

2026 | ETFO Annual Meeting Report



smaller
classes **BIG**
DIFFERENCE

Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario Equity Statement

It is the goal of the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO) to work with others to create schools, communities, and a society free from all forms of individual and systemic discrimination. To further this goal, ETFO defines equity as fairness achieved through proactive measures, which results in equality, promotes diversity, and fosters respect and dignity for all.

ETFO's Equity Initiatives

ETFO is a union committed to social justice, equity, and inclusion. The Federation's commitment to these principles is reflected in the initiatives it has established as organizational priorities, such as: ETFO's multi-year strategy on anti-Black racism; two-spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and questioning education; and addressing First Nations, Métis, and Inuit issues. ETFO establishes its understanding of these issues within an anti-oppressive framework. The Federation ensures its work incorporates the voices and experiences of marginalized communities, addresses individual and systemic inequities, and supports ETFO members as they strive for equity and social justice in their professional and personal lives. Using the anti-oppressive framework is one of the ways that ETFO is operationalizing its Equity Statement.

Definition of an Anti-Oppressive Framework

An anti-oppressive framework is the method and process in which we understand how systems of oppression such as colonialism, racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, classism, and ableism can result in individual discriminatory actions and structural/systemic inequalities for certain groups in society. Anti-oppressive practices and goals seek to recognize and dismantle such discriminatory actions and power imbalances. Anti-oppressive practices and this framework should seek to guide the Federation's work with an aim to identify strategies and solutions to deconstruct power and privilege in order to mitigate and address the systemic inequalities that often operate simultaneously and unconsciously at the individual, group, and institutional or union level.

This 2026 Annual Meeting Report can be read online at etfo.ca/annualreports.



Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO)

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The Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario

The Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO) represents over 84,000 members who include public elementary school teachers, occasional teachers, designated early childhood educators, education support personnel, and professional support personnel.

These dedicated professionals work in approximately 2,400 schools across Ontario. They teach, support, and inspire hundreds of thousands of children ranging in age from four to 14 years.

Along with providing protective and professional services for these members, ETFO promotes the economic and labour rights of all workers, as well as equity and social justice within our education system and broader society.

ETFO Priorities for 2025-2026

Approved each year at ETFO's Annual Meeting, the following priorities guide the activities and initiatives undertaken by the Federation:

- To protect the local and provincial collective bargaining rights of all members.
- To defend publicly funded public education.
- To serve the needs of the membership.
- To provide for the professional development of members.
- To advocate for social justice in the areas of peace, anti-poverty, non-violence, equity, and anti-racism.
- To fight against anti-Black racism.
- To advocate for the economic and labour rights of all workers.
- To support international assistance and co-operation.
- To advocate for the care and protection of the environment and actively engage in climate action.
- To actively engage members in the Federation and labour movement.
- To advocate for and protect the health and safety of members, both physically and psychologically.
- To advocate for the elimination of violence in publicly funded schools.

2025-2026 Executive



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President
Durham
Teacher Local



Shirley Bell
First Vice-President
Kawartha Pine Ridge
Teacher Local



Mary Fowler
Vice-President
Durham
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EXECUTIVE MEMBERS



David Berger
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Occasional
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ETFO ADMINISTRATIVE LEADERSHIP



Sharon O'Halloran
General Secretary



Lorna Larmour
Deputy General
Secretary



Sabrina Sawyer
Deputy General
Secretary



Priyanka Sawant
Chief Financial Officer



Jasmeen Sandhu
Human Resources
Officer



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

It is with immense pride and a profound sense of responsibility that I stepped into the role of president of the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario in August 2025. ETFO's history is defined by courage, solidarity, and an unwavering commitment to justice. Generations of educators have built a public education system rooted in equity and inclusion, refusing to accept anything less for the children of Ontario. To lead this organization at such a pivotal moment is both an honour and a call to action.

Ontario's fight for strong public education has always been intertwined with the strength of our labour movement. Throughout my years as an educator, local leader, member of the ETFO provincial Executive, and now as ETFO's president, I have witnessed the extraordinary power that emerges when educators stand together. That collective strength has protected our rights, strengthened our schools, and ensured that educators' voices continue to shape the future of public education. This past year has made it abundantly clear: our solidarity is the strongest defence against a government intent on weakening our high-quality public education system. It is up to us and our allies to protect it from a government determined to dismantle it.

A System Under Strain

Despite the dedication and professionalism of ETFO members, we continue to work in a publicly funded education system strained by chronic provincial underfunding, large class sizes, rising classroom violence, growing and unaddressed student needs, and a government that too often chooses private interests over investment in social services. This is not accidental; it is the result of deliberate political choices.

For years, the Ford government has manufactured crises across the public sector. They starve essential services like education and health care, and then claim these systems are “broken” or “inefficient.” They create instability and chaos, then use that chaos to justify privatization and egregious government overreach. This pattern is not new, but it has intensified under the Ford Conservatives.

In classrooms, educators face larger class sizes, fewer supports, and increasingly complex student needs. Delayed assessments, long wait times for services, and insufficient mental health and special education resources disproportionately harm vulnerable students, including students with disabilities, English language learners, and Indigenous and racialized students. These pressures also take a toll on educators’ well-being, even as they continue to give their all to support students.

Yet in the face of these challenges, ETFO members have shown remarkable perseverance because they know students deserve a high-quality public education system. They continue to advocate, support one another, and fight for the schools students deserve. That strength is the foundation of our work at ETFO and the force that will carry us through the battles ahead.

Standing Against Government Overreach

On November 19, 2025, the Ford government passed Bill 33, the *Supporting Children and Students Act*. This sweeping legislation allows the Ministry of Education to take over school boards and opens the door to the return of police in schools. Nothing about this bill improves public education. Instead, it undermines public education, silences community voices, and paves the way for privatization.

ETFO was unequivocal in its opposition. Through media releases, public statements, and coordinated advocacy, we exposed Bill 33 for what it is: an attack on democracy, local decision-making, and the communities we serve.

Our collective efforts made a difference. In the face of egregious overreach and deeply unpopular changes to school board governance, ETFO members mobilized, engaged their communities, and fought to protect democratic governance.

Over the past year, I have watched with deep concern as the provincial government has continued to centralize authority over Ontario’s public schools, first with the passing of Bill 33 and then Bill 101. In doing so, it has moved further away from its responsibility to ensure that the next generation is prepared for the future they will inherit.

The passage of Bill 101, *Putting Student Achievement First Act*, represents a significant shift in how decisions about public education are made. By removing key powers from locally elected trustees, the government has weakened the ability of communities to have a meaningful voice in their schools.

Although the government ultimately stepped back from an earlier proposal to eliminate all democratically elected trustees – a reversal that followed months of sustained advocacy by ETFO and our education partners – the legislation that did pass still undermines long standing democratic oversight.

Bill 101 removes trustees from central bargaining tables and transfers responsibility for local bargaining to newly appointed chief executive officers. This change disrupts decades of established labour relations. Trustees have served as central table partners since 2014, when the *School Boards’ Collective Bargaining Act* created Ontario’s two tier bargaining model, and they have held a statutory role in local bargaining since 1975 under Bill 100. These roles were not symbolic; they were essential safeguards of democratic accountability.

The government also took steps to remove trustees from local budget-setting processes and centralize control over classroom learning resources and assessment practices. These decisions diminish the professional judgement that educators rely on every day to meet the diverse needs of their students.

Replacing evidence-based practice with ministerial directives imposes a business-style management model on public education that does not reflect the realities of teaching or learning. Public schools are learning communities, not corporate enterprises, and they depend on the expertise of the professionals who work in them.

Families deserve trustees who are democratically elected to make decisions, not CEOs with business credentials installed to manage public education like a corporate enterprise. The fallout from this government's decisions belongs to this government alone.

A Year of Deepened Member Engagement

This year, ETFO expanded its engagement with members, including new members, across the province. Through town halls, steward-plus-one meetings, local Executive visits, all-member meetings, and new digital and print resources, we heard directly from educators about the realities in their classrooms. The issues were clear:

- large class sizes
- inadequate supports and resources for students and educators
- rising violence due to unmet student needs
- insufficient special education and mental health supports
- burnout and unsustainable workloads
- retention and recruitment challenges

Members expressed a shared vision of what our schools could be with adequate investment and responsible, accountable leadership. That vision is guiding our path forward.

Bargaining for Smaller Classes

As we prepare for the 2026 round of central bargaining, ETFO is centring the issue that unites members and resonates deeply with families across Ontario: **class size**.

Smaller classes are not simply a bargaining demand; they make a BIG DIFFERENCE. They are a matter of equity, safety, and student success.

Large classes cause all students to struggle, but disproportionately impact those who are most vulnerable.

Smaller classes are fundamental to building the calm, inclusive, and identity-affirming learning environments that allow every child to thrive. They allow for individualized support, stronger relationships, and healthier environments. Smaller classes also improve working conditions for educators and help address the retention and recruitment crisis that continues to destabilize the profession.

Reducing class sizes in Ontario public schools requires meaningful investment – investment the Ford government refuses to make. Instead of investing in public schools, the province has cut funding and undermined the structures that ensure democratic representation. ETFO will not allow this to continue unchallenged.

When our collective agreements expire on August 31, 2026, we will face a government in its third majority term whose agenda of cuts has not wavered. But because of the work educators are doing in their locals through member engagement, community outreach, and political action, we will enter these negotiations more mobilized and united than ever.

A Worsening Special Education Crisis

Ontario's special education system is in crisis. For more than two decades, ETFO has warned that provincial policies and funding structures are failing students with disabilities. Our report *Promises Unfulfilled* outlines clear, actionable recommendations to address these systemic gaps.

This is not simply a funding issue; it is a matter of justice and human rights. Every child deserves the supports they need to learn and thrive. The government's refusal to adequately fund special education is one of its most harmful and short-sighted failures. ETFO will continue to push relentlessly for early intervention, adequate staffing, sufficient funding, and a system that meets the needs of every learner.

A Commitment to Public Good

As we enter yet another round of bargaining with a government that undervalues public education, the importance of our work has never been clearer. The pressures facing our communities (cuts to social services, rising living costs, and political decisions that prioritize private interests over collective well-being) do not stop at the school doors.



They shape the conditions in which students learn and educators work. Yet history reminds us that when educators organize, when unions hold firm, and when communities are united, real and lasting change is not only possible, but inevitable.

Educators continue to cultivate critical thinking in students and encourage them to question deeply and imagine boldly, skills that empower students to shape a better future. They are cultivating creativity and resilience, important skills that empower students to replace hesitancy with agency.

But this work cannot rest solely on educators' shoulders. Our public schools require meaningful, sustained investment from the government: infrastructure that supports healthy learning and working environments, comprehensive training and resources that support educators, and policies that recognize education as a cornerstone of a just and equitable society.

Strengthening public education is not simply a bargaining issue. It is a commitment to the public good, to our communities, and to the future we want to build together.

Troubling Focus on Privatization

Increasingly, this government promotes a narrow view of public education, one that frames schools primarily as training grounds for the future labour force. This reductive framing risks erasing the broader purpose of public education: to nurture happy, healthy, critically aware young people who can participate meaningfully in a democratic society. When students are supported in developing these capacities, our democracy is strengthened; when that purpose is diminished, the long-term health of our democratic institutions is put at risk.

Across the province, people have also observed that recent policy decisions appear to prioritize corporate interests and those already benefiting from economic privilege, rather than strengthening the public systems that working families rely on. These concerns underscore why our advocacy matters. Public education must remain a public good, not a mechanism for advancing private gain.

Our Path Forward...Together

The collaborative work between education affiliates has been unprecedented. We all know that when we stand alone, the government holds most of the cards. The last decade of central bargaining has made that clear. But when we stand together, and not just for symbolic moments, the balance of power shifts dramatically toward working people. I want to thank all of our education union partners for continuing to pursue new and strategic ways to amplify our collective power.

As we move into the coming year, our work will demand both vigilance and vision. Vigilance, because the threats to public education are real, coordinated, and accelerating. Vision, because our response must be rooted not only in resistance, but in the bold, hopeful future we are determined to build. ETFO's strength has always come from our ability to imagine something better, and then organize to make it real.

We will continue to amplify the voices of educators who understand the realities of classrooms better than any politician or private interest ever could. We will continue to insist that every child deserves the full promise of public education: safe classrooms; rich learning environments; and the supports that honour their identities, strengths, and needs. And we will continue to challenge any government that undermines these principles.

The year ahead will not be easy, but it will be defining. We have the strength, the solidarity, and the collective resolve to meet this moment. Together, we will defend public education, advance justice, and build a future worthy of the students who inspire us every day.

David Mastin,
President,
Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario



General Secretary's REPORT

ETFO members demonstrate remarkable professionalism, dedication, and care while continuing to deliver high quality public education under increasing pressure. Your commitment to supporting students and one another during challenging times does not go unnoticed. Thank you for creating classrooms and learning environments where all students feel welcome, accepted, supported, and seen. Your work is appreciated.

This past year has been an exceptionally busy one for ETFO. With a new round of bargaining ahead, our public campaigns, government relations efforts, equity work, and the many other services we provide to members have continued at full pace. Together, we remain focused on strengthening public education and supporting you, our members, who make it possible.

smaller classes, BIG DIFFERENCE

To lay the groundwork for the 2026 round of collective bargaining, ETFO launched a province-wide campaign focused squarely on class size, an issue at the heart of equity, student success, and educator working conditions. Smaller classes make a measurable difference. They allow educators to give students the individualized attention they deserve, build stronger relationships, and create inclusive learning environments where every child can thrive. Ignoring class size means ignoring the inequities that shape students' daily experiences, and ETFO has made it clear that this is unacceptable.

Our smaller classes, BIG DIFFERENCE campaign highlights how large class sizes intensify existing challenges and undermine both learning and well-being. Our campaign reached communities across Ontario through television, radio, digital platforms, social media, and out of home advertising such as billboards and transit shelters. The goal is not only to raise awareness, but to mobilize broad public support for the changes students and educators urgently need.

Every member plays a role in amplifying this message and strengthening our collective voice. This means joining us in advocating for the resources that allow for targeted interventions, culturally responsive pedagogy, and the time to build the profound connections that foster a true sense of belonging and well-being.

Our Collective Strength

Throughout the year, ETFO has been organizing in schools and communities to support school board trustees and defend local democracy. This work – naming what is being lost, building allies, and engaging meaningfully with the public – is essential as we prepare for a challenging round of bargaining when contracts expire on August 31, 2026. We know this government's agenda of cuts has not changed, but we are entering negotiations more mobilized, connected, and prepared than ever.

This year, ETFO focused on strengthening the union from within by expanding and deepening members' understanding of the Federation and how to access its supports and resources effectively. We continued to build strong personal connections that help members feel rooted in their union and confident in the collective strength we share.

At the same time, ETFO invested in developing the internal capacity and infrastructure of locals, ensuring they are well-equipped to support the union's political priorities and upcoming bargaining work.

Internal engagement is not simply about promoting the union; fundamentally, it is focused on transforming both the workplace and the union itself. Our goal is to create space and community where members are embraced and feel included. As we continue to build upon efforts to engage new members and grow unity across locals, our approach will be centred on supporting the direct needs of members and building strong relationships.

This internal strength directly supports our external advocacy. ETFO is working to build a broad coalition that demands better for every child in Ontario, and our advocacy is strongest when it reflects the shared values of the communities we serve.

No Equity Without Democracy

The rollback of local democracy through bills 33 and 101 and this government's centralization agenda are inseparable from the fight for equity in our public schools. You cannot have equity without democratic processes, representation, and local voices, nor the ability of communities to make decisions that reflect their local needs. This is a truth that guides everything we do at ETFO.

ETFO's vision is one where every student, regardless of personal circumstances or geographic location, has access to a high-quality public education, and the tools and resources they need to be successful. This vision is rooted in the understanding that equity is not an abstract concept. It is the practical work of ensuring our schools are places of safety, representation, belonging, and opportunity for all.

The past year has given us powerful reminders of why this work matters and why we must remain steadfast. We have engaged in the difficult but essential work of examining how ETFO must change and grow as an organization to better serve its members and students. At the same time, we have collectively challenged a Conservative government that continues to place more school boards under supervision rather than addressing the real issues facing our schools: underfunding, teacher retention and recruitment, and the growing unmet needs of students.

Equity at the Centre

Over the past year, ETFO continued to advance equity and social justice through a wide range of heritage month resources, classroom materials, and commemorative initiatives. The annual cycle began in October with the release of the Women's History Month poster and curriculum companion, distributed to all work sites. This year's materials highlighted trailblazing women in politics and reinforced ETFO's commitment to gender equity. In January, ETFO marked International Holocaust Remembrance Day, honouring the six million Jews murdered in the Holocaust and reaffirming our responsibility to confront antisemitism and hate in all forms.

Throughout the winter and spring, ETFO released a series of heritage month resources designed to support culturally responsive teaching. The Black History Month poster, shared in February, connected African folklore, history, and futurism through the theme #FutureGriot, accompanied by a classroom activity guide. In May, ETFO published the Jewish Canadian Heritage Month artwork, *Henaynu, Here We Are*, celebrating Jewish leadership and activism, and the Asian Heritage Month poster, inspired by Setsuko Thurlow's call to create a more peaceful world. ETFO also recognized International Women's Day with the theme "Advancing Change Together," offering members themed T-shirts and toques, and supported the International Day of Pink with resources promoting 2SLGBTQ+ inclusion. In June, ETFO recognized Pride Month and Indigenous History Month, which recognizes the stories, culture, and gifts of Indigenous Peoples.

ETFO continued to expand its equity-focused classroom supports, including updates to the 2SLGBTQ+ online resource bank and the development of new lessons addressing homophobic and transphobic language for grades 3 to 8, to be released in 2026-27. The Federation also marked Transgender Day of Remembrance by sharing resources on interrupting anti-2SLGBTQ+ microaggressions. Together, these initiatives reflect ETFO's ongoing commitment to equity, inclusion, and meaningful classroom ready supports.

Together, in Solidarity

Despite the challenges ahead, ETFO's resolve remains strong. We will continue advocating for positive change, knowing that our collective efforts shape a more equitable and sustainable public education system.

As we prepare for the challenging bargaining round ahead, let's remember that our strength comes from our diversity, our solidarity, and our unwavering commitment to every student. Together, we will continue to build on our legacy and make our vision for public education a reality.



Sharon O'Halloran, General Secretary



STANDING UP FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION



ETFO continues to be a fierce advocate for Ontario's public education system. Over the past year, our collective voice, through strategic public campaigns, media outreach, and a strong social media presence, has kept education underfunding, the need to reduce class sizes, the ongoing lack of special education supports, violence in schools, and learning and working conditions in the spotlight.

In the wake of the introduction of Bill 33, ETFO's vehement opposition to the Ford government's plan to eliminate elected school board trustee positions, and the joint efforts of other education unions, community groups, opposition political parties, and education stakeholders, forced the government to take a step back.

However, despite the lack of public support for its education reforms, the government continued its attack on school board governance. Through Bill 101, the *Putting Student Achievement First Act*, the Ford Conservatives moved to strip elected school board trustees of the powers to shape public education in any meaningful way, further centralizing the decisions that impact schools across the province in the hands of the minister of education. The bill stopped short of eliminating trustees altogether, largely because of sustained lobbying and public pressure from unions, especially ETFO.

Over the past year, local leaders and members have engaged with their colleagues, members of their school communities, and the public to highlight the negative impact the Ford government's reforms are having on public schools, while laying the groundwork for what will be a crucial round of collective bargaining.

Throughout the year, staff in Communications and Political Action (CPA) Services supported this work by:

- anticipating and responding to political and economic threats to public education, workers' rights, and social justice
- strengthening member engagement through accessible campaign tools, training, and communications resources
- providing strategic support to staff in Collective Bargaining (CB) Services in preparation for the next round of collective bargaining
- bringing public attention to the Ford government's failures and mobilizing communities to take action
- equipping local leaders with the tools, training, and resources needed to inform, engage, and mobilize members
- amplifying ETFO's voice through media outreach, digital campaigns, and community engagement
- building solidarity – working alongside affiliates and independently to garner public and member support for better classroom conditions and professional respect
- highlighting ETFO's impact – showcasing the union's vital work in protecting and strengthening public education

Preparing for the 2026 Round of Collective Bargaining

This year, CPA advanced the external communications plan to support ETFO's collective bargaining readiness strategy. Developed in collaboration with CB staff, the plan integrated member engagement, advocacy, and public messaging into a coordinated approach that strengthened ETFO's position heading into the next round of bargaining.

Early implementation of the plan, including member engagement and targeted communications, increased member awareness and mobilization and helped build public support for smaller class sizes as a central bargaining priority. Our work also focused on building and showcasing solidarity to demonstrate ETFO's collective strength.

The CB readiness strategy positioned class size as a foundational priority for 2026 and beyond. As part of our ongoing work, CPA staff will continue to strengthen member engagement, with particular attention to members in their first five years, ensuring they are informed, connected, and ready to participate in the union's collective efforts.

Organizing and Member Engagement

For the 2025-26 school year, ETFO's member engagement efforts have been squarely focused on building momentum in the lead-up to collective bargaining. This has been achieved in several ways. By providing incentive funding for locals to release members to push back against the Ford government on Bill 33 and the continued underfunding of public education, training stewards and local leaders in organizing tactics, launching mobilization campaigns, and encouraging members to reach out to parents and caregivers, ETFO is building power in advance of the bargaining to come.

Organizing staff provided focused support for local member engagement to 19 locals in eight school boards. These included:

- Grand Erie
- Halton
- Hamilton-Wentworth
- Lakehead
- Ontario Northeast
- Rainbow
- Toronto
- Upper Grand

This support centred on developing a work plan, building organizing capacity through training, and implementing meaningful member engagement through one-on-one conversations and tracking participation at the local level.

September and October saw a strong focus on responding to Bill 33. Organizing staff developed a Bill 33 campaign tool kit that includes resources to support local leaders and stewards in engaging and educating members, trustees, and the broader community about the bill, with a focus on actions we can take to collectively push back. Organizers also supported locals who accessed the Bill 33 incentive funding and assisted them in organizing and coordinating school visits and phone banking to engage members one-on-one about the effects of Bill 33 and its connection to public education and members' classroom experiences.



Collective Bargaining Action Plan

In February, ETFO launched the CB action plan to engage members and the public in the upcoming round of bargaining. This plan was designed to inform, engage, educate, and mobilize members and allies about ETFO bargaining. It aligns internal and external communications into one guiding strategy.

