

Education funding falls well below inflation, failing students

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TORONTO, ON – The Elementary Teachers’ Federation of Ontario (ETFO) issued the following statement in response to the provincial government’s 2026-27 core education funding announcement:

“Calling this budget ‘record-breaking’ is meaningless when it fails to meet the needs of students, especially those with disabilities. Educators have been clear that we need adequate, stable, inflation-protected funding to support all learners. This government continues to ignore these calls, choosing instead to mask real-dollar cuts with political spin.

Students with special education needs, English language learners, and those requiring mental health supports are [disproportionately harmed](#) by education budgets that fail to reflect the real needs of students and the actual costs of running schools. According to the [Financial Accountability Office of Ontario’s report](#), Ontario is last among provinces in revenue generation and social program spending. Yet, the Ford government can find millions to purchase an airplane. That choice is deliberate and shameful.

While the province has chosen to increase the declining enrolment adjustment allocation, this targeted boost does nothing to address the chronic underfunding that boards face across the system. This level of underfunding will lead to fewer educators and caring adults in schools, and it will not improve learning conditions for students who remain in classrooms with inadequate supports. Additionally, the government is placing critical decisions about funding, staffing, and student supports in the hands of chief executive officers who do not understand the realities of Ontario classrooms. Entrusting school board budgets to individuals with no education sector experience will make an already serious situation even worse.

Families must not overlook the Ford government’s failures. They must raise their voices with their members of provincial parliament and the Minister of Education. ETFO will do the same. If this government genuinely cares about student success and well-being, it will listen and act on the improvements that are urgently needed.”

[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](#).

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