

PEEL EDUCATION WORKERS UNITED MEDIA RELEASE

Peel School Board Supervisor Approves Cuts to Frontline Services While Millions Remain in Reserves

For Immediate Release – June 26, 2026

MISSISSAUGA, ON – Education workers are raising serious concerns after additional staffing reductions were announced across the Peel District School Board (PDSB) last week. Earlier this year, the Ontario government took the extraordinary step of removing authority from democratically elected trustees, citing concerns about governance and the impact of cuts on students and frontline services. Months later, education workers across Peel are reporting the opposite result: more cuts, fewer supports, and growing instability in schools under provincial supervision.

The cuts announced by the board affect not only educators, and have impacts across all of its worker groups, including custodial workers, office and clerical staff, and IT staff. More than 330 elementary and secondary teaching positions were declared Surplus to Region in the spring. Professional Student Services Personnel have reported ongoing reductions to frontline staffing. Custodial and maintenance workers are reporting significant additional reductions to cleaning hours in schools, putting the safety of students and staff, and the condition of our schools at further risk. Workers in alternative and online programming, and in the board's IT and media support departments have also reported further cuts to services and staffing levels.

The reductions come at a time when Peel schools continue to face growing student needs, increasing classroom complexity, and ongoing pressures related to special education, mental health, and student well-being.

“Workers across the system are asking the same question: if the purpose of provincial supervision was to improve outcomes for students, why are frontline services continuing to be reduced?” said Eddie Pereira, President of CUPE Local 2544, the union representing the PDSB's custodial and maintenance workers.

“The Ministry took control of the PDSB, claiming that it was acting in the best interests of students,” said Daniela Merenda, President of OSSTF District 19's Professional Student Services Personnel (PSSP) bargaining unit. “If that is true, then it should immediately allow the Board to access more of its contingency reserve funds to protect frontline services. The PDSB has approximately \$100 million sitting in its reserves, yet provincial rules restrict access to just one per cent per budget year. We are not asking the government to drain those reserves. We are asking for the flexibility to access two per cent instead of one per cent to prevent further cuts to teachers, educational workers, student supports, and school services. The resources exist. What is missing is the political will to let schools use them. If not now, when?”

Education unions and employee groups have repeatedly warned that ongoing reductions to frontline staffing will have real consequences for students and school communities. The community is being told that the cuts are necessary while the Board maintains one of the largest

reserve funds in Ontario. Education workers are calling on the Province to immediately allow the PDSB to access a greater portion of its contingency funds to prevent further cuts to classrooms, student supports, and school services.

Peel serves one of the largest and fastest-growing student populations in Canada. Workers report that classrooms are becoming increasingly complex, while resources and supports continue to be stretched and reduced.

The Ministry of Education must provide greater transparency regarding the decisions being made under provincial supervision and explain how continued reductions to frontline services align with its stated commitments to student achievement and well-being.

Peel Education Workers United is calling on the Ministry of Education to:

- immediately permit the PDSB to access a greater portion of its contingency reserves to protect frontline staffing, student supports, and educational programs;
- halt further reductions to frontline staffing and services;
- restore investments in teaching, student support, custodial, and education worker positions;
- protect programming and services that students and families rely on; and
- provide a clear public accounting of staffing decisions made under provincial supervision.

Public education depends on the people who deliver it every day. Continued cuts to frontline services are not a plan for improvement. They are a risk to the quality of education students receive and deserve.

-30-

Peel Education Workers United *is comprised of the unions representing every one of the more than 23,000 unionized workers in the Peel District School Board.*

For more information, contact:

CUPE 1628

Evelyn Blackwell

evelyn.blackwell@cupe1628.ca

CUPE 2544

Eddie Pereira

eddie.pereira@cupe2544.ca

OPSEU 272

Fatima Bacchus

local272president@gmail.com

OPSEU 283

Kiran Sawhney

local283president@gmail.com

OPSEU 292

Greg Carnovale

president@opseu292.org

OPSEU 2100

Melody Hurtubise

president@opseu2100.ca

OPSEU 2103

Antoinette Hylton

local2103president@gmail.com

OSSTF D19 OTBU

Allison Walker

awalker@osstfd19.ca

OSSTF D19 PSSP

Daniela Merenda

president@peelpssp.ca

OSSTF D19 TBU

Nicola Allison

nallison@osstfd19.ca

PEOT

Aloysius Okafor

aokafor@peot.ca

PETL

Nadia Goode

nadiag@etfopeel.com