The action plan began by meeting with local executives, and by training stewards and local leaders on the central bargaining process, member engagement strategies, and the provincial mobilization plan. Steward-Plus-One meetings were well-attended across the province. Attendees received a number of resources, including an updated Provincial Action Engagement Guide.

The first mobilization actions called on ETFO members and community members to sign a petition urging the provincial government to increase its investment in public education. Through member efforts, over 55,000 signatures were collected, with representation from every school board in Ontario. Petitions were collected, sorted, and distributed to 43 MPPs from all opposition parties for presentation at Queen's Park. The presentation of petition signatures aligned with the release of the provincial budget.

On April 29, members from all education affiliate unions in Ontario joined ETFO in a province-wide Day of Action in a massive show of solidarity. Across the province, more than 255,000 ETFO members, teachers, and education workers wore red and purple as part of the Red for Ed and Power of Purple movements. Under the banner of "Stronger Together," the five affiliate unions demonstrated, just over a month before serving notice to bargain, that they are prepared for the next round of central bargaining and ready to demand more for students from a government that has neglected them since taking office in 2018.



CB Designated Groups

The final component of the action plan was to hold all-member meetings to inform members of the collective bargaining priorities and strike vote. The mobilization piece at these meetings was the distribution of 84,000 member postcards and 30,000 parent and community postcards, which included a pledge to hold MMPs accountable and demand more investment in public education. The postcards also provided an opportunity for members to connect with caregivers and the community, to share their stories about what is happening in schools and ask for support ahead of bargaining.

New Member Engagement

New Member Kit

CPA staff collaborated with Professional Learning/ Curriculum Services staff to review and update the content of the *Welcome to ETFO* booklet for the new school year. Feedback from new member chairs, questions from the new member virtual town halls last year, and recommendations from local presidents informed the content updates.

The booklet is a main component of the popular hard-copy new member kits, which also include several flyers detailing membership services and provincial programs, with a focus on those for members in their first five years.

New Member Town Hall Meetings

President Mastin and General Secretary O'Halloran hosted evening virtual town halls on November 25 and 27 to engage new members in an interactive format via Zoom. More than 200 members in their first five years registered to attend one of the two dates, while 30 members indicated they were unavailable but wanted to receive information. On social media, members with more than five years in ETFO expressed interest in attending the town hall and learning more about their union.

Follow-up communication with all registrants and those who offered regrets included a PDF of the slide deck with hyperlinks to supplementary resources, highlighting PRS Matters bulletins.

New Member Newsletter

To engage new members and provide concise, tailored information, an electronic newsletter was distributed in November and May. The November distribution date was chosen to allow sufficient time for boards to provide contact information for new hires, and included a special invitation from the president to attend the new-member town hall. The email was sent to nearly 12,000 members in the provincial database within their first four years, with an open rate of 54 per cent.

New Member Orientation Conference: Gearing Up!

The new member orientation program for women from designated equity groups was held for the first time on April 15 and 16. Over two full days, 20 members from teacher and occasional teacher locals received a wealth of information from a range of speakers, including four members who shared their experiences and union involvement in a panel discussion. Workshop topics covered ETFO structure and governance, membership services, workplace rights, health and safety, ETFO's anti-oppressive framework, professional judgement, and ways to become more involved at the local and provincial levels.

The evening session offered a balance of learning, creativity, and connection through small-group conversations guided by table questions. Members toured the provincial office and participated in an interactive movement workshop organized by a Toronto teacher member.

Member Engagement Resources

To deepen members' understanding of their union and raise awareness of union membership services, staff developed new materials this year. These materials were shared electronically with new member committee chairs and local presidents for distribution to members and new members. Several resources were also circulated in both hard copy and electronic formats through the monthly steward mailing. The following resources were newly developed or revised during the year:

- *Engagement Guide* to welcome and introduce new members to their union – a three-page document outlining steps for engaging new members and encouraging involvement.

- *Who Should You Call or Email* – an interactive flyer listing key contacts for members, including email addresses, phone numbers, and websites.
- *Talking Politics at Work* – a four-page overview of members' rights when participating in ETFO campaigns or political action in the workplace.
- *Know Your Rights* slide deck for stewards and locals to use to educate members about balancing political activity with professional duties as an educator.
- *Backgrounder on Red for Ed* – a four-page overview of the tactic of wearing red as part of public education campaigns that explains why ETFO has embraced and continues to use it.

Support for Local New Member Chairs

This year, local chairpersons who attended the daylong training at Fall Leadership were invited to subscribe to a new electronic newsletter. In total, 75 members expressed interest in receiving the newsletter, and each email distributed had an open rate of 85 per cent. The newsletters included links to resources on the secure site created for new members, reminders of programs and registration dates for new members, and links to videos available on the ETFO YouTube channel. Chairpersons expressed a desire for regular updates to share directly and use in new member outreach.

New Resource Section for Stewards

To support the work and role of stewards, a new section was established on ETFO Secure. Featuring seven areas, the Stewards Resources page offers a repository of diverse tools to help workplace leaders implement union campaigns, educate members about their rights, and provide practical tips for communicating and engaging with members. The online area also includes a dedicated section where stewards can access social media images to amplify membership services, sites, and campaign messages.

To access stewards' resources, visit members.etfo.ca/etfo/stewards/stewards-resources (login required).

School Board Trustee Summit

On January 22, ETFO held a summit for school board trustees at the Sheraton Centre Toronto Hotel. More than 30 trustees from across the province participated in the event, which included members of the ETFO provincial Executive and some local leaders. Panel discussions covered underlying issues in public education and the anti-democratic attacks by the provincial government on school board governance. The event also provided opportunities for trustees and ETFO representatives to discuss common concerns and strengthen working relationships.

Political Action Conference

ETFO held its 2026 Political Action Conference on February 18 and 19. The conference featured panels on local democracy, school board governance, and community organizing. More than 100 members attended workshops focused on mobilizing for the upcoming municipal and school board elections and on strengthening effective member engagement.

Panellists discussing local democracy and school board governance included Nigel Bariffe, vice-president of the Elementary Teachers of Toronto; Dawn Danko, trustee with the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board; and Lana Parker, associate

professor at the University of Windsor. ETFO members who shared insights on bringing community into the conversation were Niki Kazemzadeh of the Waterloo Region Teacher Local; Jey Plourde, Political Action Conference co-chair with the Upper Grand Teacher Local; and Sarah Whalen, vice-president of the Kawartha Pine Ridge Teacher Local.

BuildingBetterSchools.ca

The Building Better Schools campaign allows ETFO to communicate and engage a wide variety of people outside of the membership, including retired members, families, members of other unions, and Ontarians who support a strong universal public education system. It also serves as another avenue for ETFO members to engage in political advocacy.

Campaigns focused on opposing Bill 33 and urging supporters to stand up for elected school board trustees. Though Education Minister Paul Calandra clearly signalled his intention to remove all elected trustees in the English public boards, as a result of advocacy efforts across the province, the legislation (Bill 101) that was eventually introduced did not eliminate elected school trustees. However, it did reduce their power and set the maximum number of trustees at 12, capping boards at their current number if they have fewer than 12.



Petition signers from the spring action plan were integrated into the email campaign to further engage them with political lobbying to support bargaining throughout the next year. The site also remains a place where supporters can get updated information on the impact of school cuts, find social media sharables and videos, and access research and action items to promote ongoing campaigns.

Campaigns



The goal of ETFO campaigns is to help frame the conversation about the importance of a well-funded public education system and the centrality of schools to Ontario life, to promote the teaching profession and work of other education professionals employed in public schools, and to position educators as critical to the achievement and well-being of students.

ETFO's campaigns succeed because we consistently innovate, finding new ways to share the Federation's messaging and to reach people where they are via targeted tactics like programmatic out-of-home, social and digital media and email, or by reaching more and more Ontarians in their home language through radio, social media, and digital channels.

In 2025-26, this integrated approach enabled us to connect with communities across every Ontario school board. ETFO also continues to build long-term relationships with diverse communities by advertising in Arabic, Cantonese, French, Hindi, Persian, Punjabi, Mandarin, Tamil, and Urdu.

Out-of-home advertising and television ads were among the first campaign elements to launch this year, building early visibility and amassing over 161 million measurable impressions across the province.



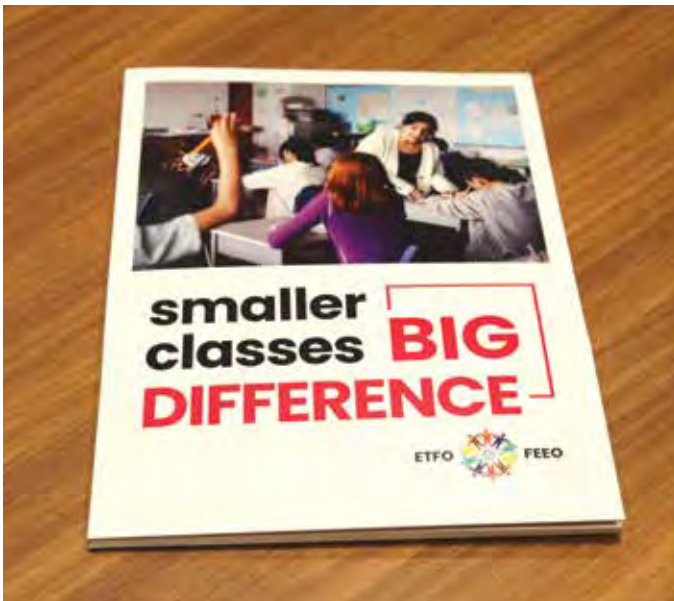
From August through late November, and again in February, ETFO maintained a strong province-wide audio push. ETFO saw 63,640 radio spots across hundreds of stations and more than 4.8 million digital audio impressions through podcasts and streaming platforms.

Altogether, streaming audio delivered over 144 million seconds of ETFO's message to Ontarians – equivalent to nearly 4.6 years of continuous listening.

ETFO produced a series of new testimonials in the spring with three educators and a parent on the impacts of cuts to public schools, the need for smaller classes, and the need for special education supports. The videos were aired on broadcast TV during news programming, and distributed online through video, streaming apps, social and digital channels, and in movie theatres province-wide.

Digital and social ads delivered over 99 million impressions, with 10 million completed video views across digital and CTV. Social media ads reached approximately 5.6 million Ontarians.





In the run-up to the 2026-27 school year, a province-wide out-of-home and direct mail campaign will be launched, accompanied by another wave of social ads that are projected to garner more than 13 million impressions.

ETFO's goal is to continue mobilizing members and the public as we head into the next school year and begin gearing up for bargaining. As the Federation plans for the next phase of the campaign, we look forward to continuing to build an effective strategy to support public education in the long term.

Media Relations

Throughout the year, staff coordinated media interviews; drafted and issued media advisories, releases, and statements (including joint statements); supported released officers and local presidents with media requests; and responded to media inquiries related, but not limited, to:

- collective bargaining – class size, call for early bargaining
- provincial budget/chronic underfunding of public education
- Bill 33 – changes to school board governance and police in schools
- Bill 101 – *Putting Student Achievement First Act* – changes to school board governance and leadership structures, stripping trustees' core responsibilities, and unilateral changes to local and central bargaining

- ministry supervision/school board takeovers
- Classroom Supplies Fund
- ministry pause of curriculum changes
- revised Kindergarten curriculum
- artificial intelligence
- EQAO – delay, results and advisory body
- days/months of recognition
- declining enrolment
- potential teachers' college changes

To support local presidents, full-day media training was offered at the provincial office on June 9. Speaking notes and key message documents were also provided on a variety of issues throughout the year.

On March 10, ETFO local presidents, representing members in school boards currently under supervision, issued a joint letter to Education Minister Paul Calandra. The letter, titled "Ministry Supervision is Failing Students," was also shared with ministry-appointed supervisors, directors of education at supervised boards, and the leadership of the OPSBA and the Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association.

Press Conferences

ETFO held/participated in a number of press conferences throughout the year, including:

- September 2 - President Mastin joined MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam, Andrea Vasquez-Jimenez, and other education partners at a Policing-Free Schools press conference at Queen's Park. ETFO called on the Ford government to withdraw Bill 33 and ensure schools are safe, supportive, and inclusive, not patrolled by unnecessary police.
- October 21 - ETFO held a press conference in the media studio at Queen's Park to sound the alarm on Bill 33. President Mastin was joined by Cindy Gangaram, president of the Hamilton-Wentworth Teacher Local; Chandra Pasma, NDP education critic and member of provincial parliament; and Stephen Skoutajan, president of the Ottawa-Carleton Teacher Local, whose school board was under Ministry of Education supervision. The press conference was held after members of ETFO's provincial Executive gathered outside Queen's Park at 12:30 p.m. They were joined by ETFO local leaders from across Ontario and representatives from other education unions who watched question period from the public gallery that morning.

- November 18 - President Mastin participated in an NDP press conference at Queen's Park ahead of the expected passage of Bill 33 on November 19.
- February 11 - President Mastin spoke at a Canadian Civil Liberties Association (CCLA) press conference at Queen's Park, condemning the provincial government's takeover of seven Ontario school boards. Other speakers included Harini Sivalingam, director of the CCLA's equality program; Martha Hradowy, Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation president; and Carter Peios, president of the Ontario Student Trustees' Association.
- March 11 - President Mastin also spoke at an Ontario Public School Board's Association (OPSBA) press conference at Queen's Park, condemning the education minister's role in working to eliminate democratically elected school board trustees. Other speakers included OPSBA president Kathleen Woodcock, Carter Peios, and David Lepovsky, parent representative and chair of the Toronto District School Board's Special Education Advisory Committee. Representatives from other education partners were also present.
- April 27 - First Vice-President Shirley Bell joined other education stakeholders at an NDP press conference at Queen's Park about Bill 101, the *Putting Student Achievement First Act*.
- June 3 - ETFO, L'Association des enseignantes et des enseignants franco-ontariens, the Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association, CUPE Ontario School Board Council of Unions, and Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation held a press conference at the ETFO provincial office to announce that notice to bargain was being served.

All media releases and statements can be found on ETFO's [public website](#) under **News and Publications**.



Videos

ETFO released multiple short, engaging videos this year to introduce the newly elected president and capture the attention of members and the public. These included a series of "Did you know?" clips created as part of the member engagement strategy, which address members' frequently asked questions and reiterate the union's important political positions. This series will continue throughout the coming year.

The following videos were released this year:

- Defending public education (September)
- Did you know ETFO's collective agreements expire in August? (February)
- Did you know trustees are essential? (March)
- Did you know ETFO is a union? (April)
- Did you know social justice work is union work? (May)
- End-of-school-year message (June)

Videos are typically released on ETFO's three social media channels (Facebook, Instagram, X) and can be accessed on the [ETFO Educators YouTube channel](#).

Podcasts



Since its launch in the spring of 2022, the popularity of *Elementary: A Podcast from ETFO*, has grown steadily. *Elementary* is a podcast for teachers, education workers, and anyone who wants to know more about public education in Ontario. Episodes are produced in collaboration with ETFO's service areas, and interviews and information are presented to support ETFO's bargaining goals and positions, providing resources for members and the public to discuss education issues.

In celebration of 2025 being the 15th anniversary of designated early childhood educators (DECEs) joining ETFO, the podcast episodes throughout the season featured the voices of DECEs speaking about their work and their union. These interviews highlighted the value and meaning of DECE's work, and their connection to ETFO as their union. The podcast also featured one episode consisting of a panel interview with a DECE, a teacher, and an academic studying the work of DECEs.

Episodes published between April 2025 and May 2026 include:

- Lana Parker on why we organize for public education
- Systemic changes and Black mental health with Crystal Garvey
- Artificial intelligence and climate justice
- The important role of DECEs in Ontario's classrooms
- How to improve special education in Ontario
- President Karen Brown's opening speech to ETFO's 2025 Annual Meeting
- Joe Pitawanakwat on teaching and learning about Indigenous plants and their uses
- Education and AI: An interview with Phil McCrae

As of spring 2026, there have been 21,800 unique downloads of the podcast. Episodes are promoted with regular features in ETFO's *Voice* magazine, in the member e-newsletter, and on social media. *Elementary* can be found on iTunes, Google, and most podcast apps.

Membership Newsletters

For many years, ETFO has used a bi-weekly email newsletter, branded *Your Member News*, to support communication with members. The newsletter is distributed from mid-August to the end of June, with one newsletter issued during July.

ETFO members continue to show high engagement rates with the ETFO e-news. The average open rate across all industries in 2025 rose to 42 per cent, and ETFO's e-news exceeded that by 15 per cent, with an average open rate of 57 per cent between March 2025 and March 2026. Maintaining an up-to-date membership contact list is ongoing work that is supported by staff in Member Records and CPA.

In 2026, 68 per cent of recipients opened the e-news using a mobile device, with the remainder using a desktop computer. Sixty-seven percent of members clicked on links within the e-news from a mobile device, with 34 per cent clicking through on a desktop computer.

If you know a member who is currently not receiving the ETFO e-newsletter, please ask them to email communications@etfo.org.

Websites



ETFO's public and member-only websites continue to be used by ETFO members to access the information they need. The member-only website, members.etfo.ca (commonly referred to as ETFO Secure), offers tailored content for individual members based on their role within the organization. It has sections for collective bargaining updates, professional learning resources, PRS Matters, upcoming events, and more.

This year, CPA staff expanded ETFO Secure to include a newly developed dedicated section for occasional teachers, replacing the etfo-ots.ca website. The occasional teachers section provides a detailed search and filtering of occasional teacher resources.

The public website, etfo.ca, was visited 526,583 times in the last 12 months, while members.etfo.ca was visited 321,841 times during the same period. ■

Member Communication

Keeping ETFO's membership database current and up to date is vital for strong and effective communication. Members can provide their personal, non-work email addresses and personal mobile or home phone numbers using ETFO's [online form](#) or by contacting Member Records at 416-962-3836/1-888-838-3836, ext. 3806.

Solidarity Works! A Timeline of ETFO Wins

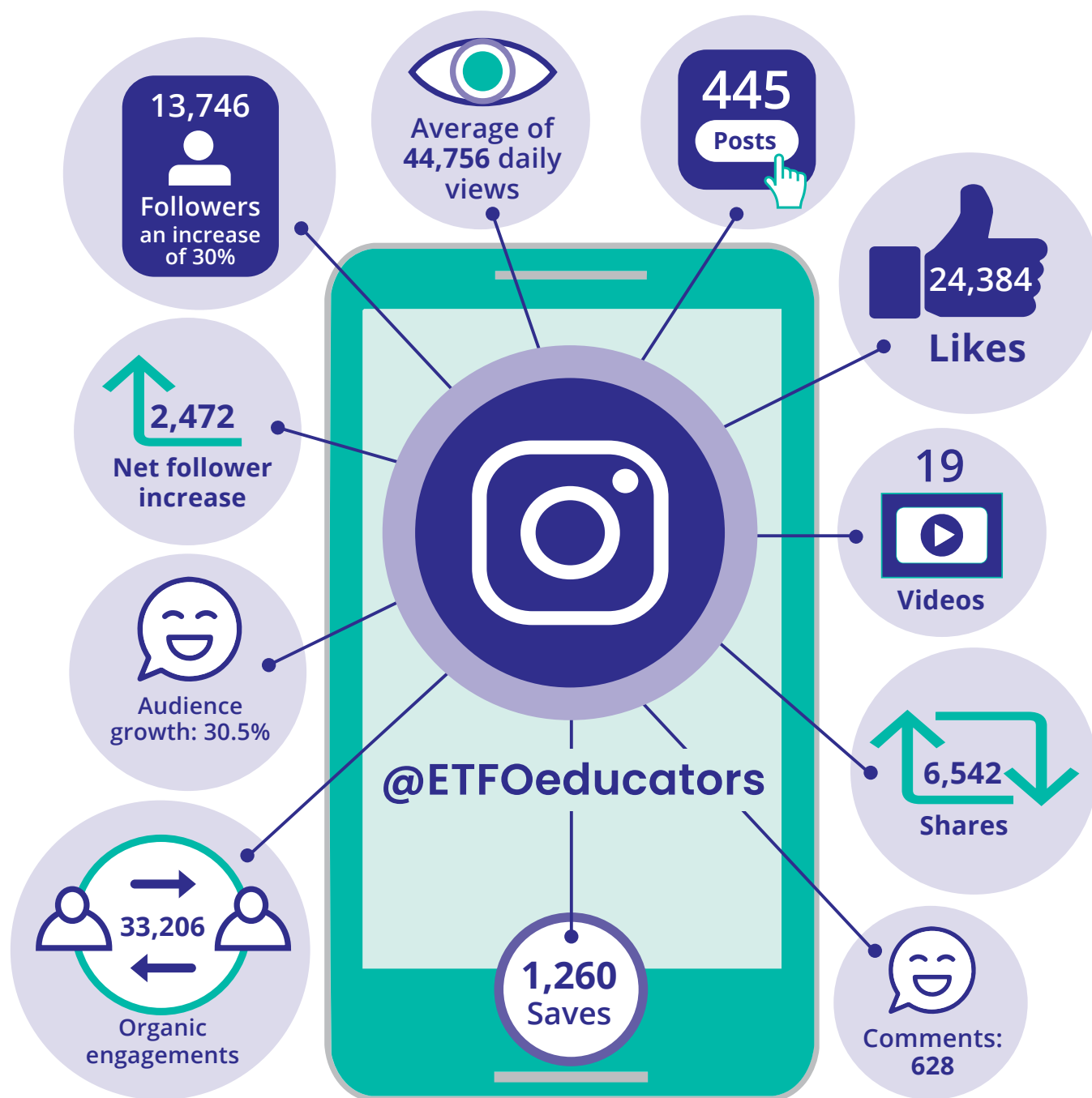


1917	Teachers' unions in Ontario win pensions with the passage of the <i>Teachers' Superannuation Act</i> in the legislature.
1918	The Federation of Women Teachers' Associations of Ontario (FWTAO) is created.
1920	The Ontario Public School Men Teachers' Federation (OPSMTF) is created.
1931	Teachers' federations propose a "model" contract of employment. The government adopts it and urges school boards to use it.
1943	School boards are now required to give reasons for dismissal in writing.
1951	Following years of women teachers accepting less pay than their male counterparts and of their federation campaigning for pay equity, the <i>Fair Remuneration for Female Employees Act</i> , which legislates equal pay, is passed.
1965	Teacher federations negotiate the pay grid.
1968	Teacher federations create the Qualifications Evaluation Council of Ontario (QECO) to standardize the assessment of teacher qualifications.
1973	In 17 locals, collective bargaining talks break down, and teachers walk out. In response, the government enacts legislation banning the right to strike and mandating compulsory arbitration instead. About 80,000 teachers across Ontario submit mass resignations, and 30,000 rally at Maple Leaf Gardens. The bill is withdrawn three days later.
1975	Bill 100, the <i>School Boards and Teachers Negotiations Act</i> , is passed, which enshrines the right to strike and the right to negotiate a wide scope working conditions.
1985	The "85 factor" is introduced.
1986	The first occasional teacher collective agreement is signed.
1987	After 10,000 teachers in Toronto strike over the issue, the first teacher agreement with preparation time is negotiated, with 150 minutes guaranteed.
1991	Teacher federations win equal partnership in managing the OTPP after 20,000 OTF members rally for equal control and members of OSSTF and OPSMTF occupy the offices of the minister of education.
1991	FWTAO launches a lawsuit on behalf of occasional teachers who were denied the right to buy back their pensions. It is ultimately successful.
1997	126,000 teachers walk off the job to protest sweeping changes to the education system under Mike Harris.
1998	FWTAO and OPSTF merge to form ETFO.
2000	ETFO successfully protests proposed changes to make supervision of extracurriculars mandatory, and the Harris government does not introduce that part of the legislation.
2001	The Harris government proposes Bill 80, which would mandate that teachers take 14 professional development courses within a five-year period to maintain their certification. Mandatory recertification is eventually scrapped.



