencing growing strain. Chronic underfunding, large class sizes, reduced access to special education supports, rising incidents of violence in schools, and a teacher retention and recruitment crisis are all making it harder for students to learn and for educators to do their jobs safely and effectively. Educators are being asked to meet complex needs with fewer resources, all while navigating gaps in mental health and community supports.

President Mastin emphasizes that Education Week must be more than a celebration, "This week shines a light on the invaluable work happening in classrooms, but it also highlights the urgent need to strengthen the public education system that should support that work. Ontario's public education system has earned international recognition for its quality, and preserving that strength requires a clear, sustained commitment to the conditions that allow students and educators to thrive. Protecting this legacy is a shared responsibility."

ETFO's [Eight Building Blocks for Better Schools](#) set out the priorities needed to ensure equity, safety, and student success and well-being. These priorities form a roadmap for strengthening public education across the province. Each of these building blocks represents a concrete, achievable step toward a more equitable and effective system. Progress depends on the Ford government's commitment to the same improvements, backed by investments required to make them classroom realities.

[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://BuildingBetterSchools.ca).

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