2005	ETFO wins 200 minutes of preparation time in teacher/occasional teacher collective agreements. Gains are also made with supervision caps, money for professional development, occasional teacher workload, and professional issues.
2006	Occasional teachers win improvements in daily rates and the right to teach the same timetable as the teacher being replaced.
2008	ETFO negotiates reductions in class-size averages in grades 4 to 8 and increased preparation time of 240 minutes in teacher/occasional teacher agreements. This round also brings maximum 80-minute supervision caps across the province, and in many locals, better leave provisions and enhanced union rights.
2011	ETFO organizes and welcomes 10 DECE locals into its membership.
2013	ETFO negotiates a minimum threshold of eight weeks' salary topped up to 100 per cent for eligible members taking pregnancy leave, as well as sick leave provisions for members in long-term occasional assignments
2015	ETFO refuses to participate in EQAO testing as part of a work-to-rule to protest sick leave strips. EQAO is cancelled. Strips to preparation time and sick leave are staved off.
2015	ETFO enshrines teachers' rights to use professional judgement in assessment and evaluation of students in the central agreement. It also ensures members in long-term occasional assignments can access benefits.
2016	ETFO wins its Charter challenge with a court finding that Bill 115 violated members' rights to meaningful collective bargaining.
2017	ETFO negotiates a cap on Kindergarten class size, and a further reduction in class-size averages for grades 4 through 8.
2017	ETFO negotiates investments in special education and a "priorities fund" to hire more teachers for early years, special education, Indigenous students, at-risk students, and English language learners.
2019	The government proposes strips to the Kindergarten model and to class size in grades 4 to 8. In the face of a massive show of member solidarity, the government backs off on elementary class-size increases and signs an agreement to maintain the Kindergarten teacher/DECE staffing model.
2020	ETFO negotiates renewed investment through the Support for Students Fund to hire additional teachers in special education and to support English language learners, Indigenous students, and mental health and well-being initiatives.
2022	Justice Thomas Lederer releases a decision on a remedy for Bill 115. As a settlement, the government must pay more than \$103 million in damages to eligible ETFO members.
2022	ETFO wins its Charter challenge with a court finding that Bill 124 violated members' rights to free and fair collective bargaining.
2022	The Ford government passes Bill 28, using the notwithstanding clause to impose collective agreements and circumvent collective bargaining, which is a Charter right. ETFO joins its labour allies to successfully pressure the Ford government to repeal Bill 28 and completely scrub the legislation from the record.
2023	The government tables massive strips to sick leave provisions. ETFO refuses to accept strips and negotiates improvements to health and safety provisions, additional support for students, professional development funding for education workers, a remedy for Bill 124, adequate funding for benefits, and wage increases, among other improvements.
2024	After nearly a 10-year legal battle to protect ETFO members, the Supreme Court of Canada confirms Section 8 Charter protections in a landmark case (York Region District School Board v. ETFO). The historic, unanimous ruling confirms public school boards are governmental entities and educators have a reasonable expectation of privacy against unreasonable searches in the workplace.
2026	Successful fightback against Bill 33, which ensured no democratically elected trustees were eliminated.

Social Media Metrics for 2025-26

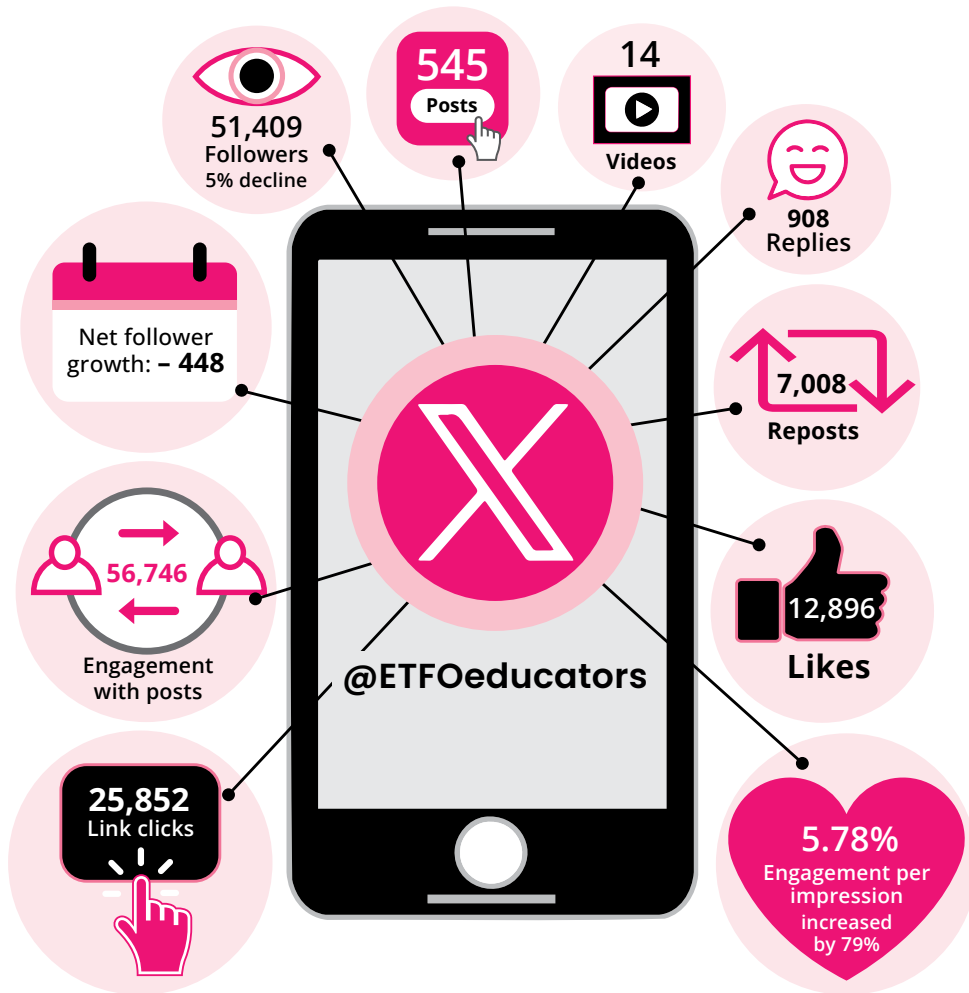


Post with the most organic engagement likes, comments, shares, and saves featured a carousel of images from October Representative Council with local leaders holding signs identifying class sizes in boards. This post garnered **1,328** forms of engagement, **1,075** likes, **176** shares, **43** comments and **34** saves.

Linktree*

Account created and added to Instagram in March 2025. In the last year it generated: **934** views and **562** link clicks. Top two links opened were etfo.ca and events.etfo.org

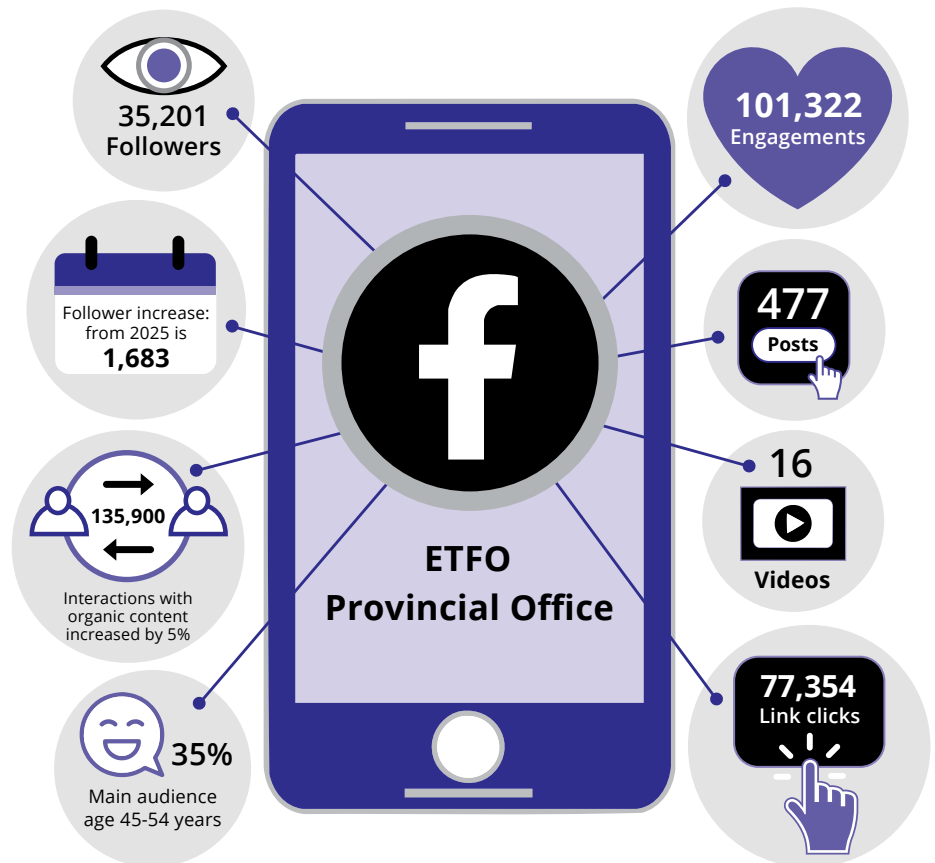




Post with the greatest organic engagement occurred on March 24 with a response to Minister Calandra's March 20, 2026, letter to #onted educators and board staff which was concerning and deeply problematic in tone and content. Earned **1,633** engagements with **141** likes and **859** link clicks to the full release.

The post with the highest engagement, a total of **53,667**, was on April 29 featuring a Day of Action photo album with members.

Post that generated the greatest comments: March 11 media release on response to Ford government's \$750 buy-off for home room teachers. It sparked **1,323** comments and the link to the release was opened **1,934** times.



smaller classes, **BIG DIFFERENCE**

Bargaining for Smaller Classes

As we prepare for the 2026 round of central bargaining, ETFO is putting forward the issue that unites members and resonates powerfully with families across Ontario: class size. Smaller classes are not just another bargaining item. They are a proven, urgent investment in equity, safety, and student success.

Large classes make learning harder for every student, but they disproportionately harm those who need the most support. Smaller classes create the calm, inclusive, identity-affirming environments where students can thrive. They allow educators to provide individualized attention, build stronger relationships, and support students with complex needs. They also improve working conditions, helping to stabilize a profession facing a recruitment and retention crisis.

Achieving smaller class sizes in Ontario's public schools requires adequate, sustained investment. Instead of strengthening public education, the Ford government has cut funding and weakened the structures that ensure democratic oversight. ETFO will bring the fight for adequate investment and smaller class sizes to both the teacher/occasional teacher and education worker central tables when the 2026 round of bargaining begins. Here is an overview of the Federation's pre bargaining work ahead of this next round. ■

To learn more about ETFO's class size advocacy and collective bargaining priorities, visit etfocb.ca and BuildingBetterSchools.ca.



2026 Central Bargaining Timeline



Spring 2024	ETFO conducts a debrief of the 2022 round of bargaining with all stakeholders, including members, local leaders, ETFO provincial Executive, and ETFO staff.
Fall 2024	ETFO released officers engage in a province-wide listening tour.
Spring 2025	ETFO released officers meet with local executives as phase two of their listening tour.
May 2025	ETFO conducts its online all-member 2026 collective bargaining survey.
August 11, 2025	During her opening address to ETFO's Annual Meeting, President Karen Brown announces ETFO's smaller classes, BIG DIFFERENCE campaign.
Fall 2025	ETFO conducts focus groups with members as part of its survey process.
Throughout the 2025-26 school year	ETFO rolls out the smaller classes, BIG DIFFERENCE campaign across the province through television, radio, billboard, and social media ads.
December 2025	ETFO meets with local presidents and chief negotiators to discuss the Federation's bargaining strategy and action plan.
December 2025	ETFO Collective Bargaining Standing Committee establishes the 2026 teacher/occasional teacher and education worker bargaining goals.
February 2026	The T/OT and ed. worker bargaining goals are approved at February Representative Council.
February 2026	ETFO's petition campaign delivers over 55,000 signatures to the Ontario Legislature from members and the community demanding smaller class sizes and adequate investment in public education.
March 2026	Steward-plus-one training sessions are held across the province.
April 2026	The Ford government introduces the <i>Putting Student Achievement First Act</i> , which significantly changes the structures of local and central bargaining.
April 29, 2026	A province-wide Day of Action is held with all education affiliates to demonstrate support for public education. Over 255,000 teachers and educators wear Red for Ed or purple, and ETFO members wear smaller classes, BIG DIFFERENCE buttons.
May 2026	ETFO holds all-member meetings across the province to discuss the bargaining process and a central strike vote.
May 2026	ETFO runs a large-scale postcard campaign designed to amplify parent and community voices. Each postcard asks for a pledge to call on members of provincial parliament to adequately invest in public schools.
June 2026	ETFO, along with L'association des enseignantes et des enseignants franco ontariens, CUPE - Ontario School Board Council of Unions, Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association, and the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation, serves notice to bargain on behalf of teachers and occasional teachers, and education workers.

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS



ETFO's lobbying and political action strategy is fully integrated with its public campaigns, member mobilization, and organizing efforts. During the 2025-26 school year, the Ford government set out to implement a complete overhaul of school board governance, with the clear objectives of further centralizing power in the Ministry of Education and silencing dissenting voices at the school board level.

ETFO's lobbying and advocacy efforts centred on earning support – both from the public and from decision-makers – for concrete solutions to the challenges facing the public education system. At the same time, ETFO focused on defending the importance of local community voices in shaping public education policy, and the role that school board trustees can play in responding to the needs of students, families, and educators across the province.

Bill 33, *Supporting Children and Students Act*, 2025



On May 29, 2025, Minister of Education Paul Calandra tabled Bill 33, *Supporting Children and Students Act*, 2025. The legislation passed first reading and was at second reading when the Legislature began an extended summer recess.

Bill 33 included amendments to several acts, including the *Education Act*. The legislation grants unprecedented powers to the minister of education to intervene in school board operations. The legislation also mandates that school boards implement school resource officer programs whenever they are offered by local police forces.

On June 27, 2025, ETFO sent a submission to the Ministry of Education in response to the proposed legislation. In its submission, ETFO opposed the proposed amendments to the *Education Act* and called on the government to withdraw them.

As the Legislature resumed sittings in October after an extended summer break, ETFO participated in a series of community and union-led actions in opposition to Bill 33. These actions included a press conference held on October 21 calling on the Ford government to withdraw Bill 33 and stop its attack on public education.

Many ETFO locals, supported by the provincial office, engaged and mobilized members in opposition to Bill 33. Locals were able to access incentive funding provided by ETFO provincial to release members to support local member mobilizing efforts.

Despite widespread opposition to the proposed legislation, the PC government adopted Bill 33 on November 19, and it received royal assent the next day.

Ontario Liberal Party Annual General Meeting and Leadership Race

The Ontario Liberal Party held its annual general meeting (AGM) from September 12 to 14 in Toronto. ETFO, alongside AEFO, OECTA, OSSTF, and OTF, hosted an education networking suite for delegates at the AGM. Several members of provincial parliament (MPPs) were in attendance, which



provided a valuable opportunity to discuss education issues with them directly.

After the conclusion of the AGM, Ontario Liberal Leader Bonnie Crombie announced that she would step down after receiving only 57 per cent support during the leadership review vote held at the AGM.

On January 22, the Liberals appointed MPP John Fraser as its interim leader. He is expected to remain in the post until a leader is chosen through a leadership race, with voting taking place from November 9 to 20, 2026. The new leader will be announced on November 21, 2026.

Ontario NDP Convention

The Ontario NDP held its 30th biennial convention from September 19 to 21, 2025, in Niagara Falls. ETFO and the other education affiliates hosted an education networking suite, which was well attended by delegates, including ETFO members and most NDP caucus members.

NDP Leader Marit Stiles received 68 per cent support from delegates at the convention and announced that she will continue to lead the NDP. In response to the lower-than-expected result from the leadership review, she promised changes in how the next election campaign would be run.

On the second day of the convention, President Mastin, alongside other affiliate presidents and NDP education critic Chandra Pasma, addressed convention delegates and called on them to take action against Bill 33. At the convention, the NDP launched a campaign to oppose the bill, which included community canvassing and online actions.

Changes to Regulation 521/01: Collection of Personal Information

On September 25, 2025, ETFO and OSSTF sent a joint submission to the Ministry of Education in response to proposed changes to Regulation 521/01: Collection of Personal Information. Both unions called on the ministry to pause the proposed amendments to O. Reg. 521/01 and establish a formal consultation process with unions and education stakeholders to better consider more effective and appropriate measures. Despite these recommendations, the government proceeded with the amendments, and the changes have been implemented.

The changes require school boards and school authorities to collect a police record check from employees every five years, imposing an unnecessary burden on ETFO members and school administrators. While ETFO and OSSTF support initiatives that protect the students our members serve, the ministry provided no evidence that the expanded record-check requirements would accomplish that purpose.

Meeting with NDP Education Critic Chandra Pasma

On October 1, ETFO President David Mastin, General Secretary Sharon O'Halloran, and ETFO staff met with NDP education critic Chandra Pasma. President Mastin thanked MPP Pasma for her ongoing advocacy and support for public education. President Mastin highlighted ETFO's priorities on important issues, including class size, retention and recruitment of educators, special education supports, and violence in schools. He also discussed the implications of Bill 33 and thanked MPP Pasma for her ongoing work in opposition to the proposed legislation.

Meeting with Minister of Education

On December 15, President Mastin, General Secretary O'Halloran, and ETFO staff met with Minister of Education Paul Calandra. President Mastin outlined ETFO's priorities on critical issues, including class size, special education supports, violence in schools, and the ongoing retention and recruitment crisis. He also highlighted the importance of community input into public education at the local level and the significant concerns that have arisen with the adoption of Bill 33.

Meeting with MPP John Fraser

On December 15, President Mastin, General Secretary O'Halloran, and ETFO staff met with Liberal education critic John Fraser, MPP for Ottawa South, and staff from his office. President Mastin outlined ETFO's priorities, including class size, special education supports, violence in schools, and the ongoing retention and recruitment crisis. He also highlighted the difficulties being experienced in school boards under supervision, and the concerns that have arisen since the adoption of Bill 33. MPP Fraser spoke about the recent call by the Ontario Liberal caucus for a \$1 billion investment in education to hire 10,000 additional school support staff.

Meeting with Green Party MPPs

On December 17, President Mastin, General Secretary O'Halloran, and ETFO staff met with Green Party MPPs Mike Schreiner and Aislinn Clancy. President Mastin outlined ETFO's priorities, including class size, special education supports, violence in schools, and the ongoing retention and recruitment crisis. He also highlighted the difficulties being experienced in school boards under supervision, and the concerns that have arisen since the adoption of Bill 33.

Fall Economic Statement

On November 6, the provincial government tabled its fall economic statement. The government revised its deficit figures for 2025-26 to \$13.6 billion, down from \$14.6 billion in the 2025 budget tabled in May.

The impact of tariffs is expected to continue to be felt across the province, with the government forecasting lower economic growth of 0.8 and 0.9 per cent for 2025-26 and 2026-27 respectively, compared to 1.8 per cent in 2024-25.

The fall economic statement contained no changes to public education funding from the figures tabled in the 2025 budget in May, and only a modest 0.4 per cent increase of \$400 million to health-care spending.

Following the tabling of the fall economic statement, ETFO issued a media release calling on the province to fix the outdated education funding formula and make the investments in public education that students and educators need.

2026 Pre-budget Consultations

On January 21, President Mastin, accompanied by ETFO staff, participated in pre-budget consultations held by the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs in London. During the hearing, President Mastin focused his comments on the impact that years of chronic underfunding have had on Ontario's public education system and the changes that are needed to improve student outcomes. President Mastin also addressed the importance of local community input into how public education is delivered and the need to maintain local democracy in public education.

In addition to the presentation to the committee, ETFO staff prepared a written submission, which was shared with the committee for consideration.

All ETFO submissions can be viewed at etfo.ca/news-publications/publications

Consultation on Proposed Regulations Related to School Boards and Local Police Services

On February 2, ETFO sent a submission to the Ministry of Education in response to the government consultations on its proposed regulation related to school boards and local police services resulting from the adoption of Bill 33. In addition to outlining parameters for implementing School Resource Officer (SRO) programs, the proposed regulation would require school boards to provide unprecedented, broad access to police services for school activities, well beyond the stated purpose of SRO programs.

Joint Affiliate Lobby Reception at Queen's Park



On March 25, ETFO, alongside AEFO, OECTA and OSSTF, hosted a breakfast reception for MPPs at Queen's Park focused on the importance of investing in public education. Thirty-six MPPs from all four political parties attended the event, including Minister of Education Paul Calandra, Opposition Leader Marit Stiles, NDP education critic Chandra Pasma, Liberal interim leader John Fraser, and both Green Party MPPs Mike Schreiner and Aislinn Clancy.

This event provided an opportunity for education union leaders, including ETFO representatives, to connect with government and opposition MPPs and political staff to discuss the importance of investing in public education. President Mastin spoke at the event on behalf of ETFO members and highlighted the need to invest in public education amid economic uncertainty.

Budget 2026

On March 26, the Ford government tabled the 2026 provincial budget. Staff prepared a memorandum that was shared with local leaders, providing a summary and analysis of the budget.

The budget projected a significant deficit of \$13.8 billion for 2026-27. The government's response to the economic turmoil resulting from the ongoing trade dispute with the U.S. and ongoing international conflicts is primarily focused on providing tax relief to businesses, while ignoring the need to invest in public services, such as health care and education.

The budget did not contain details on school board funding allocations; these would be available once information on Core Education Funding grants were released. However, based on the budget forecast for the next three years, nominal increases in education spending will be easily outpaced by inflationary costs, leading to additional real-dollar funding cuts.

Unless additional funds are made available to school boards, many will continue to experience increasing fiscal pressures, which could result in further loss of important student supports and programs.

Bill 101, *Putting Student Achievement First Act, 2026*

On April 13, Education Minister Paul Calandra tabled Bill 101, *Putting Student Achievement First Act, 2026*. The government framed the bill as a response to financial mismanagement, weak governance, and putting politics ahead of student outcomes in some school boards; however, the legislation sought to unnecessarily restructure school board governance and leadership roles, limit the core responsibilities of trustees, and significantly interfere with central and local bargaining.

On April 27, First Vice-President Shirley Bell participated in a press conference hosted by NDP education critic Chandra Pasma to voice concerns about Bill 101 and express opposition to the government's plans. On the same day, President Mastin, accompanied by General Secretary O'Halloran and ETFO staff, participated in hearings on Bill 101 held by the Legislature's Standing Committee on Social Policy.

President Mastin spoke about the serious concerns ETFO has with the proposed legislation, including the centralization of power in the hands of the minister of education at the expense of local community voices, and the interference with collective bargaining that would result from the adoption of Bill 101. President Mastin called on the government to withdraw the bill and to engage in meaningful consultations with education stakeholders.

Bill 101 was adopted in third reading on May 6 and received Royal Assent the following day.

Core-Education Funding Grants

On May 13, the government released education funding details for 2026-27. Unlike previous years, the ministry did not release details regarding the Responsive Education Programs (REP), simply indicating that the information will be released at a later date.

For 2026-27, Core Education Funding will remain relatively flat, with a small decrease in per-student funding of 0.2 per cent, after accounting for inflation. While the government continues to tout "record-breaking" investments, the province is still investing less in Ontario's schools, on a per-student basis, than at the beginning of the PC government's time in office.

The cumulative funding gap in public education over the past eight years is approximately \$6.4 billion, and unless the government allocates additional funding to public schools, the fiscal challenges affecting more than half of school boards in Ontario will only increase.

When it comes to special education funding, the government continues to maintain the current funding model, which is not based on the actual needs of students, while reducing real-dollar funding by 1.2 per cent, after accounting for inflation and declining enrolment. Without additional funding, students will continue to wait for assessments for unreasonable lengths of time, and schools will continue to struggle to provide the supports students need.

Many school boards will experience the compounding impact of declining enrolment and funding cuts by the current government. Unless additional funding is allocated by the province, these funding reductions will impact staffing levels in schools across the province. ■

BUILDING A MORE JUST SOCIETY



ETFO continues to play a leading role in advancing equity and social justice in classrooms, schools, and communities across Ontario and the world. The Federation acts as a catalyst for dialogue, learning, and collective action by providing members with professional resources, human rights training, and classroom supports that help build inclusive, identity-affirming environments. ETFO also amplifies social justice causes publicly and works in solidarity with coalitions, community partners, and grassroots groups that share its commitment to human rights. Its support for international programs reflects a long-standing dedication to strengthening public education and advancing the rights of all people, especially women and girls.

The Federation's mandate, outlined in its Objects, is clear: "To foster a climate of social justice in Ontario and continue a leadership role in such areas as anti-poverty, non-violence and equity." In acting on this commitment, ETFO understands itself as an agent of social change, using its voice, influence, and collective strength to build a more just society.

2025-26 Equity Initiatives

The 2025-26 school year presented several challenges for ETFO members, especially as the government continued to produce instability across the province. From taking over some of the largest school boards in the country to intentionally minimizing the influence of democratically elected officials, the government has taken steps to eliminate the voice of the most marginalized communities. ETFO members, locals, and provincial fought back and ensured that students and workers alike are not simply left without support.

This past year saw ETFO invest in its commitment to fight against anti-Black racism through the creation of five new programs to support Black members, including a program specific to local leaders and a mentorship program for Black women members. These efforts were not in isolation, as there were concerted and continued efforts to embed measures against anti-Black racism in *Voice* magazine, discussions at Representative Council, keynote speakers at large conferences such as Fall Leadership, and intentional time to learn about the Ontario Human Rights Commission's *Dreams Delayed* report. New resources to support addressing anti-Black racism include *Collective Action, Conscious Change: Disrupting Anti-Black Racism in Ontario Schools* and the forthcoming *Race Matters: The Early Years*, which both address necessary changes within our society.

ETFO also invested in establishing partnerships with community organizations committed to the work of social justice and equity. This includes working with Harmony Movement on new anti-homophobia and anti-transphobia lessons for their Words Matter campaign, as well as the Enchanté Network on creating new 2SLGBTQ+ resources for members and the public at large.

Work this year also saw a renewed commitment to Indigenous programs, including a revised program for Native Language teachers. Two new Indigenous education curriculum resources, *Visual Art In a Good Way* and *Responsibility and Reciprocity: Learning from the Natural World*, will be released in September.

ETFO also provided responsive tools to help members navigate sensitive topics, including the recently released *Combatting Antisemitism in Ontario Learning Communities* and the soon-to-be-released *Combatting Anti-Palestinian Racism in Ontario Learning Communities*. All resources can be accessed at etfo.ca.



ETFO Supports and Donations



Community Support

Anti-Poverty Groups

In 2025-26, ETFO allocated \$10,000 to donate to grassroots-level groups working on poverty issues, undertaking political activities to further their cause, or working directly to benefit those living in poverty in their communities.

Status of Women Donations

ETFO allocates \$20,000 for status of women donations. These donations are made to organizations whose goals are to improve the status of women and/or girls in Ontario or Canada. The Canadian Women's Foundation was one of the organizations that received funding this year.

Emergency Relief

ETFO made donations responding to the following global emergencies:

- Sudan humanitarian crisis appeal – \$38,150
- Jamaica, Cuba, and Haiti crisis appeal – \$50,000

International Donations

ETFO has made donations to the following organizations:

Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF) International Programs

Through CTF International Programs, ETFO contributed \$67,500 to support women's projects by international organizations, including:

- Canadian Organization for Development Through Education (CODE)
- Equality Fund (formerly MATCH International Women's Fund)
- Teachers' Action for Gender Equality (TAGE) – WP

Teachers' Action for Gender Equity (TAGE) – WP

Africa

- African Women in Education Network (AWEN)
- Burkina Faso (SNEA-B)
- Burkina Faso (SNESS)
- The Gambia (GTU)
- Ghana (GNAT)
- Kenya (KUPPETT)
- Sierra Leone (SLTU)

Asia

- El Asia Pacific (EIAP)

Latin America and Caribbean

- El Latin America (EILA)

Teachers' Action for Teaching Organizations (TATO)

Africa

- Bénin (SNEP-B/SYNAEM-B)
- Burkina Faso (SNEA-B/SNESS)
- Ghana TEWU
- Kenya (KUPPETT)
- South Sudan (NTUSS)
- Zambia (ZNUT)

Asia

- El Asia Pacific (EIAP)

Teachers' Action for Teaching (TAT)

Africa

- Bénin (SNEP-B/SYNAEM-B)
- Burkina Faso (SNESS)
- The Gambia (GTU)
- Ghana (GNAT)

- Rwanda (SYNEDUC)
- Sierra Leone (SLTU)
- Togo (FESEN)
- Uganda (UNATU)

Asia

- India (AIPTF)

Latin America and Caribbean

- Belize (BNTU)
- Grenada (GUT)
- St. Kitts (SKTU)
- St. Lucia (SLTU)
- St. Vincent and the Grenadines (SVGTU)

Teaching Together

Teaching Together (formerly Project Overseas) is a joint endeavour between the CTF and member organizations such as ETFO. Overseas placements are scheduled in July with partner organizations who, like the CTF, are members of Education International.

The committee received an increase in the number of applications this year and ETFO sponsored 15 members to participate in Teaching Together 2026.

The following members represented ETFO in Teaching Together 2026:

- **Antigua and Barbuda**
Christine Mongraw
Kawartha Pine Ridge Teacher Local, team member
- **Belize**
Sarisha Moodley
Elementary Teachers of Toronto, team member
Melissa Williams
Elementary Teachers of Toronto, team leader
- **Ghana**
Zachary Palmer
Simcoe County Teacher Local, team member
Jennifer Pinder
Waterloo Region Teacher Local, team member
- **Guyana**
Lynne McNab
Waterloo Region Teacher Local, team leader
Sarah Ramsay
York Region Teacher Local, team member
- **Saint Kitts**
Amy Patel
Durham Teacher Local, team member

TEACHING TOGETHER 2026



Interested in **enhancing your global perspective?**

Open to **exchanging professional knowledge** with teachers overseas?

Passionate about **international co-operation and collaboration?**

If you are a teacher and answered yes to these questions, then consider applying to Teaching Together.



ETFO FEEO

- **The Gambia**

Sandra Bonnell
Elementary Teachers of Toronto, team leader
Fadumo Deria
Ottawa-Carleton Occasional Teacher Local,
team leader

- **Trinidad and Tobago**

Nayab Abid
Peel Teacher Local, team member
Murad Doray
Toronto Occasional Teacher Local, team member

- **Uganda**

Barbara Marcus-Jones
York Region Teacher Local, team member
Jennifer Scott
Greater Essex County Teacher Local, team member
Rebecca St-James
Limestone Teacher Local, team member

Overseas Support

Cambodia Support for Girls

Partners for Rural Development (PRD) is a women-led Cambodian non-profit and non-political organization working in 10 of the most rural and impoverished villages in the provinces of Battambang and Pailin. ETFO has maintained a long-standing partnership with PRD through its Education for Change program.

In 2025, PRD continued to work with eight primary schools in the Samlout district of Battambang province and in Pailin. The total student and teacher population is 2,925.

PRD collaborated closely with the Samlout and Pailin departments of education, teachers, principals, students, parents, school committees, Women's Affairs, and gender focal points. During the year, PRD delivered three professional development workshops to teachers aimed at strengthening teaching methodologies and supporting the development of classroom games, and teaching and learning materials. PRD provided training on Capacity Building for Primary School Teachers to 82 teachers, 50 of whom were women.

PRD co-operated with the Battambang provincial department of education to deliver a training course on leadership and school management to 27 school principals (six women) from 14 schools.

PRD's programs for women and girls included a focus on gender equity and equality, women's empowerment, education and development, health, agriculture, and the environment.

Caribbean Union of Teachers (CUT)

Funding to the Caribbean Union of Teachers (CUT) makes possible a number of gender-based union activities that would otherwise not be possible. Specifically, in 2025, the CUT conducted four days of trade union education, with two of the days led by the status of women committee dedicated to gender education and leadership training. In late February 2026, the first phase of a proposed research project was completed that involved developing the terms of reference for a study to analyze and interpret information on challenges faced by women teachers in the Caribbean and the adequacy of support systems for these members, and to develop strategies to address these challenges. The organization plans to have an independent review of its policies and governance documents to make its unions more inclusive for women and to inform the union on matters of advocacy for improvements in support systems for Caribbean women teachers. In April, the final report and recommendations were shared with CUT member units to inform future strategic planning and advocacy efforts.

Colombia Support for Women and Girls

ETFO has partnerships with two organizations in Colombia.

- The Fundación Ratón de Biblioteca promotes a creative approach to English literacy through reading, writing, speaking, art, and games in Medellín. In 2025-26, these projects were delivered through five community libraries in Aguas Frias, Guadalupe, La Esperanza, Raizal, and Villatina.
- The Colombian Grandmothers' Project supports grandmothers who are the primary caregivers for children in Montería. These supports include training for women heads of households in entrepreneurship, counselling, and psychosocial support for mothers and grandmothers. The organization also aids with purchasing school kits, uniforms, and transportation.

Support for Swaziland National Association of Teachers

The Women's Wing of the Swaziland National Association of Teachers supported 22 women teachers in upgrading their qualifications and seven others in furthering their studies.

Ugandan Support for Women Teachers

In November 2025, the Uganda National Teachers' Union conducted a women's empowerment workshop with 160 women leaders. The theme was "Enhancing Entrepreneurship and Leadership Capacity Building for Quality Education." The conference focused on promoting girls' education and mentorship, building capacity in entrepreneurial and leadership skills, and raising awareness of gender equality in Uganda's education system.

Overseas Scholarships for Women and Girls

ETFO supports the CTF Teachers' Action for Gender Equality (TAGE) Program, Hope for Rwanda's Children Fund (HRCF), and scholarships for girls and women. This continued support includes scholarship funding for women teachers to further their teacher qualifications or support for girls to attend primary, secondary, and post-secondary education.

The TAGE program provided 10 bursaries across 10 CUT units, supporting qualified women teachers to upgrade their credentials in education. TAGE also administered support through the African Women in Education Network, Education International Asia Pacific, the Education International Latin America Women's Network, and the Caribbean Union of Teachers.

HRCF supported 45 secondary school students' and six university students' educational scholarships in 2025-26. HRCF university scholarship recipients graduated from the University of Kigali.

ETFO HUMANITY FUND



Established in 2003 and financed primarily by members, the ETFO Humanity Fund is dedicated to creating a difference for children around the world, enriching their lives and their communities.

The fund supports charities that: promote the advancement of elementary education for children in Canada and elsewhere; provide relief for suffering arising from natural disasters or sudden catastrophes; and relieve poverty and physical hardship in Canada and internationally by providing food and other basic supplies to children in need.

The fund is financed through payroll deductions agreed to by members of participating locals, as well as by individual donations from ETFO members, staff, and locals. The Stephen Lewis Foundation is the fund's signature charity. Many other charities receive funds throughout the year. For a full list, please see the one-page annual report of the Humanity Fund distributed separately at ETFO's Annual Meeting.

Any local that is not currently participating in the fund is encouraged to work with their members and school board to join. With every new local that joins, the Federation expands its ability to help those in need in Canada and around the world. ■

ETFO ACTION ON VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS

Since 2017, ETFO has been engaged in a multi-year strategy to address workplace violence in schools.

The elements of the strategy were originally developed by a seven-member multi-service area working group, and included action items across four components:

1. Internal: member education and training for locals
2. External: working with stakeholders at the local and provincial level
3. Public partnerships: collaborating with allies in public education and workplace safety
4. Lobbying: engaging in local and provincial lobbying addressing violence and underlying causes

The strategy was extended twice, in 2020 and again in 2023, and targeted funding enabled data collection, resource creation and distribution, and stakeholder engagement. In June 2026, the final report was submitted to the Executive. The work to address violence in schools remains a high priority for ETFO, and the elements of the strategy have now been embedded in the ongoing work of Health and Safety Services and across the organization.

Achievements

Over the course of the multi-year strategy, there have been a number of notable achievements, including:

- All-member surveys were conducted in 2017 and 2023. Strong engagement from ETFO members and data analysis made the scope of the issue undeniable. The data continues to be valuable for local-level advocacy, identifying underlying causes of violence, and demonstrating the far-reaching impact on workers, students, and the education system.

- ETFO's 2019 Workplace Violence Symposium brought together 49 organizations from across education, including labour, children's advocates, researchers, and the government. It established that workplace violence in schools had reached a crisis point, and the speakers and panels shared expertise and recommendations that helped inform the actions of the strategy.
- ETFO's Action on Violence Toolkit represents the resources that have been developed over the years, branded and assembled on the ETFO Health and Safety website (etfohealthandsafety.ca) for easy access. The tools, which include checklists, videos, posters, and more, are widely used by members and local leaders to both address and prevent workplace violence.
- ETFO's Action on Violence local-partnership program is an ongoing initiative. The 90-minute session is delivered by trained facilitators, with cost-sharing provided by ETFO provincial. It highlights the occupational health and safety rights of workers, illustrates the scope of the issue and its underlying causes, and familiarizes members with the resources available to them. It includes calls to action for members to report all violent incidents, recognize the impacts of workplace violence as compensable through the WSIB, and refuse work that they believe is likely to endanger them.



- At the Provincial Working Group on Health and Safety, the creation of the Ministry of Labour document *Workplace Violence in School Boards: A Guide to the Law* represented a rare agreement between all participating stakeholders. It remains the best interpretation of how the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* is best applied in school boards with respect to workplace violence and is a valuable tool in pushing for improved compliance with the law.

The underlying issue, as with so many things in Ontario's education system, remains the continued and worsening underfunding. As such, engagement with the public has been crucial. Among the many efforts made to reach out directly to families was the brochure *Safe For Everyone: Violence at School*, which gives parents information, guidance, and opportunities to take action.

Addressing Violence in 2025-26

The work of the strategy this year has been spread across many programs, the creation of resources, working alongside allies, and continued advocacy.

ETFO's **annual health and safety conference** included a keynote by Amanda Rocheleau, a social worker with expertise on compassion fatigue, which is linked with experiences of violence in the workplace. Local leaders and health and safety representatives learned effective advocacy techniques to be used at joint health and safety committees to hold school boards accountable for keeping workers safe from workplace violence. Information on Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) claims for mental stress and a Workers Health and Safety Centre module on workplace stress were offered to participants.

Regional health and safety training included an update on ETFO's Action on Violence Toolkit. Participants had the opportunity to review the new safety plan checklist. A workshop on how organizing can be driven by members' health and safety concerns was presented.

The **Women's Health and Safety Conference (WP)** included information on intimate partner violence in the workplace. A workshop on vicarious trauma and compassion fatigue allowed members to develop strategies to cope with workplace stressors related to violence.



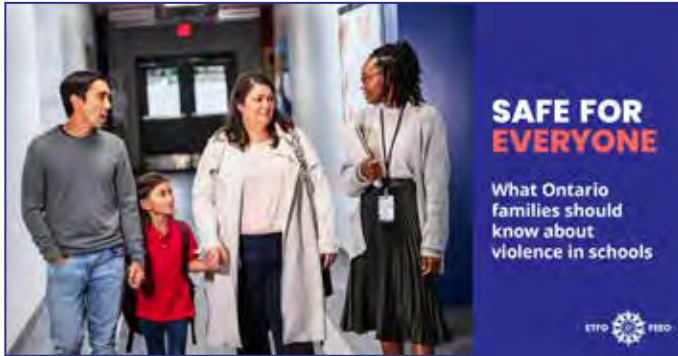
Health and Safety workshops in a number of programs included information about workplace violence and the Action on Violence Toolkit.

The **Action on Violence Toolkit** was updated and expanded. The frequently asked questions now include sections on summoning immediate assistance, reporting violent incidents, and debriefing/responding after an incident. A checklist was created to help members ensure that safety plans include all critical elements.



Health and Safety Conference

The **Safe for Everyone** brochure on violence, designed for families, was introduced in May 2025. ETFO successfully pushed back against school boards that attempted to restrict members from sharing the brochure with parents.



Two faculties of education requested a workshop on health and safety focusing on violence in the classroom. It was clear that pre-service teachers are witnessing and experiencing violence in the workplace without adequate training and information.

ETFO continued to work with the **Provincial Working Group on Health and Safety** (PWGHS). The results of a survey sent to school boards to gather information on best practices for fulfilling their obligations under the OHSA are being used in the *Workplace Violence in School Boards: A Guide to the Law* update.

Other relevant topics at the PWGHS have been providing input on updates to PPM 120: Reporting Violent Incidents to the Ministry of Education, and the provincial model for a local police/school board protocol.

ETFO continues to accept and pursue **partnerships with other stakeholders and allies**. This includes representation at the Health and Safety Committee of the Ontario Federation of Labour and the Health and Safety Advisory Group of the Canadian Labour Congress, both of which allow for solidarity across sectors and learning from other jurisdictions. The New Democratic Party of Ontario continues to seek input when developing policy or drafting proposed legislation. Advocacy groups such as the Ontario Autism Coalition and Community Living Ontario engage in conversations as they develop their own strategies.

Violence in elementary schools is almost always caused by students' unmet needs. ETFO has sought to **address violence using the protections of the OHSA and by examining the root causes**. Work being done across the service areas highlights students' unmet needs and advocates for change.

This includes the creation of special education resources for students with behaviour needs, advocacy through Building Better Schools, the student mental health symposium, and the focus on smaller class sizes being undertaken in bargaining.

Moving Forward

The actions of ETFO's multi-year strategy to address violence in schools have included communications, capacity-building, training and resources, multi-media resources, lobbying, and the Building Better Schools initiative. While some actions, like the initial symposium and all-member surveys, were standalone efforts and crucial to initiating the strategy, much of the work has been in embedding ongoing actions within the organization's work.

Additionally, the Action on Violence Toolkit and Action on Violence Program remain available to members and locals and will be updated as needed.

ETFO's strategy to address violence in schools helped focus the attention of the organization on this important issue, and created a framework that addressed the needs of members, students, and the education system of Ontario. This work continues. ■

For information and resources on violence issues, please visit etfohealthandsafety.ca



Health and Safety Conference

DRIVING LABOUR ACTION



As an affiliate of both the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) and the Ontario Federation of Labour (OFL), ETFO participates in and contributes to the broader labour movement at the provincial and national levels. The following highlights key developments from each organization over the past year.

CLC

The CLC focused on strengthening labour's political influence, particularly through a national listening tour to re-engage workers and shape the future of the federal NDP. Key political actions included opposing the federal government's use of Section 107 of the *Canada Labour Code* to end legal strikes, as seen in the CUPE Air Canada and CUPW disputes. The CLC also rallied against cuts to Canada Post. ETFO maintained its seat on the Canadian Council and prepared for the 31st CLC convention in May 2026, held in Winnipeg.

The CLC participated in the UN Commission on the Status of Women in March 2026, focusing on access to justice for women and girls. Education unions were encouraged to push for sustainable climate policies and a just transition for workers. The CLC ran several lobby campaigns over the year, including: Psychological Health and Safety is Occupational Health and Safety, Tax Fairness, and a campaign to address violence faced by Indigenous women, girls, and two-spirit people.

OFL

The OFL is focused on defending public education and workers' rights against provincial legislation. The OFL actively opposed Bill 5, *Protecting Ontario by Unleashing the Economy Act*, and Bill 33, *Supporting Children and Students Act*, condemning them as anti-democratic moves that undermine environmental protections, worker safeguards, and local school board autonomy. A significant victory was achieved when Toronto Police Services reversed plans to reinstate school resource officers following OFL organizing.

In November 2025, the OFL held its 18th biennial convention in Toronto; ETFO had over 100 delegates. Key resolutions included a joint education union campaign to defend public education, workplace heat stress measures, and Indigenous rights. Delegates also marched on Queen's Park to protest Bill 33. Laura Walton was re-elected OFL president, Ahmad Gaied was re-elected secretary-treasurer, and Michael Hamilton is the newly elected executive vice-president.

The OFL continued to support numerous ongoing strikes and lockouts across the province, including actions by CUPW, OPSEU, CUPE, ONA, COPE, and Unifor. A database of active strikes was maintained on the OFL website. The OFL also hosted a human rights summit adjacent to the convention, providing equity learning opportunities. Looking ahead, the OFL adopted the "We Are One: Power Plan" strategy to guide the next two years, which aims to build worker power, affordability, and security.

The next OFL convention is scheduled for November 2027 in Toronto.

ETFO Labour Council Conference

ETFO held this biennial program on November 14 and 15 at the provincial office. The conference, open to all members, was created to raise awareness and encourage involvement in regional labour councils. Members learned about labour councils and the role of elected regional council delegates. The opening panel featured three speakers who shared lessons and proposed action plans to strengthen worker power.

To learn from workers' struggles and current labour issues, members heard from the chair of CUPE's Air Canada component, an organizer with the Migrant Rights Network, and a labour professor who discussed how the labour movement can respond to government attacks. Saturday's program included a presentation by the Canadian Labour Congress' Ontario regional director, a panel



featuring three labour council presidents, and an interactive workshop offering tools for members to hold politicians and decision-makers accountable. Attendees also participated in a brainstorming session on how to bring the union's class size campaign to their regional labour council.

ETFO Union School

ETFO Union School took place over three sessions: November 4 to 6, February 4 to 6, and April 30 to May 1. Thirty participants engaged in discussions on various topics, including: unions and the labour movement, member engagement and organizing, equity and social justice in the union, movement and wellness, leadership journey mapping, climate justice, leadership opportunities, parliamentary procedures, and public speaking. In session one, Prof. Sachin Maharaj from the University of Ottawa joined the group for a presentation titled *Democracy Under Attack: Understanding the Impact of School Board Takeovers*. In session two, participants had the opportunity to attend the business session of the February Representative Council as observers, where they listened to local leaders debate motions. In session three, participants explored various ways to go beyond land acknowledgments.

Organizing Training

ETFO organizing staff worked with ETFO Health and Safety staff to deliver three organizing training sessions at this year's Health and Safety Regionals. The organizing workshop was tailored specifically to members engaged in health and safety at the local level. The training introduced health and safety representatives to key elements of organizing. The key topics included engagement and mobilizing, making organizing work for health and safety, organizing conversations, tracking, and campaign development. Sixty-two health and safety reps received this training across three regionals.

In May 2026, ETFO organizing staff coordinated training for locals with Organizing For Power, a global training program that teaches the fundamental methods of organizing to build mass movements capable of winning victories that transform people's lives. This four-part training series was an opportunity for ETFO leaders to learn about organizing and mobilizing in preparation for the upcoming rounds of both central and local bargaining. ■



Union School

BUILDING A STRONG FEDERATION



PROFESSIONAL LEARNING/ CURRICULUM SERVICES

Educators are lifelong learners, and ETFO is proud to offer many professional learning and development opportunities for its members through Professional Learning/Curriculum Services. With a focus on leadership development and professional learning, staff work to deliver programs and services that meet the needs of ETFO's diverse membership. As a priority, staff provide skills, research, and opportunities that support a strong professional union membership.

ETFO's 15th Anniversary Representing Designated Early Childhood Educators (DECEs)

The 2025-26 school year marked the 15th anniversary of Full-Day Kindergarten and ETFO's representation of DECEs. This milestone offered an important opportunity to recognize and celebrate the vital role DECEs play in laying the foundation for children's lifelong learning. DECEs enrich the Kindergarten program through their specialized expertise in early childhood development, developmentally appropriate practice, play- and inquiry-based learning, and social-emotional development, among many other areas.

A number of events and initiatives highlighted the invaluable work of DECE members, including hosting a DECE focus group and town hall to deepen understanding of DECE experiences in the union, and inviting Emis Akbari, executive director of the Atkinson Centre and a professor and program coordinator at the School of Early Childhood at George Brown, as a Representative Council guest speaker.

A new resource titled *The Power of DECEs in Kindergarten* was also produced and shared with members, along with a cover story in the fall issue of *Voice* magazine and an *Elementary* podcast episode on the important role DECEs play in Ontario's classrooms.

Advocacy

Staff advocated for members by participating in workgroups or by responding to Ministry of Education initiatives, including:

- Education Partners Discussion Table
- Education Quality & Accountability Office Advisory Committee
- Ministry Initiatives Committee
- Ontario Coalition for Children and Youth Mental Health
- Ontario Physical and Health Education Association
- Ontario Federation of Labour Environment & Green Jobs Committee
- OFL Artificial Intelligence, Technology & Automation Committee
- Ontario Teachers' Federation (OTF) Affiliates' Curriculum Workgroup
- OTF Assessment Workgroup
- OTF Curriculum Forum, including various subject associations
- OTF Teacher Education Staff Workgroup
- OTF Artificial Intelligence Committee
- Reimagining Teacher Education Workgroup
- School Mental Health Ontario Affiliate Advisory Group



Addressing Challenging Behaviours Through Effective Classroom Management

In 2025-26, ETFO facilitators delivered 11 Classroom Management workshops across the province. The sessions focused on building positive relationships and establishing effective classroom routines and procedures. The workshops also equipped participants with practical strategies to support a positive learning environment while addressing the day-to-day challenges of today's classrooms.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Resources for Members and Local Leaders

Staff in Professional Learning/Curriculum Services and other ETFO service areas created a number of member guides, resources, and professional learning opportunities to address the growing use of AI in education. These included:

- Guidance for Local Leaders on Artificial Intelligence
- An Overview of Artificial Intelligence in Elementary Education in Ontario
- Use of Artificial Intelligence in Elementary Schools
- Professional Judgement and Artificial Intelligence
- Equity and Bias in Generative Artificial Intelligence
- Podcast: Elementary – Artificial Intelligence and Climate Justice
- Summer Academy courses
- Information Communication Technology Conference for Women

More resources are currently in development with member writing teams, including guides to support assessment and evaluation practices and AI literacy.

Assessment Workshop and Website Series

The Assessment Workshop was updated for 2025-26 and was hosted in seven locals with over 130 teachers attending. Participants explored a variety of assessment for learning tools and strategies to better inform instruction through one of three workshop options: Assessment and Planning, Ready for Learning, and Monitoring Growth. The ETFO Members Sharing in Assessment website (etfoassessment.ca) continues to be an integral part of the workshop. It was updated this fall to include videos illustrating assessment for learning strategies.

ETFO Additional Qualifications (AQ)

ETFO AQ courses experienced strong and consistent demand across all 2025-26 sessions, particularly in Reading Part 1, Special Education (Part 1 – Specialist), Mathematics P/J Part 1, Kindergarten Part 1, and Teaching English Language Learners Part 1. This sustained interest reflects strong alignment with educator professional learning needs.

Ongoing improvements to the learner experience have also contributed to program success. A modernized course design, including enhanced navigation and a streamlined table of contents, has made courses more intuitive and engaging. In addition, the enhanced course progress widget allows candidates to easily track completion of activities and learning experiences, a feature frequently cited as a reason for continued enrolment in ETFO AQ courses.

Feedback from candidates continues to highlight significant success in delivering meaningful, well-organized, and practical learning experiences. Course content is consistently described as directly applicable to classroom practice, supporting effective planning, assessment, and demonstrating inclusive teaching strategies. The flexible, manageable structure enables educators to balance professional development with personal responsibilities, thereby increasing accessibility and completion. Seventeen per cent of educators surveyed in the most recent AQ session had taken more than four courses with ETFO, demonstrating strong repeat engagement. Courses are further strengthened by supportive instructors and opportunities for peer engagement that foster a positive and collaborative learning environment, even in fully asynchronous formats.

Kindergarten AQ courses were recently revised to reflect the updated Kindergarten curriculum, ensuring alignment with current classroom practice. In response to emerging educational priorities, Holocaust and Countering Antisemitism Part 1 is scheduled to be offered in Fall 2026.

Recent Ministry of Education subsidies for mathematics and special education AOs present an important opportunity to further increase participation. Targeted messaging, such as "Your Subsidy. Your AO. Your Growth," reinforces the value of available funding and encourages educators to take advantage of board-supported opportunities through ETFO AO.

ETFO is widely recognized as a preferred AQ provider for its quality, relevance, accessibility, and continuous improvement, positioning it well to sustain momentum and support continued growth in registrations.

Breaking Barriers: Empowering Girls and Women in Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics (WP)



This two-day STEAM learning institute brought together 44 women members for a hands-on, resource-rich experience focused on maker spaces, technology, and robotics. Throughout the conference, members explored and engaged in strategies to support STEAM programming for girls.

Classroom Management for the Occasional Teacher Workshop

This workshop provided five occasional teacher locals with practical professional learning specifically addressing the needs of occasional teachers. It was designed to build teacher confidence, support self-reflection and goal setting, and create opportunities for networking. The workshop presentation was refreshed and is based on *The Occasional Teacher's Handbook*, the newly revised version of ETFO's former resource, *I Am The Teacher*.

Climate Justice Conference

In February, 45 members gathered for the Climate Justice Conference, guided by the TABS framework: Teach, Act, Belong, and Sustain. Workshops explored approaches to integrating contemporary social justice topics across multiple Kindergarten to Grade 8 curricular areas, and strategies for youth and community mobilization.

Keynote speaker Beze Gray, an Indigenous land protector, spoke about the pending court case against the Ford government for rolling back global climate commitments, the impacts of Sarnia's Chemical Valley on the Aamjiwnaang First Nation, and the vital role of youth advocacy. Members benefited from the content's relevance and depth, as well as the opportunity to learn in community with like-minded educators.

Climate Change and Environmental Education Resources

A consolidated webpage on ETFO's public and members' sites brings together all climate action and environmental education resources into one convenient online location. Members can access ETFO resources, podcasts, *Voice* articles, partner materials, and ETFO AQ course information at etfo.ca/socialjusticeunion.

Curriculum Conference

The curriculum conference, Unpacking the 2023 Language Curriculum, was held in October 2025. Seventy members participated in four workshops of their choice led by expert ETFO members. Workshop topics included special education, assessment, multilingual learners, affirming 2SLGBTQ+ identities, French immersion, integrating climate change, and division-specific content. A variety of ETFO resources were shared with members in print and digital formats.

Educating for Social Justice (WP)

This two-day conference supported 55 women members interested in building their knowledge of social justice and equity-focused classroom practice. The keynote, presented by Brock University professor Dolana Mogadime, focused on the works of women poets and delved into oral histories where the voices of elders from Black communities are heard, celebrated, and amplified. ETFO resources that support anti-oppressive practices in the classroom were highlighted, and the plenaries and workshops, led by ETFO members, explored a wide range of topics rooted in social justice and equity within classroom practice. Participants left with an increased understanding of how to embed social justice practices into their programs and to foster ways for students to see themselves in the fabric of the curriculum.

Etfopley.ca

The ETFO Early Years website was refreshed in 2025-26 with new content and an improved, user-friendly layout, making all professional learning resources easier to navigate. Designed to support educator teams, individual teachers, occasional teachers, designated early childhood educators, and teacher leaders, visitors can explore a range of materials, including videos, a photo gallery, and classroom tours. Recent additions highlight ways to support literacy development in Kindergarten through play, as well as strategies for communicating with families using a culturally responsive lens.

Gender Equity in Mathematics & Coding Resources

New resources to support ETFO members in building their knowledge of gender equity in mathematics and coding are being developed by staff and member writing teams. While mathematics and coding are essential components of Ontario's education system, societal stereotypes and systemic barriers continue to shape how girls experience these learning areas resulting in these fields having long-standing gaps in participation, confidence, and representation. These resources will serve as a starting point for educators to explore gender equity in mathematics and coding, promoting professional reflection, curriculum alignment, and inclusive instructional practice.

Growing Leadership (WP)



On November 11 and 12, women members from designated groups participated in the Growing Leadership program, a two-day workshop focused on leadership development, goal-setting, and celebrating individual strengths.

Through *Leadership Journeys: Women's Voices in Union Professional Learning and Equity Work*, participants learned from women leaders navigating instructional and system-level leadership. Grounded in an intersectional feminist framework, the program explored leadership styles, identity mapping, and ETFO leadership pathways.

The Heart and Art of Teaching and Learning Blog



The Heart and Art website (heartandart.ca) continues to serve as a reflective and informative resource for teacher members in their first five years and beyond. Thoughtful blog posts are posted each month on topics such as wellness, social justice, assessment, special education, multilingual language learners, technology tools, the value of professional learning, and teacher professional judgement. Some of this year's posts included:

- Why a Human-Centred Approach Matters in Teaching Today
- Inspiring STEM with Canadians in Space – Jeremy Hansen: Artemis II Mission and Beyond
- Structured Literacy Shift Series – The Power of Positive Self-Talk

Blog posts are shared regularly with members through the member e-newsletter and more broadly through social media.

The Importance of Play-Based Learning

A new resource, *The Importance of Play-Based Learning*, was added to the Early Years Resource series in 2025-26. This newest guide reinforces ETFO's long-standing position that play is essential in the early years because it is fundamental to how children learn.

Central to this approach is the role of the Kindergarten educator team, who thoughtfully design playful learning experiences that are meaningful, engaging, and that nurture children's sense of agency and excitement about learning. All the guides in this series serve as valuable advocacy tools for members as they engage in conversations about the importance of the early years and the critical role of the Kindergarten team.

Information Communication Technology (ICT) Conference (WP)



The 2025-26 ICT Conference for Women was held on November 20 and 21 for 84 members. This year's theme was AI in education. The keynote, *AI, Climate Justice, and the Future of Teaching: Thoughtfully Navigating Complexity*, invited members to step into critical, courageous conversations seeking to understand how to engage with AI as ethical, justice-oriented women shaping the next generation.

Workshop sessions included Questioning AI: Building Media Literacy and Critical Thinking Skills; Putting AI Literacy into Practice; Using AI to Refine Math Skills; Navigating Ethics and Digital Citizenship; Assessment Practices; and AI for Equity: Differentiated Instruction & Inclusive Learning for Multilingual Language Learners (MLLs). Every session shared how girls and gender-diverse learners may be impacted by AI within their workshop topic. Members also read and reviewed the four new members' guides to artificial intelligence. The 2026-27 ICT Conference will also address AI in education.

Junior/Intermediate Multigrade Classroom Resource

A new resource to support educators working in classrooms that bring together students across three or more grade levels is currently in development.

Designed for both new and experienced teachers, the resource foregrounds equity-driven pedagogy, highlighting the essential role of Culturally Responsive and Relevant Pedagogy, inclusion, and Universal Design for Learning in assessment, instruction, and relationship-building within highly dynamic multigrade learning communities. It will be released in fall 2026.

Language Curriculum Supports

ETFO continues to support members, with particular attention to those teaching Language within the Junior/Intermediate grades, through three programs. Support was offered to members through the 2025 Summer Academy, with six language-focused courses delivered both in-person and online. In the Local Workshop series, four language workshops provided targeted support on Strand B of the curriculum and were provided to locals. Finally, a curriculum resource centred on the reciprocal relationship between reading and composition in the Junior/Intermediate grades, accompanied by instructional videos that highlight pedagogical and assessment practices for both new and experienced members, are in development for the 2026-27 school year.

LEAD Conference

This year's LEAD conference, Building Sustainable Practices for Complex Lives, was offered on December 11 and 12 to members who are currently consultants, coordinators, facilitators, or teachers with system-wide responsibilities. This learning event engaged 35 members from locals across the province. The evening session offered an engaging and interactive networking session designed to bring members together to share experiences, exchange ideas, and build meaningful connections. Participants were part of conversations that inspired growth and strengthened the professional community. The full-day session featured a workshop facilitated by Robin Lacambra that offered members strategies for navigating the numerous demands of work and life with awareness and intention.

Leadership 2025

Leadership training took place on October 16 and 17. Over 400 participants engaged in workshops, plenary sessions, and training for committee chairs on topics that included:

- Generative AI

- Logistics for locals
- Environmental advocacy
- ETFO's class size strategy
- Human rights officer training
- Media training
- Promises Unfulfilled
- Supporting a member in crisis
- CB equity resource
- Ontario College of Teachers' advisory on hate/discrimination
- Committee chair training - new members, political action/public relations, professional learning, social justice, and status of women

This year's keynote speaker was Naila Keleta Mae, who shared the Black and Free project. Jennifer Huang from the Toronto and York Region Labour Council also gave a presentation on the council's Fund Our Schools campaign.

Learning in the Early Years



Thirteen after-school workshops were booked in locals across the province in 2025-26. Participating locals selected from five topics: Building and Enriching Partnerships in Kindergarten, Documenting and Communicating Learning in Kindergarten, Fostering Self-Regulation in Kindergarten, Learning in the Early Years, and The Empowered DECE (offered exclusively to DECE locals). Each session drew on a range of ETFO resources, including etfopley.ca and publications such as *Building and Enriching Partnerships in Kindergarten* and *Learning in the Early Years: Exploring Our Thinking*. The workshops highlight current research and examine best practices in early years education.

Local Executive Training

ETFO's strength is rooted in strong locals and effective local leadership. This year, 10 training sessions were delivered to support local executives in their roles. These facilitated workshops focused on executive planning, team building, goal setting, communication strategies, and local constitution development. Each session was tailored to address the unique needs of participating teacher, occasional teacher, and DECE locals.

Local Leaders Virtual Academy Webinar Series

Ten webinars were offered to local leaders as part of ETFO's ongoing Virtual Academy:

- New member tools
- Programs, partnerships, and funding incentives
- Representing members in investigations
- Conducting member conflict management
- Policy and special education plans
- Current issues in health and safety
- Preparing for bargaining – local gap analysis
- To grieve or not to grieve, that is the question: Assessing member discipline
- Supporting trans and gender non-conforming members
- Artificial intelligence and education

Mental Health Resources

ETFO staff participated in consultations with School Mental Health Ontario this year to inform the revision of resources designed to support members in implementing mental health literacy with elementary students. The School Mental Health Ontario website (smho-smso.ca) provides members with accessible information, lessons, learning activities, FAQs, and other resources. It also features a comprehensive educator guide focusing on educator well-being, as well as materials to help members effectively teach mental health literacy.

New Presidents Training

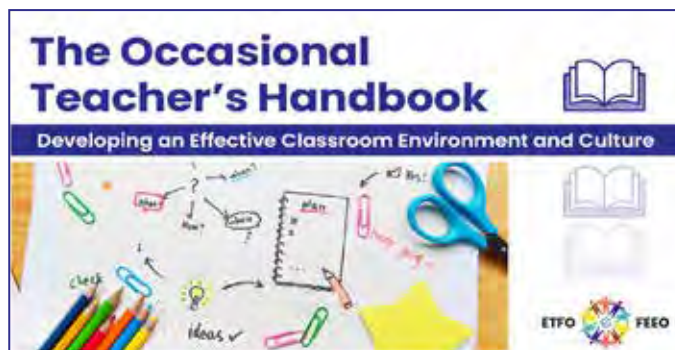
Training for new presidents and newly released local leaders occurred from January 28 to 30. Participants engaged in sessions on PRS issues, local budgets, engagement and mobilization, health and safety, reaching out to members of designated groups, and collective bargaining. Local leaders also participated in a simulation exercise that allowed them to experience issues they might encounter and to develop prioritization strategies to manage them.

The Occasional Teacher (OT) Conference



This year's OT Conference, *From Handbook to Classroom*, was centred on practical strategies for grounded confidence and immediate impact. Occasional teacher members had the opportunity to dive into the newly released ETFO resource *The Occasional Teacher's Handbook: Developing an Effective Classroom Environment and Culture*. Conference participants also engaged over the two days by sharing ideas and strategies to build confidence, clarity, and calm in occasional teaching.

The Occasional Teacher's Handbook



In March 2026, ETFO released *The Occasional Teacher's Handbook: Developing an Effective Classroom Environment and Culture*.

The handbook is a full revision of the previous ETFO book *I Am the Teacher*, and is a modern, practical guide that equips occasional teachers with the tools and up-to-date insights they need to succeed in any classroom. Rooted in ETFO's anti-oppressive framework, it supports educators in navigating diverse learning environments and understanding their rights – empowering them to step in, adapt quickly, and teach with confidence. The Classroom Management for the Occasional Teacher workshops use *The OT's Handbook* as the central resource guide.

Preparing Future ETFO Members at Faculties of Education in Ontario

ETFO continued its commitment to engaging future members by connecting with teacher candidates at the 13 publicly funded faculties of education across Ontario. Through ongoing liaison with faculty leadership, professional learning opportunities provided through workshops, and Federation Day presentations and collaboration via ETFO member representatives on teacher education liaison committees, these efforts support teacher candidates as they prepare to enter the profession and begin their involvement in the union.

This year, ETFO launched a new [Supports for Teacher Candidates webpage](#) and a [newly developed flyer](#) to provide clear, accessible information about union supports, professional resources, and pathways to involvement. These tools are designed to meet teacher candidates where they are and to strengthen early connections to ETFO as their professional and collective voice.

Presenters on the Road (POTR)

More than 30 POTR workshops were delivered in locals across the province in 2025-26. The most active period was February through April, with 18 workshops engaging over 450 members. POTR remains a highly valued partnership opportunity, fostering strong member engagement and meaningful professional learning in locals. The most popular workshops this year were:

- Inclusive Language in the FSL Classroom
- Supporting Students with Tiered Response, Universal Design for Learning and Differentiated Instruction
- Supporting Early Math Skills and Understanding in Kindergarten through Play

- Assessment for Learning: Revisit strategies to improve student learning
- Thriving in Core French

Presenter's Palette



On February 19 and 20, this program was provided to 20 members interested in enhancing their leadership skills and developing their presentation and facilitation expertise. Teacher, occasional teacher, and DECE members at all stages of career development brought a range of experiences to the program. Members developed a workshop description and plan, and explored facilitation strategies to engage participants while ensuring an inclusive environment. Attention was placed on best practices of ensuring equity and inclusion in professional learning experiences.

Professional Judgement



Professional judgement is something teachers exercise daily in their classrooms. ETFO created the Professional Judgement Matters series to support members in acting on and advocating for professional judgement, both generally and in specific contexts. Additionally, to support members with implementing early reading screeners, ETFO created a series entitled Pedagogy and Professional Judgement. Both are available for download from members.etfo.ca.

Putting Young Minds First: An ETFO Symposium on Student Mental Health



The second iteration of the Putting Young Minds First symposium considered the changing student mental health landscape through presentations and panels featuring experts in the field. A hundred members and 20 education allies engaged in meaningful discussion focused on the three tiers of mental health support: mental health promotion for everyone at school, prevention and services in collaboration with mental health professionals, and specialized and intensive support when needs cannot all be met at school. Additionally, participants reviewed ETFO resources and supports as they considered next steps.

Regional and Provincial Classroom Management Course

This referral-based program offers limited enrolment and is designed to support members who are experiencing challenges with classroom management, establishing effective routines, and/or supporting students with self-regulation. In 2025-26, ETFO offered fall, spring, and summer sessions at the ETFO provincial office as well as two, two-day workshops hosted in locals. Members expressed appreciation for the timely support and professional learning provided by their Federation.

Special Education Needs in the Regular Classroom

The Special Education Needs in the Regular Classroom series offers resources, webcasts, and workshops to assist members in supporting students with special education needs. Ten workshops were offered in locals with over 270 members attending.

The resources provide curated summaries of relevant information, numerous access points, and guiding questions that inform, prompt reflection, and support implementation of pedagogy that focuses on students with exceptionalities but ultimately benefits all learners.

ETFO members can access the digital versions of the resources and webcasts for free through ETFO Secure, and print copies of the resources are available for purchase through shopETFO. Workshops for each resource are also available by request through the Professional Learning/Curriculum Services partnership catalogue.

Supporting English Language Learners (ELLs) Workshop Series

Workshops were hosted by six different locals in 2025-26. The series, delivered by member facilitators with expertise in English as a Second Language programs, focuses on creating equitable programs and learning tasks for multilingual language learners (MLLs). The following popular topics were offered:

- An Anti-Opressive Approach to Supporting MLLs
- Program Adaptations for MLLs: Learning the Curriculum while Learning English
- Supporting ELLs and Steps to English Proficiency

Supporting MLLs with Possible Special Education Needs

This year, ETFO released several new resources to support English language learners, or more inclusively, MLLs. This new suite of resources is designed to support members in a variety of roles as they work with MLLs who may have special education needs. A program brief is included to inform professional conversations and classroom practice. An interactive infographic outlining a multi-tiered approach, with practical tools, is also included. A three-part video series features members with English as a Second Language expertise from four different locals walking viewers through a multi-tiered approach to support MLLs and highlighting the importance of a team approach and professional judgement. These resources and other materials developed about MLLs are available on ETFO Secure.

Summer Academy



In 2025, ETFO's Summer Academy offered in-person and virtual courses throughout July and August. Over six weeks, 32 three-day courses designed and delivered by ETFO members were offered across the province and online. Courses addressed a range of topics, including artificial intelligence, assessment, culturally relevant and responsive pedagogy, Kindergarten, literacy, mathematics, and mental health and wellness. The most popular summer courses were those on structured literacy and the revised Language curriculum, followed by early years/Kindergarten and special education.



Welcome to ETFO New Member Program

The New Member Welcome Program supports members in their first five years by encouraging active involvement in ETFO. Launched in 1999 as one of the Federation's earliest initiatives, the program introduces new members to their professional union and provides an overview of ETFO's role and work. It is designed to help members see themselves as valued contributors and to explore opportunities for engagement within the union. Locals can request a Welcome to ETFO session, delivered by a provincial released officer, for new members each year. This year's sessions highlighted the [Welcome to ETFO booklet](#) and reinforced the importance of ongoing outreach to new members.

EQUITY AND WOMEN'S SERVICES

The work of Equity and Women's Services illustrates ETFO's commitment to social justice, equity, inclusion, anti-oppression, and broad-based equity concerns. This commitment is reflected in one of the Federation's Objects, which is "to foster a climate of social justice in Ontario and continue a leadership role in such areas as anti-poverty, non-violence, and equity."

Equity Resources

2SLGBTQ+ Online Resources

This web page, available on the public-facing website, was updated throughout the year. It features a bank of resources and websites curated by ETFO members to assist with 2SLGBTQ+ education, teaching, learning, and support. We encourage all members to use the page, found under the Social Justice tab on etfo.ca, to find sites that can help support learners and develop pedagogical awareness and practice.

Anti-Palestinian resource

The resource to address anti-Palestinian racism covers themes such as learning about Palestinian history, understanding anti-Palestinian racism, and approaches to affirming Palestinian identity within learning communities. It will be available as a digital download through members.etfo.ca in the fall of 2026.

Asian Heritage Month poster – Speak Peace



This year's poster was inspired by the words of Japanese Canadian activist Setsuko Thurlow, which encourage us to create a more peaceful world: "Get involved. Take Action. Be an agent of change."

The poster's background features the word peace in different Asian languages. There are over 2,000 languages and dialects spoken across Asia; those in the poster represent a sampling of some that might be heard in Ontario classrooms and communities.

Black History Month poster – We Didn't Cross the Waters Alone



The 2026 poster spans generations and continents to tie together the past, present, and future. The themes blend traditional West African folklore, imagery, and concepts with curriculum-based African Canadian history and the importance of looking to the future. The #FutureGriot hashtag captures the reality that all Black students will ascend from their present experience of being learners to one day being the keepers of history and knowledge that can be shared through the long-kept practice of oral storytelling. A companion classroom activity document was shared to the Classroom Resources section on members.etfo.ca in March to encourage educators to engage with the poster throughout the school year.

Combating Antisemitism in Ontario Learning Communities

In December, ETFO released *Combating Antisemitism in Ontario Learning Communities*, a resource designed to support educators in understanding and interrupting antisemitism in schools. It is grounded in ETFO's anti-oppressive framework and includes one lesson plan for each division.

Harmony Movement: Words Matter – Homophobia and Transphobia Lessons

In partnership with ETFO, Harmony Movement has developed two classroom lesson plans for grades 1 to 8 focused on addressing homophobic and transphobic language in school spaces.

The resource will be released in the 2026-27 school year and responds to a clear and growing need identified by educators for practical, age-appropriate guidance on interrupting homophobic and transphobic language while fostering student understanding, empathy, and accountability.

International Day of Pink T-shirt

April 8 marked the Day of Pink, a day to take action on bullying, homophobia, and transphobia. This year, the theme was “Solidarity in Every Shade,” honouring the brave actions of those who have fought and continue to fight for safer and more inclusive communities. While the International Day of Pink only happens once a year, it is important to support 2SLGBTQ+ students all year long. Resources were shared to support this essential work.

International Holocaust Remembrance Day

On January 27, International Holocaust Remembrance Day, we remember the six million Jewish people murdered in the Holocaust, along with the millions of others targeted by the Nazi regime. We acknowledge the survivors who rebuilt their lives in Canada and around the world, and their descendants who are keeping their stories alive. ETFO commits to standing against antisemitism, hate, and Holocaust denial, in classrooms, communities, and institutions.

International Women’s Day T-shirt and toques

ETFO marked International Women’s Day on March 8 by drawing attention to the gendered impacts of the affordability crisis on women’s economic security, autonomy, and rights. This year’s theme was “Advancing Change Together,” which reminds us that when we work in solidarity, change can happen in our schools, communities, and at the polls. This year, ETFO created popular T-shirts and toques that were available to members through shopETFO.

Jewish Canadian Heritage Month poster – Henaynu: Here We Are



During Jewish Canadian Heritage Month, we celebrated the vibrant contributions of Jewish Canadians to our country’s cultural, social, and community life, with a special focus on social justice and activism within their respective fields.



International Day of Pink T-shirt

Across generations, Jewish Canadians have helped shape and enrich Canada's story through leadership and advocacy. The theme of this year's poster, *Henaynu*, which means "here we are," goes beyond pointing out one's physical presence; it is an actionable response when tasked with something important and meaningful. This year's poster artwork, by Toronto artist Rosette Sund, honoured a lasting presence, woven into the fabric of Canada's past, present, and future.

Pride



Each year, many communities across Ontario offer a variety of Pride activities in which everyone, including ETFO locals, gender and sexuality alliances, and social justice clubs, can participate. Pride is about creating inclusive school places and communities. It's an opportunity for 2SLGBTQ+ people and allies to challenge homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia, and promote social justice and equity. ETFO participated in the 2026 Family Pride event, where staff led engaging activities for youth and community members.

Race Matters: The Early Years

This new classroom resource will be released in the 2026-27 school year to support early years educators in addressing race, racism, and anti-Black racism with children in Kindergarten. Children begin to recognize racial differences and develop biases that confirm racial preferences and attitudes early in life. As educators, we have the power to engage in meaningful discussions, learning experiences, and strategies that will foster spaces of belonging and engagement. The resource invites educators to reflect on how to embed conversations about race in everyday practice and create positive understandings with young learners.

Suggested Resources for Gender-Independent Children and Transgender Youth/Adults

ETFO continues to update and enhance this [online document](#) that lists resources educators can use when working with gender-independent children and transgender youth/adults. The document, available under the [Social Justice tab at etfo.ca](#), lists organizations, resources, and links to school board gender-expression and gender-identity policies.

Transgender Day of Remembrance

Each year, ETFO recognizes the International Transgender Day of Remembrance (TDOR), which is observed on November 20. It is a day to remember transgender people, gender non-conforming individuals, and those perceived to be transgender who have been murdered because of hate. The theme for 2025 was "Mourning Yesterday to Safeguard Tomorrow," which addresses the significance of how we can use the hurt of the past to prevent it being repeated in the future. A link to a resource on how educators can interrupt anti-2SLGBTQ (micro) aggressions was shared among the membership.

Women's History Month poster (French) – Les Femmes en Politique



Each October, Women's History Month is recognized in Canada. This month highlights the past and present contributions of Canadian women and serves as a reminder of our continued work towards equality and social justice for all. This year's poster and curriculum companion, dedicated to trailblazing women in politics, was distributed to all ETFO work sites across the province via the stewards' mailing.

Anti-Black Racism-Focused Programs & Initiatives

Code Black Leadership Program – Parts 1 & 2



The popular Code Black leadership program was expanded to a two-part conference this year. During Part 1, members attended sessions that covered topics such as Your Union and You, leadership, and actionable next steps. Sessions also included a panel of former Code Black participants.

Part 2 launched this year and in this new two-day program, members gained a deeper understanding of the union, identified personal assets and leadership skills, and examined leadership opportunities within ETFO, locally and provincially. Past Code Black participants Yahyah Gairey and Marcia Thompson shared their leadership journeys, and keynote speaker Melissa Taylor spoke to the importance of self-care and the psychological impact of burnout.

Collective Action, Conscious Change: Disrupting Anti-Black Racism in Ontario Schools

This resource provides essential context about anti-Black racism in Ontario, how it shows up in educational settings, and the impacts these realities have on students, educators, and school communities. It examines the diversity of Black identities and lived experiences in Canada and highlights the importance of affirming Black excellence, brilliance, and joy.

Designed as a practice-forward resource, *Collective Action, Conscious Change* centres practical strategies for action at multiple levels – from classroom instruction and assessment to school-wide culture and leadership and advocacy with family and community.

Grounded in ETFO's anti-oppressive framework, the resource supports educators and stakeholders in translating learning into action and taking intentional steps to disrupt and dismantle anti-Black racism wherever they work and lead.

Empower Mentorship Program for Black Members

This new mentorship program was designed to build capacity and increase the representation of Black members in leadership positions locally, provincially, and in the broader labour movement. A two-day training session for mentors was held in June, focused on understanding ETFO's structure and leadership pathways, the role of a mentor, skill development and effective communication strategies for mentors, anti-oppressive leadership and the importance of equity, and creating a culture for mentorship. A call for mentees will occur in the 2026-27 school year.

Leadership Forum for Black Women (WP) – Parts 1 & 2

The program was developed to support the engagement and leadership of Black women members in the union and was expanded to a two-session conference this year. Part 1 focused on identifying and expanding the 22 participants' leadership skills and developing a collective stance in anti-oppression using feminist frameworks to increase participation in ETFO. Highlights included presentations on misogynoir trauma, leadership styles, and opportunities within ETFO, as well as a session with former MPP Jill Andrew about her lived experiences and leadership journey.

Part 2 centred on leadership development for members who are committed to increasing their participation and activism within ETFO, and/or seeking election to their local or provincial ETFO executive. Attendees heard from Crystal Garvey, executive board member and equity vice-president at OPSEU, and an executive producer of the award-winning documentary *Silent Voices*.

Protecting Your Peace (WP)

This new two-day program for women members who identify as Black offered a space for 35 participants to refresh and rediscover themselves through the exploration of ancestral healing, empowerment, wellness, and personal growth.

Kearie Daniel, founder and executive director of the Black Women's Institute for Health, presented the keynote, *Toxic Resilience and the Cost of Survival for Black Women Educators*. Members also enjoyed presentations by DEI education leader Shelita Walker, Georgia Fullerton from Create My Artstory, health and wellness coach Alyssa Lopez, neuroscientist Krissy Doyle-Thomas, and Melissa Taylor from Ancestral Memory Therapy.

Unapologetically Black



This annual two-day program provides a space for members to share, listen, and gain insight into issues related to anti-Black racism. May 22 was an evening of Black excellence featuring a screening of the powerful documentary *Silent Voices*, which explores the critical issue of mental health within Black communities. The screening was followed by a discussion with the cast and executive producer Crystal Garvey.

On May 23, participants heard from Shana McCalla, founder of Find Ontario Missing Black Boys, who talked about the crisis of missing black boys in Ontario and the signs of trafficking. Participants engaged in interactive discussions, workshops, and closing plenary. Anti-Black racism resources that provide professional and personal supports were shared with participants.

Mapping the Way: The Nuts n' Bolts of Anti-Black Racism

On February 27, ETFO offered this new one-day program for 20 local leaders. The program is designed to provide local leaders with tools to address anti-Black racism within their local and/or to organize a community event on issues affecting education and the Black community. Leaders heard from presenters Tana Turner from Turner Consulting and Nikki Kazemzadeh, Waterloo organizer, and explored topics such as how

to engage Black members, action plans versus equity audits, the Ontario Human Rights Commission's *Dreams Delayed* report, and supports available from EWS. Participants were also provided with time to hear from other locals about their actions to address anti-Black racism and to plan their own next steps.

First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Education (FNMI) Initiatives

FNMI Education Symposium



The ETFO FNMI Education Symposium was held on November 29, with 26 members in attendance. The event was called *Truth, Reconciliation, and Action in Education*. The morning keynote, delivered by Sherri Vansickle, an assistant professor in Brock University's faculty of education, emphasized the importance of trauma-informed and culturally sensitive approaches in classrooms. In the afternoon, participants engaged in an interactive activity inspired by David A. Robertson's book *52 Ways to Reconcile*. This session encouraged members to brainstorm and share practical strategies for advancing reconciliation within their schools and communities.

Indigenous Resources

The etfofnmi.ca website includes a list of resources developed by ETFO members (both Indigenous and non-Indigenous) and the broader Indigenous community, teacher union affiliates, and others in the education sector. The resources focus on FNMI world views, issues, and perspectives to support members in their learning and instructional practices. The site also features relevant news and dates of significance.

Leadership Symposium for FNMI Women

The theme of this year's symposium was "Leading with Balance." Over two days in March, 24 women gathered for inspiration, learning, and connection.

The symposium featured traditional teachings with Judy Sackaney on self care using traditional tools and medicines, and setting spring equinox intentions. Members also learned about collective bargaining, body language, and navigating difficult conversations.

Native Language Gathering

Eight Native Language teachers participated in this reformatted program in November. Highlights include a presentation by Jasmine Rice on Indigenous language frameworks and the exploration of revitalization versus reclamation, and a powerful talk on the importance of language by Charlotte Neckoway, in which she shared her story and resources rooted in songs. Members explored ideas and resources and stayed connected through five virtual check-ins and a second in-person session in June.

Responsibility and Reciprocity: Learning from the Natural World

The *Responsibility and Reciprocity* resource for the early years embeds FNMI world views into teaching practice by encouraging learning from the natural world. It supports educators in extending learning beyond classroom walls through community walks, outdoor experiences, and nature journaling, and is rooted in picture books by Indigenous authors.

Visual Art In a Good Way

Visual Art In a Good Way invites educators to teach visual art in a way that honours First Nations, Métis, and Inuit artists and perspectives without appropriation. It explores visual art best practices and includes one lesson plan for each division.

Training, Programs & Initiatives

...and Still We Rise: Act III



The third act of ETFO's signature Women's Program concluded at the Westin Harbour Castle in Toronto with over 325 women attending. Many members who attended acts I and II invited other members to join, with about 50 new participants attending Act III. The focus of the conference was furthering classroom, school, and community engagement in politics. Over 20 workshops were presented by members (17 members from various locals), staff, and external organizations. The conference began with a group dance session led by ZahraMoves, followed by a panel discussion with four women members who spoke about how they've been spurred on to greater political engagement. Keynote speakers at the conference included Lisa Boate from Liberated Menopause, Inuit singer and songwriter Elisapie, and journalist Ginella Massa. Members also enjoyed an evening of crafting, trivia, and karaoke.

Affirming, Connecting, and Thriving (ACT) Together – Program for Non-Binary Members



This inaugural program offered dedicated, ongoing support and programming for ETFO members who identify as non-binary. Members explored opportunities for connection, networking, and building community. The second session provided a space for ETFO members who identify as non-binary to connect and discuss issues related to social justice and political action, and engage with guest speaker Kristyn Wong-Tam, member of provincial parliament.

Anti-Hate Conference

Held in January, the second annual Anti-Hate Conference examined the prevalence of hate within the Canadian landscape and how these manifestations of hate are affecting learning communities. Participants engaged in discussions about populism, political polarization, disinformation, and the rise of the alt-right, while reaffirming the role of educators in challenging and supporting learners. The afternoon session provided a presentation about healthy masculinities to raise awareness of the manosphere and examine strategies to support students.

Anti-Oppressive Framework (AOF) Training (local leader training, GP and WP)



Multiple sessions of ETFO's AOF Training were offered this year, with 30 members taking part in each of the two GP sessions and WP sessions held at the provincial office. Members from across the province met for the two-day training, during which staff from different service areas presented sessions on topics such as navigating discomfort, intent versus impact, legal implications, and more.

This year, for the first time, ETFO also hosted two regional conferences, including one in Ottawa and one in Thunder Bay. The AOF program is a prerequisite for ETFO's Collective Bargaining Academy, Union School, and Parliamentary Training. In addition, members of ETFO's Selection Committee and Professional Relations and Discipline Committee must attend a two-hour AOF session.

Building Allyship for Gender Justice

ETFO launched this program in 2024, in partnership with Gender at Work. Participants collaborated to break down traditional barriers that lead to gender discrimination in schools and communities and to build their practice as allies in the quest for gender justice. They explored the interlinked dynamics of male privilege, power, voice, and agency, and how these can be harnessed to empower women and strengthen gender equality in education.

Conscious Classrooms: Responding to Gender-Based Violence (WP)

This two-day conference hosted on November 27 and 28 was developed in collaboration with the Toronto Rape Crisis Centre/Multicultural Women Against Rape and White Ribbon. The program aims to enhance understanding of gender-based violence within school communities and support students who have disclosed, while creating trauma-informed and gender-inclusive classrooms.

Disability Issues Conference

This program, which ran December 2 and 3, addressed the themes of advocacy, human rights, and identity-affirming representations of disability. The evening event featured Melanie Marsden from Anishnawbe Health Toronto and Janet Rodriguez from Disability without Poverty sharing their perspectives on collective action towards a barrier-free world for people with disabilities. In the daytime session, members participated in a morning workshop by the Ontario Human Rights Commission on the duty to accommodate disabilities in employment and service delivery, and enjoyed an afternoon program presented by the authors of the book *We Move Together*, which explores disability justice in STEAM.

Elementary Podcasts



During the year, Equity and Women's Services partnered with Communications and Political Action Services on ETFO's *Elementary* podcast. Episodes featured in the podcast this year included:

- Systemic change and Black mental health with Crystal Garvey
- Artificial intelligence and climate justice
- Joe Pitawanakwat on teaching and learning about Indigenous plants and their uses in Anishnaabek traditional medicine

Faculty of Education Workshops

ETFO provides equity workshops for teacher candidates upon request from faculties of education. EWS staff offered the following workshops:

- Challenging and Championing 2SLGBTQ+ Issues
- Exploring an Anti-Oppressive Framework
- Culturally Relevant & Responsive Teaching and Assessment Practices
- Everyone is Able
- Learning While Black: Addressing Anti-Black Racism in Education
- Possibilities: Addressing Poverty Issues in Elementary Schools
- Cultural Appropriation vs. Appreciation

Approximately 400 teacher candidates attended this year's workshops.

First Steps: Observer Training for Annual Meeting

For Annual Meeting 2025, 8 ETFO members who self-identified within ETFO's designated groups were selected to observe one of the Federation's most important democratic processes. The members learned about Robert's Rules of Order and ETFO Annual Meeting operating procedures, and participated in new delegate training, the Annual Meeting dinner (seated with honorary life members), and frequent sessions with staff to review and debrief on the day's events. A highlight was a session in which four alumni from the previous year's program provided reflections and discussed next steps with the participants.

Genders and Sexualities Alliances (GSA) Symposium

This two-day symposium on April 10 and 11 brought together ETFO members to share ideas, build connections, and explore strategies for empowering students involved in GSAs across Ontario.

Health and Wellness Conference for Men Educators

The Health and Wellness Conference for Men Educators took place on April 24 and 25 with 20 participants. The program provided participants with knowledge and a variety of tools to attend to their own mental wellness as educators, as well as that of the students they teach.

Lateral Violence (WP)

Thirty-six members participated in this two-day program on January 28 and 29. Led by Chris Leonard, the workshop focused on understanding and addressing lateral violence among colleagues in school communities. Participants learned how to identify harmful behaviours and explored strategies for responding effectively.

Leaders for Tomorrow (WP)

This is an intensive, year-long leadership development opportunity for women members who self-identify as racialized, FNMI, members with a disability, and/or 2SLGBTQ+. The program includes workshops and experiences related to leadership roles within ETFO, both locally and provincially. This year, 20 women from designated groups participated in several activities: having courageous conversations, developing an anti-oppressive framework, exploring Indigenous ways of knowing, being an ally, writing speeches, disrupting microaggressions, and chairing meetings. Participants also had the opportunity to observe the May Representative Council to see ETFO's governance first-hand. They were joined by a panel of past participants who spoke about their own leadership journeys and also had a chance to meet with service area representatives to discuss various ways the union supports members and other leadership pathways.



Leaders for Tomorrow

Local Equity and Women's Services Workshops



Equity and Women's Services workshops provide equity training to members at the local level in formats modified for after-school meetings and professional development day conferences. In 2025-26, 45 equity workshops were requested (as of April). The most requested workshops were Race Matters: Teaching Students to be Race-Conscious; Unlearn. Relearn: How Colonization Impacts Your Practice; Culturally Relevant and Responsive Pedagogy; 2SLGBTQ+ Human Rights Education Strategies; and 2SLGBTQ+ Awareness in Primary Classrooms.

Additional workshops offered this year:

- 2SLGBTQ+ Education Timeline
- Affirming the Identities of 2SLGBTQ+ Families in Schools

- Combatting Antisemitism in Ontario Learning Communities
- Disrupting and Challenging Islamophobia
- Name It: Understanding Anti-Black Racism in Ontario Education
- Race and Education: The Water We Swim In
- Why Poverty

Local Executive Equity Training

During 2025-26, EWS engaged in local executive equity training with nine teacher locals, two occasional teacher locals, and one DECE local, covering topics such as different levels of critical equity conversations, anti-oppressive framework capacity-building, and action planning at the local level. Local executives expanded their knowledge on allyship, recognizing biases, supporting internationally trained educators, examining issues of gender identity, affinity spaces, and other topics.

Action plans developed during the training focused on the OHRC's *Dreams Delayed* report, coordinating member focus groups and surveys, exploring local constitutions to support women's programs and equity-focused initiatives, planning affinity spaces, examining demographic changes, equity training for stewards and social justice committees, and other equity goals. This program has been significant in building the collective capacity of equity and anti-oppressive frameworks within and beyond the local level.

Make the Season Kind – CBC School Challenge

As part of the CBC’s annual Make the Season Kind campaign, ETFO partnered with the Daily Bread Food Bank, Feed Ontario, and food banks across the province on the second annual CBC School Challenge.

This engaging program sparked meaningful conversations about social justice, poverty, and food access, and empowered students to think critically and creatively about real-world issues. Students gained valuable knowledge and had the opportunity to earn recognition for their hard work, with the CBC acknowledging three outstanding submissions in each division.

Next Steps (WP)



The Next Steps leadership program is open to women members who are also from one or more of ETFO’s designated groups. The program, which took place this year on February 24 and 25, provides a space for personal and professional growth. This year’s focus was on transformational conflict resolution.

Peer Learning for Inclusive Classrooms (WP)



ETFO partnered with Gender at Work, an international feminist knowledge organization, to offer this exciting program to 16 women members actively working in classrooms. The program’s goal is to help teachers better understand the interlinked dynamics of power, voice, agency, and privilege, and how these can be harnessed to foster women’s empowerment and strengthen gender equality in and through education. Participants worked together to co-create, test, and provide feedback on learning activities that sought to answer inquiry questions. They met in person for a pair of two-day sessions and participated in check-ins with facilitators throughout the year.

Racialized Members Conference

This year’s theme was “Arts as Activism: Creators Change the World,” which showcased how various art forms have been and are used to provide joy, resistance, and hope to racialized communities. On November 18 and 19, members participated in sessions led by Yazmeen Kanji, an Indo-Caribbean filmmaker, and Brian Kobiyakawa, whose Japanese Canadian heritage informs his work as a musician.

Social Justice Conference for Male Educators

The Social Justice Conference for Male Educators was held on November 28 and 29, with 20 members in attendance. Participants explored how men can show allyship through action in their roles as educators and work to promote social justice and inclusion in the public education system.

Social Justice Chair Training – Fall Leadership 2025

Leadership training for social justice chairs provides participants with support for prioritizing the human rights, anti-racist, and equity needs of their committees. Chairs explored the planning and programming of ETFO local workshops such as EWS workshops and workshops for supporting English language learners. Additionally, participants were able to network with other local leaders from around the province.

Status of Women Chairperson Training – Leadership 2025

Local status of women committee chairs came together to plan, reflect, and share best practices. Participants completed a “What’s your leadership style?” quiz and discussed how they respond to various leadership approaches. Together, they explored ETFO’s Status of Women Resource Guide and learned strategies for member outreach and event planning. The chairs took part in a presentation on Women’s History Month and women’s programs, focusing on women’s health and historically underrepresented voices, and had the opportunity to view Indigenous resources and equity workshops that could be brought to their locals. A second training opportunity was offered in May 2026.

Visions Program (WP)



The Visions Program for members of education worker bargaining units was held at the provincial office with 17 designated early childhood educator members and two education support personnel, representing 10 different locals. Members learned about ETFO’s history, governance, and service areas, with additional workshops on collective bargaining and the grievance process, intersectional feminism, and women’s programs. Members attended several sessions focused on creating action plans to become more involved in their local and/or provincial union.

Women in Action I and II (WP)

ETFO supports locals with this women’s leadership program by providing facilitators, training materials, and financial support to host a two-day session. In 2025-26, five teacher locals, three occasional teacher locals, and two DECE locals held sessions between October and June.



Women in Action III (WP)

Sixteen women gathered on May 21 and 22 for Women in Action III, which builds on content from Women in Action I and II. The session enhances leadership skills, builds confidence, and supports networking with other members from across the province.

Women in Action Facilitator Training (WP)

Fifteen member facilitators gathered to update their resources, talk about gender justice campaigns, and share facilitation tips. During the school year, the facilitators were paired up to provide Women in Action workshops (Part I or II) to members in 10 locals.

Incentive Funding

International Women’s Day Local Incentive Fund (WP)

Local incentive funding for International Women’s Day (IWD) is available to assist locals with costs related to providing local programs that promote and celebrate IWD events. This year, up to \$30,000 in funding was requested and provided to 15 locals. Of the locals that accessed this fund, one was a designated early childhood educator local, one was an education support personnel local, six were occasional teacher locals, and seven were teacher locals.

Take Back the Night (TBTN) Local Incentive Fund (WP)

Each September, TBTN activities are held nationally and internationally to demand the right to be safe and free from gender-based violence. Incentive funding of up to \$300 per local is available and granted on a first-come, first-served basis. In 2025-26, 21 locals received incentive funding to plan TBTN virtual events.

HEALTH AND SAFETY SERVICES

Health and Safety Services (HSS) assists locals, committees, and members with advocacy, information, and action for safer and healthier school communities. This year, the service area provided information and training about some of the health and safety hazards that ETFO members identify as their most significant concerns, including violence and psychosocial hazards. Ongoing programs and resources from HSS raise awareness of health and safety rights and responsibilities, such as reporting, training, risk assessments, and work refusals, so that members can assert their rights to a healthy and safe workplace.

Prioritizing safe building infrastructure is part of ETFO's advocacy efforts through Building Better Schools and our education funding and pre-budget consultation submissions. The failure to maintain school infrastructure has resulted in schools with built-in hazards like structural weaknesses, asbestos, and poor ventilation, and schools that don't protect students and workers from outside hazards like infectious diseases, wildfire smoke, and pests.

ETFO continues to monitor and provide guidance on perennial workplace hazards, such as lead in drinking water and high temperatures in schools, and works with locals and allies to identify emerging hazards and health and safety issues.

Provincial Working Group on Health and Safety

ETFO is represented by staff at the Provincial Working Group on Health and Safety (PWGHS), alongside representatives from other education-sector unions and organizations, including the Council of Ontario Directors of Education and the Ontario Principals' Council.

Each PWGHS meeting is an opportunity to collaborate with stakeholders, to consult with the Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development (MLITSD), and to work directly with the Ministry of Education on issues of occupational health and safety. The parties' ongoing commitment to the PWGHS has been confirmed through bargaining in a Letter of Agreement, and the issue of violence was identified as a priority issue. A sub-group is using information on best practices to address violence in schools gathered from school boards across Ontario to update *Workplace Violence in School Boards: A Guide to the Law*.

In addition to the focus on violence, the PWGHS has discussed other health and safety concerns, including: addressing outbreaks of infectious diseases, the renewed enforcement of the *Immunization of School Pupils Act*, the sharing of information from the School Facilities Condition Assessment program, and safety protections for workers providing health support to students, such as lifting and toileting.

Despite regular questions from worker representatives on the PWGHS, the anticipated updates to Policy/Program Memorandum 120: Reporting Violent Incidents to the Ministry of Education, and the provincial model for a local police/school board protocol have yet to be released. ETFO has submitted feedback on these updates and asked that they be shared with the group for review prior to release, re-establishing a past practice that has fallen by the wayside under the current government.

The committee's work will be paused once bargaining begins, as the government declines to meet while engaged in bargaining. However, labour members will collaborate on issues in the meantime, and are able to directly contact Education or Labour Ministry representatives with questions or to raise concerns. The work on violence, on accessing health and safety information at the provincial and local level, and on ongoing and emerging issues will continue.

Joint Health and Safety Committees (JHSC)

Supporting local leaders and members of JHSCs is key to enabling a strong internal responsibility system in each workplace. Local health and safety representatives contacted HSS staff for advice on recommendations, inspections, and their entitlement to information. Staff continued to support members who believed their work was likely to endanger them, with some members opting to exercise their right to refuse unsafe work.

JHSCs are reminded, as multi-site agreements expire, of the requirement under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* to seek approval from the Ministry of Labour for their multi-workplace structure arrangement. ETFO staff continues to be available to advise locals on changes to their terms of reference to support their multi-workplace JHSCs.

Consultations and Advocacy

Staff participated in the work of the Ontario Federation of Labour (OFL) Health and Safety Committee and the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) Health and Safety Advisory Group, discussing concerns about inadequate enforcement by the Ministry of Labour, as well as strategies to address health and safety concerns. ETFO continues to partner with Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers (OHCOW), sharing their resources, directing members to their services, and inviting speakers to ETFO programs.

ETFO joins the labour movement in advocating for proper funding to sustain the Workers Health and Safety Centre (WHSC) and OHCOW. Health and Safety Services staff continue to share the excellent resources each partner organization provides. Through subsidies, ETFO's WHSC Level I program, and promotion of training opportunities, ETFO has provided intensive health and safety training to prepare members to engage in activism in their locals. ETFO remains committed to offering the worker-focused and labour-friendly modules from the WHSC at annual fall conference and regional trainings.

Workshops

Training is the cornerstone of every health and safety program. Training ensures members are aware of their rights, know how to control their exposure to hazards, and use JHSCs and the MLTSD for enforcement, if necessary. ETFO planned, developed, and presented the following workshops:

- ETFO's annual **Health and Safety Conference** was held on November 24 and 25. Seventy-four members participated in the program, which included a keynote address from social worker Amanda Rocheleau on dealing with compassion fatigue, and a workshop on vicarious trauma. Members were offered a choice of WHSC modules: health and safety awareness; stress in the workplace; or viruses, moulds and bacteria.
- ETFO's **WHSC Level I Labour Activist program** was offered three times: the August 18 to 22 session had a focus on workplace violence, November 3 to 7 was a women's program, and June 1 to 5 was for members of designated groups. The 48 participants had a week of intensive health and safety training and built the skills to engage in activism back in their locals. Through the programs for women and members of designated groups, ETFO continues to work towards more diversity among health and safety representatives.
- The **Women's Health and Safety Conference (WP)** was held on January 30. The program used a gender framework to support the leadership development of 46 members to build knowledge and advocacy for safer and healthier workplaces.
- A new program, **Work and Women's Health**, was held on February 12 for 59 members. Keynote speaker Laura Mae Lindo shared her experiences of gendered expectations that affect women in the workplace. Participants learned about their health and safety rights, discussed how systemic change must accompany individual advocacy, and took part in a workshop that helped them identify challenges and solutions in their own workplaces.
- The Health and Safety special topics conference was once again **Resisting Resilience: Psychosocial Hazards in the Workplace**. It was held on March 6 and 7 for 38 participants. Keynote speaker Birgit Umaigba shared her perspective as a health-care worker about concerns across the sectors. Workshops provided the opportunity to understand the tools available to identify psychosocial hazards and push employers towards improvement.
- Regional Health and Safety training** was held in three locations across the province in April and May. Every local was invited to send at least one delegate to develop knowledge, advocacy, and leadership in health and safety, including how to organize members around health and safety issues. Sixty-one members participated in the regional training, including a heat- and cold-stress workshop.
- Locals from 11 school boards applied for cost-sharing funding to present the **Action on Violence Program** for ETFO members. Trained facilitators delivered the program and the feedback from local leaders indicates that the program continues to improve the rates of incident reporting and health and safety awareness.
- Staff provided a workshop on health and safety, including **staying safe from workplace violence**, to pre-service teachers at two faculties of education. Future ETFO members are already experiencing hazards in their workplaces during placements.
- Health and Safety Services staff collaborated with staff from Professional Learning/Curriculum Services on **Putting Young Minds First: An ETFO Symposium on Student Mental Health**.

In addition, HSS staff presented workshops at programs offered by other service areas, including Fall Leadership, New President Training, Beyond the Basics, Union School, Leaders for Tomorrow, New Member Orientation, Conscious Classrooms, Women's Health Conference, and Virtual Academy.

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING (CB) SERVICES

2026 Bargaining: What's at Stake

ETFO's experience at the bargaining table with the Ford government tells us that we must remain vigilant in our fight to protect public education and ETFO members' hard-bargained and hard-earned collective agreement entitlements.

This government is intent on defunding and privatizing public education in Ontario. The recent Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives report confirms that the education funding shortfall, adjusted for inflation, has now reached over \$6.4 billion. Further, this spring's *Auditor General of Ontario's Special Report on Special Education Needs* confirms what members have known to be true: that the provincial government has chronically underfunded special education and neglected the needs of students with disabilities.

Bargaining Preparations

Preparations for central and local bargaining began well before negotiations began. In spring 2025, ETFO worked with Strategic Communications (Stratcom) on a comprehensive survey to seek members' input into the Federation's bargaining goals for the 2026 round of negotiations. This input was used by the Collective Bargaining Standing Committee to develop bargaining goals, which were then reviewed by the ETFO Executive and approved by Representative Council. ETFO's 2026 bargaining goals are available at etfocb.ca.

Under the *School Boards Collective Bargaining Act* (SBCBA), the items that will be negotiated at ETFO central tables (i.e., the "scope" of central bargaining) must be negotiated and agreed upon by ETFO, the central employer bargaining agent, and the government. In alignment with ETFO's 2026 bargaining goals, two lists of items that would be presented by ETFO for discussion at its central tables were drafted: one list for the ETFO Teacher/Occasional Teacher (T/OT) Central Table and one list for the ETFO Education Worker (EW) Central Table.

ETFO Bylaw 10.1.3.1 mandates that these lists be approved by local presidents before being used at ETFO central tables.

ETFO's Constitution mandates the creation of Central Bargaining Advisory Councils (CBAC) comprised of Representative Council delegates. The two CBACS, an EW CBAC and a T/OT CBAC, were elected at the October 2026 Representative Council meeting.

Local Bargaining Preparations

For the 2026 round of bargaining, 87 collective agreements will be negotiated at the local level. Local bargaining takes place between ETFO locals/ bargaining units and individual school boards. Local bargaining teams are assisted during their preparations and negotiations by ETFO provincial Collective Bargaining Services liaisons.

ETFO's 2026 negotiation procedures require all ETFO locals and bargaining units to develop a preliminary submission, a set of proposals that the local/bargaining unit will present to the school board to negotiate. The preliminary submission must be reviewed and approved by members through a vote conducted by the local.

This year, many ETFO local collective bargaining committees and negotiation teams were busy reviewing local agreements to determine what improvements were necessary and developing preliminary submissions.

Notice to Bargain

On June 3, ETFO served notice to bargain on the government and the Council of Ontario Directors of Education (CODE). Previously, the employer bargaining agencies at the central tables that sit at ETFO's T/OT and EW central tables were the Ontario Public School Boards' Association and the Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association. In May 2026, the Ford government passed the *Putting Student Achievement First Act*, which replaced these employer agencies with the central employer bargaining agent, CODE.



Determining T/OT and EW Central Lists

ETFO negotiates two central agreements at two separate central tables:

- The central agreement for ETFO's EW members (i.e., designated early childhood educators, education support workers, and professional support workers) is negotiated at the EW Central Table.
- The central agreement for ETFO's T/OT members is negotiated at the T/OT Central Table.

The first step in the bargaining process is to determine the items for the central lists for each table. These are the items that will be bargained provincially and will form the central terms, or "Part A" of all the local agreements. Under the SBCBA, all items that are not on the central list are available for local bargaining.

Collective Bargaining Conference

The 2026 Collective Bargaining Conference was held on April 8 with a theme of "Building Union Power: Mobilizing for 2026." Approximately 300 participants attended from locals across the province. The conference provided participants with focused training and support on building skills to enable success in the upcoming round of bargaining.

The keynote was delivered by Marcia Howard, teacher chapter president of the Minneapolis Federation of Educators, whose speech, entitled *It's the Same Fight*, highlighted attacks on public education on both sides of the border and how her union's successes could be replicated here in Ontario.

Local leaders learned about the Ontario Human Rights Commission's report *Dreams Delayed: Addressing Anti-Black Racism in Education*, and planned how they could leverage its recommendations at local bargaining tables.

Local presidents, chief negotiators, and up to two additional members of their local collective bargaining committee were invited to attend the conference.

Facing Management – It's Everyone's Collective Agreement

This one-day, beginner-level workshop was held on November 1 at the ETFO office.

Participants were provided an opportunity to examine roles, rights, and effective communication in the union/management relationship, discuss best practices, explore strategies for conflict resolution, and learn to address issues confidently and in a professional manner.

Women's Collective Bargaining Issues Conference (WP) – Level 1 and Level 2



In November, participants attended the Women's Collective Bargaining Issues Conference, Level 1, an entry-level training session that enabled women members to learn and develop skills to become involved in the local bargaining process.

Members heard from keynote speaker MaryAnne Laurico, staff regional representative from the Public Service Alliance of Canada, engaged in collective agreement comparison activities, discussed collective bargaining issues facing women today, and received an overview of ETFO's collective bargaining process.

In March, members were given the opportunity to participate in Women's Collective Bargaining Issues Level 2. Participants expanded their knowledge of the collective bargaining and negotiation processes while developing personal skills to bring to leadership roles in their locals. Attendees learned from a panel of local leaders and engaged in an analysis of women's issues in bargaining and an intensive bargaining role-play.

Introduction to Collective Bargaining

At the Introduction to Collective Bargaining program on January 17, participants were given an overview of ETFO bargaining history to put the current bargaining process in context. They learned about the structure of the bargaining process, what happens at the bargaining table, and the importance of collective agreement enforcement.

Bargaining for Equity and Social Justice (WP)

This two-day conference is an entry-level program for women members who have been or would like to be engaged with their locals in some capacity, including as members of local collective bargaining committees, local standing committees, or as workplace stewards. In April, participants considered the concept of bargaining for equity and social justice, how it was applied in the most recent round of bargaining, and began conversations and planning for future rounds.

The conference included workshops and presenters that helped attendees develop a more complex and intersectional view of ETFO membership. Participants explored practical skills needed at the bargaining table and considered how collective agreements can better serve a diversity of needs and advance social justice.

Collective Bargaining Conference for Members of Designated Groups



This two-day, entry-level program ran for the first time in May. It is designed for members of designated groups who want to develop their knowledge about the collective bargaining process and better understand the need for ongoing enforcement and improvement of their collective agreement. The conference provides a learning opportunity and environment that encourages participants to become more active in local collective bargaining and to explore the leadership roles available to them at their work sites or in their locals.

To Grieve or Not to Grieve, that is the Question: Assessing Member Discipline

In this Virtual Academy workshop, the process of grieving discipline was discussed. Participants explored the steps that are needed to assess the grievance, how to ensure members are informed and engaged in the process, and reviewed arbitration decisions on various types of issues, including

human rights violations. Participation was open to presidents, chief negotiators, grievance officers, and released local leaders.

Preparing for Bargaining – Local Gap Analysis

This Virtual Academy workshop outlined the gap analysis process used to review a local collective agreement in preparation for the next round of bargaining. ETFO resources, along with other strategic suggestions to expand the depth and breadth of a local's gap analysis process, were discussed. Participation was open to presidents, chief negotiators, grievance officers, and released local leaders.

ETFO Pay Equity Strategy for Education Workers

In 2024, ETFO embarked on a strategy to address pay equity issues for its education worker members, including designated early childhood educators, education support personnel, professional support personnel, and other education worker members in 14 school boards and one school authority. The process is governed by the *Pay Equity Act* (PEA), enacted in 1987, which is based on the premise of equal pay for work of equal value. Under the PEA, employers are required to achieve and maintain pay equity for female-dominated bargaining units in their employ. The process to achieve pay equity is ongoing.

CB Communications

CB e-newsletters are emailed to approximately 81,000 members and posted on the ETFO Secure site at members.etfo.ca. They provide members with brief, timely updates on central bargaining.

ETFO's CB website (etfocb.ca) was refreshed and relaunched to promote ETFO's smaller classes, BIG DIFFERENCE campaign prior to the start of the 2025-26 school year. New content includes frequently asked questions, testimonials, and resources related to the campaign. The site remains a one-stop hub where members can access links to bargaining information, central agreements, social media shareables, education, and bargaining-related news, as well as ETFO's bargaining-related media releases.

CB staff moderate a members-only Facebook group for collective bargaining with over 10,000 members. The group provides members with an opportunity for open dialogue on central bargaining issues.



Collective Bargaining Action Plan

In preparation for the 2026 round of bargaining, Collective Bargaining and Communications and Political Action staff developed and launched a collective bargaining action plan that includes member mobilization efforts, a legislative petition, member and parent/community postcards, steward-plus-one meetings, and all-member information meetings. An overview of these efforts is included in the “Standing Up for Public Education” section of this report.

PROFESSIONAL RELATIONS SERVICES (PRS)

PRS Advice

PRS staff provide advice to members, stewards, and local leaders on a wide variety of workplace issues and members’ rights and responsibilities. This includes conflict resolution, ethics, medical accommodation, sick leave, return-to-work issues, human rights, performance appraisals, mitigating workplace violence, Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) claims, long-term disability (LTD) claims, and various types of investigations.

Confidential On-Call System

The ETFO PRS service area offers a confidential on-call system to allow both members and local leaders to directly connect with PRS on a daily basis. PRS staff strive to ensure that all calls received during the business day are returned on the same day. Calls received after hours are routed to a general mailbox, and efforts are made to return them within 24 hours. ETFO also has an emergency after-hours legal assistance system that responds only to critical calls.

A voice mail message provides the necessary instructions to the caller. As additional support, locals can provide new ETFO members with a wallet-sized legal assistance card that explains the steps to take if they are contacted by the Children’s Aid Society (CAS) or the police regarding an allegation. Members report that this card is a handy tool to use in an emergency.

Allegations, Investigations and Complaints

The union is often the primary line of defence for members facing an investigation. Even allegations that appear to be frivolous or entirely false can result in CAS and/or criminal investigations. Many allegations can also result in discipline by the employer and/or complaints to the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) or College of Early Childhood Educators (CECE). In accordance with ETFO policy guidelines, members may have access to legal counsel through PRS at the provincial office when facing allegations and complaints that are directly related to their employment responsibilities. PRS staff continue to advise and support members facing allegations of inappropriate conduct, which are reported to CAS and/or police.

Ontario College of Teachers/College of Early Childhood Educators

While the OCT and CECE act as professional regulators, ETFO PRS staff act as advocates for teachers and designated early childhood educators (DECE), ensuring fair defence and supporting professional rights in OCT/CECE investigations related to professional misconduct, competence, and/or capacity. PRS staff sit on a variety of Ontario Teachers’ Federation affiliate committees to monitor and discuss the OCT’s activities. PRS staff also regularly observe the council meetings of both regulators.

Although OCT and CECE complaints against ETFO members continue to increase in volume and complexity (particularly in the areas of social media use and human rights), PRS staff remain responsive and informed on trending issues, offering advice and support to members dealing with complaints.

PRS Matters Bulletins

Through PRS Matters bulletins, PRS staff provide advice about legislative changes and legal and professional issues. Copies of new bulletins are mailed to workplace stewards and can be accessed by members online at etfo.ca. This year, PRS staff created two new bulletins to address changes in public education:

- **Police Record Checks and Criminal Disclosure: What Members Need to Know** - Recent legislative and regulatory changes have expanded police record checks and self-reporting requirements for educators. This PRS Matters bulletin outlines when vulnerable sector checks are required, applicable timelines and renewal cycles, and members' obligations to disclose criminal charges, convictions, and related bail conditions to school boards and professional regulators. It also highlights potential employment and certification implications and encourages members to seek PRS support when navigating these matters. A supplementary Reg. 521 FAQ for local leaders was also created to accompany this bulletin.
- **Freedom of Information Requests: What You Need to Know** - The freedom of information (FOI) process is a part of the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* and was designed to make sure that all requests for information access are treated fairly and objectively. This PRS Matters bulletin provides ETFO members with information related to the role of a teacher/DECE when asked to provide their records as part of an FOI request through their district school board.

Staff also revised the following PRS Matters bulletins this year to reflect the most current information available:

- **Allegations Involving Children's Aid Society, Police, OCT, or CECE** - What to do if it Happens
- **Allegations of Sexual Misconduct** - Special Edition
- **EQAO Testing** - Advice to Members
- **Requests For Medical Information** - Advice for Members
- **Managing Current Events and Sensitive Issues: Tips for Members**
- **DECE Performance Appraisal Learning Plans and Continuous Professional Learning**

Member Guides

The following member guides, created and updated by PRS staff, are accessible on the ETFO website:

- *Guide to Pregnancy and Parental Leave*
- *A Member's Guide to Employment Insurance*
- *A Member's Guide to WSIB*
- *A Member's Guide to LTD*
- *You're Not Alone: Mental Health in Pregnancy and Postpartum*

PRS also offers a quick-reference guide for local leaders with information about the leaves and benefits available to members through the *Employment Standards Act* (ESA) and Employment Insurance (EI). This year, PRS updated this guide and added a companion reference checklist for locals to use to explore how their local collective agreements support or supplement these ESA and EI entitlements.

PRS Town Hall

In February, the PRS service area created an opportunity for leaders of designated early childhood educator locals to connect with the provincial office through a town hall meeting. Local leaders were able to ask questions and discuss issues with PRS staff and their colleagues on a wide range of relevant topics of their choice.

Virtual Academy

The following PRS webinars were offered to local leaders this year:

Supporting Trans and Gender Non-Conforming Members

This virtual workshop was hosted in March. Information was shared to help participants:

- understand competing human rights
- develop and use proactive and reactive strategies for support and advocacy within the local, at both system and individual levels, with the board and at the bargaining table

Participants were also provided with a resource package and information about 2SLGBTQ+ workshops offered by Equity and Women's Services.

Conflict Resolution

This virtual workshop was held in December. Information was shared to help local leaders who may find themselves in the position of having to mediate a conflict between two members. PRS staff shared tips, best practices, and resources to foster a supportive mediated conversation.

Investigations

At this virtual workshop in November, information was shared to help local leaders:

- understand when to refer members directly to ETFO for representation
- understand the principles of discipline and fair process in investigations
- prepare a member to respond to allegations presented in board investigations
- present mitigating factors when representing a member
- prepare a member identified as a witness in board investigations

A list of resources was provided to support members participating in investigations.

PRS Workshops & Presentations

PRS staff responded to requests from local leaders, members, and faculties of education for presentations/workshops to address professional issues, including supporting stewards, teacher performance appraisal, pregnancy and parental leaves, professional boundaries, and retirement. They also offered leadership development workshops at Fall Leadership and New Presidents Training.

This year, the PRS service area added the opportunity to request a virtual format for Pregnancy and Parental Leave workshops and Teacher Performance Appraisal workshops. This virtual option was well-received, with an equal divide between requests for in-person delivery and online delivery formats. PRS staff will continue to offer locals the option to host these workshops virtually for the 2026-27 school year.

Several new PRS presentations were delivered at ETFO's 2025 Leadership Conference, which offered training for local presidents and committee chairs looking to broaden their knowledge and advance their leadership abilities:

Dealing with Human Rights at Local Events: A Review

This presentation was designed to provide a review of the union's legal responsibilities when managing member complaints about human rights issues at local events. Going forward, these legal obligations will be reviewed annually with local leaders.

Supporting Members in Crisis

Local leaders providing support to members can find themselves out of their depth when there are mental health concerns or a crisis emerges. This training offered an introduction to managing these situations and recognizing when outside help is needed.

Human Rights Officer Training

This workshop was specifically designed to assist local representatives in the role of human rights officers. Human rights violations, harassment, discrimination, conflict, and strategies to support members were topics on the agenda.

Logistics for Locals

This workshop covered the following topics: how to run an efficient meeting, how to set an agenda, how to maintain decorum, and record keeping and note-taking.

Annual Conferences and Programs

The focus of PRS conferences is to help prevent professional issues before they arise by educating members on their rights and responsibilities. Conferences also address recent changes to legislation and other issues affecting the profession. The following programs/conferences were offered this year:

- **An Ounce of Prevention: Kindergarten Conference** is designed to meet the needs of teachers and DECEs working in Kindergarten. At this year's event, members re-ignited their passion in early years education, learned more about the extended day program, reflected on the transformational impact of Full-Day Kindergarten, deepened their understanding of developmentally appropriate practice through an equity lens, explored how coding and maker space pedagogy can be authentically integrated into Kindergarten play and inquiry, examined how play-based learning environments can help nurture oral language, and gained insight into rights and responsibilities associated with the Kindergarten program. This year, all workshops were facilitated by DECE members.

- **An Ounce of Prevention: Provincial Conference** is open to the general membership and focused on helping members navigate conflict, build positive professional relationships, and apply practical communication strategies. Through a keynote and workshops led by professional relations and legal experts, sessions addressed issues such as workplace conflict, harassment and discrimination, free speech, and parent-educator relationships.
- **Beyond the Basics Conference (WP)** is a four-day Women's Program conference held in two sessions (December 2025 and March 2026) that provided aspiring leaders who identify as women with the opportunity to build networks, challenge barriers, and develop leadership skills in the area of professional relationships, including legal rights and responsibilities. Participants engaged in activities focused on best practices in medical accommodation, member mediation/conflict resolution, investigations, and managing day-to-day activities in local ETFO offices through a trauma-informed lens.
- **Planning and Programming** is designed to help teachers experiencing difficulties in planning and instruction. This course is held twice a year, and registration is by referral only.
- **Professional Boundaries** is a course for members who need training on professional conduct and boundaries to help them understand their responsibilities. Registration for this course is by referral only.
- **Women's Health Conference: Wellness in the Classroom and Beyond (WP)** provides members with dedicated time to focus on well-being, safety, and advocacy. Participants engage in sessions exploring workplace safety, emerging research on medical gaslighting, and reflective practices for working in a care-focused role. The conference centres wellness as both a personal and collective responsibility, offering research-informed insights and practical strategies to support sustainable, healthy work lives.
- **Understanding Human Rights Investigations for Local Leaders** is a one-day program for released local leaders and is held at the ETFO provincial office. It provides training for local released leaders who directly support members involved in human rights investigations. This year's program included workshops focused on trauma-informed representation and externally referred, board-level, human rights investigations.

Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB)

PRS staff offered the following WSIB presentations:

- Beyond the Basics Conference: WSIB Claims for Workplace Mental Health Injuries (December 2025 & March 2026)
- Health & Safety Conference: WSIB & Mental Stress Claims (March 2026)

Long-Term Disability (LTD)

ETFO's LTD plan remains in a very good position. This year the contribution rate was reduced by 10 per cent, effective January 1, 2026, with no changes to the LTD benefit, which is great news for members eligible to participate in the plan.

ETFO continues to assist members with their LTD claims. ETFO staff and legal counsel determine whether the claim meets ETFO's case selection criteria and if legal support can be offered to the member to advance their claim against the insurer.

Perinatal Mental Health PRS Working Group

PRS staff organized a working group comprised of members who have been diagnosed with a mental health condition related to pregnancy. The purpose of this working group was to provide these members with an opportunity to share their personal experiences. Flowing out of these experiences, and with the guidance of a clinical psychiatrist who specializes in this area, PRS staff developed a new brochure, *You're Not Alone: Mental Health in Pregnancy and Postpartum*. This brochure is designed to support and inform members on the topic of Perinatal Mood and Anxiety Disorders (PMAD). The resource provides clear information about PMAD, outlines symptoms and risk factors, addresses common misconceptions, and highlights the importance of early intervention. It also includes guidance on accessing appropriate care, as well as considerations for colleagues and how the union can support members returning from pregnancy or parental leave. Based on clinical evidence and informed by member experiences, this brochure strengthens ETFO's efforts to enhance awareness and provide practical, reliable support for members experiencing PMAD. ■



FEATURE

THE AUDITORS IN THE STACKS

Karen Devonish-Mazzotta and Leanna Bornstein write about teaching their students to look for characters and stories that represent their school community.

ETFO *Voice* keeps members updated on professional and political issues through its quarterly print publication and online at etfovoice.ca.

Following the 2025 Annual Meeting budget motion that significantly reduced the budget for ETFO *Voice*, and in accordance with the Executive's direction, the 2025-26 publication year served as a transitional period for research and reflection. ETFO published two print and digital issues of *Voice* magazine (Fall 2025 and Spring 2026) as well as two digital-only issues (Winter 2025 and Summer 2026). This hybrid model allowed for a controlled comparison of member engagement while a comprehensive review was conducted. The review consisted of a member-wide survey and facilitated focus groups designed to understand how members receive, read, and value *Voice*.



Fall Issue Highlights:

- Annual Meeting round-up
- Impact of large classes on student learning
- Thinking critically about artificial intelligence
- Rewriting the story of special education
- Reflecting on 15 years of DECE integration in public schools



Spring Issue Highlights:

- Combatting anti-Black racism
- Teaching students about food security and food justice
- Supporting multilingual learners in French immersion
- The critical work of education support personnel
- Ensuring books in school libraries reflect the students they serve



Winter Issue Highlights:

- Climate justice issue
- Artificial intelligence, sustainability, and regenerative futures
- Design thinking for a sustainable future community
- Using the LENSE tool to meet sustainability goals
- Outdoor education and connection to the Earth



Summer Issue Highlights:

- Annual women's issue
- Reflecting on Women in Action
- Girls who game
- Cultivating Black women's leadership
- Body image
- Creating a menopause-friendly workplace



Building Better Schools

buildingbetterschools.ca

ETFO's public awareness platform, with resources and information to help Ontarians advocate for improvements to our education system and schools.

Collective Bargaining

etfocb.ca

The official website of ETFO's collective bargaining efforts.

ETFO-AQ

etfo-aq.ca

ETFO's site for Additional Qualifications courses developed and delivered by teachers for teachers.

ETFO Events

events.etfo.org

Check the online calendar and register for ETFO events, presented by service areas throughout the year.

First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Education

etfofnmi.ca

This website includes a compiled list of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit (FNMI) resources developed by ETFO, teacher union affiliates, and others in the education sector.

Health and Safety

etfohealthandsafety.ca

Visit for information about issues affecting member wellness, including how to prevent or deal with hazards in the school community, violent incidents, and initiatives to make health and safety a priority in school boards.

Members Sharing in Assessment

etfoassessment.ca

A website to help members enhance their understanding of assessment and learn new strategies and approaches.

Professional Learning in the Early Years

etfopley.ca

Supporting educators in learning more about teaching in the early years, with videos, facilitator guides, photo galleries, and early years classroom tours.

shopETFO

shop.etfo.ca

ETFO's online store, offering classroom and professional learning resources, branded clothing, and other fun items.

The Heart and Art of Teaching and Learning

heartandart.ca

Interactive blog for beginning teachers written by fellow educators, focused on relevant topics for those new to the profession.

Voice

etfovoice.ca

The official website of ETFO's *Voice* magazine, containing current and back issues.



ETFO 2025-2026 Member Survey: WHO WE ARE

ETFO's annual member survey helps inform decisions about programs and activities and predict future member needs. This year, we received responses from 16 per cent of members who were sent the survey.

Membership Population*

Member Type	2016 2017	2017 2018	2018 2019	2019 2020	2020 2021	2021 2022	2022 2023	2023 2024	2024 2025	2025 2026
Teachers	57,604	58,839	59,931	58,367	58,107	56,730	57,565	59,639	59,233	59,380
Occasional Teachers (OT)	20,958	24,121	25,621	25,178	28,532	27,294	27,702	27,137	27,156	27,693
ESP/PSP/DECE/ALI**	2,990	3,114	3,229	3,337	3,840	4,124	4,089	4,432	4,254	4,065
Total	81,552	86,074	88,781	86,882	90,479	88,148	89,356	91,208	90,643	91,138

*These numbers reflect a headcount; some members may have multiple membership types.

**ESP – education support personnel; PSP – professional support personnel; DECE – designated early childhood educator; ALI – adult literacy instructor.

Membership

Overall membership increased slightly from the prior year, with a small decrease in the total number of ESP/PSP/DECE/ALI members.

Gender

The percentage of ETFO members who are women has increased to just over 85 per cent after remaining at 80 to 82 per cent for the previous 18 years. This year, 0.27 per cent of the membership who responded to the survey identified their gender as “other.”

Age

Teacher Members:

- Just over 73 per cent of teacher members are aged 35 to 54 while slightly over 10 per cent are aged 34 and under.
- The number of teachers aged 45 to 54 has remained relatively stable at almost 44 per cent.
- The 55 to 64 age group has remained stable for the last few years at slightly more than 15 per cent.

OT Members:

- Slightly more than 26 per cent of OT members are aged 55 to 64, while just above 29 per cent are 34 or younger.
- The 45 to 54 age group is slightly lower this year at just under 13 per cent.

- There was an increase of those aged 55 to 64 to slightly more than 26 per cent this year, up from almost 24 per cent the previous year.
- The percentage of OT members 65 or older increased this year to approximately 12 per cent.
- Almost 51 per cent of OT members are now over 45.

DECE Members:

- Ten per cent are under the age of 34, while 51 per cent are over 45.

ESP/PSP/ALI members:

- Sixty-two per cent of these members are between the ages of 35 and 54.

Grades Taught

- About 25 per cent of all ETFO members reported that they taught a combined grade.
- Less than one percent of ETFO members reported that they taught a triple combined grade.
- Of those members who stated they taught Kindergarten, about 96 per cent were women.
- Male members represented almost 35 per cent of those who stated they taught Grade 8.

Part-Time Work

- Approximately four per cent of teacher members work part time. Of these, 93 per cent are women.

Qualifications

Members with a BA, B.Sc.74.55%
 Members with a B.Ed82.05%
 Members with a master’s degree18.07%

Members with one specialist certificate29.84%
 Members with two specialist certificates17.58%
 Members with no specialist certificate.....45.36%

Qualifications Evaluation Council of Ontario
 Members with a rating of A4.....77.20%
 Members with an A3 rating11.38%

- Almost two per cent of teacher members report being either First Nations, Métis, or Inuit. This compares to slightly over one per cent for OT members, almost two per cent for DECE members, and nearly eight per cent of ESP/PSP/ALI members.

Teacher Members – Years of experience

Years of Experience	2002-2003	2025-2026
Less than 1 year	2%	0.5%
1-4	19%	6.1 %
5-10	19%	15%
11-15	18%	18%
16-20	12%	20.4%
21-25	11%	24%
26-30	11%	13.7%
31+	5%	2.2%

Slightly less than seven per cent of teacher members have fewer than five years of experience, nearly 22 per cent have fewer than 11 years of experience, and approximately two per cent have more than 31 years of experience.

OT Members – Years of Experience

Years of Experience	2003-2004	2025-2026
Less than 1 year	10%	16.7%
1-4	20%	21%
5-10	10%	14.3%
11-15	6%	7.5%
16-20	4%	6.7%
21-25	4%	6.4%
26-30	7%	7.7%
31+	30%	19.7%

Almost 38 per cent of OT members have fewer than 5 years of experience, just over half have under 11 years of experience and nearly 20 per cent have 31 or more years of experience.

- The percentage of teacher members and OT members who report being a person with a disability is slightly over five per cent. That compares to almost three per cent for DECE members and 4.55 per cent for ESP/PSP/ALI members.

DECE Members – Years of experience

Years of Experience	2014-2015	2025-2026
Less than 1 year	0.6%	3%
1-4	91.0%	12.5%
5-10	4.4%	17%
11-15	1.9%	41.4%
16-20	0.9%	12.3%
21-25	0.5%	5.9%
26-30	0.3%	4.1%
30+	0.2%	3.8%

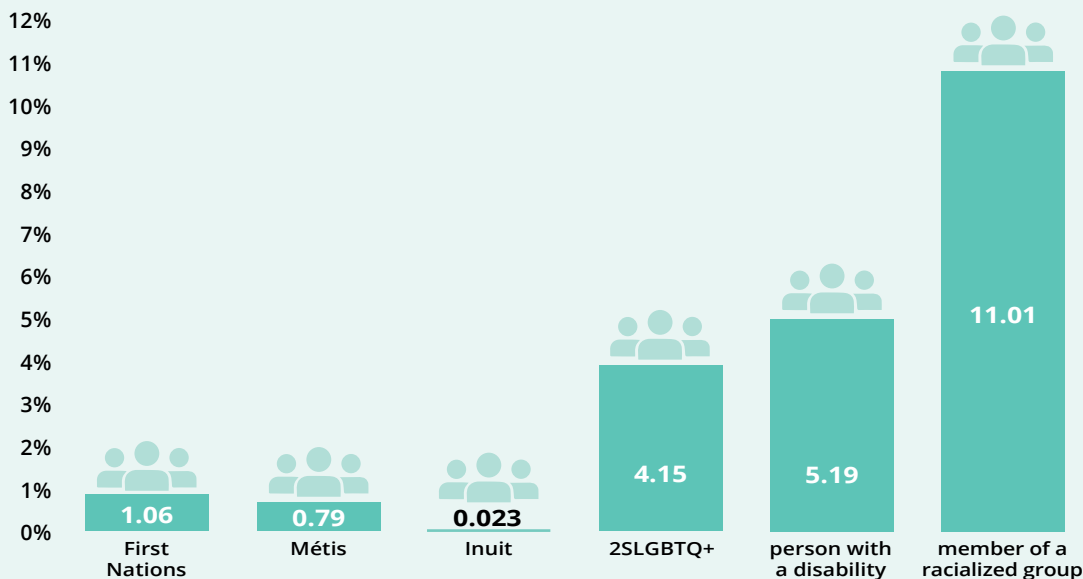
Approximately 33 per cent of DECE members have fewer than 11 years of experience.

ESP/PSP/ALI Members – Years of experience

Years of Experience	2003-2004	2025-2026
Less than 1 year	1%	5.7%
1-4	17%	21.6%
5-10	24%	18.2%
11-15	24%	9%
16-20	17%	9%
21-25	3%	19.3%
26-30	1%	12.5%
30+	0%	4.5%

Approximately 27 per cent of ESP/PSP/ALI members have fewer than five years of experience and almost five per cent have more than 31 years of experience.

All Members

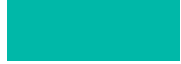


- Approximately 3.5 per cent of teacher members identify as two-spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, or questioning (2SLGBTQ+). Male teachers represent about 28 per cent of teacher members who self-identified as 2SLGBTQ+.
- Nearly 11 per cent of teacher members identify as belonging to a racialized group, as do just over 12 per cent of OT members, approximately eight per cent of DECE members, and slightly over one per cent of ESP/PSP/ALI members.

Activities Outside TEACHING



Like other professionals, ETFO members have responsibilities and pursue activities that are outside of their profession:

	67.5%	Teacher members with at least one dependent child
	35%	OT members with at least one dependent child
	66%	DECE members with at least one dependent child
	61%	ESP/PSP/ALI members with at least one dependent child
	22%	Teacher members caring for a parent or other dependent adult
	19%	OT members caring for a parent or other dependent adult
	20%	DECE members caring for a parent or other dependent adult
	22.72%	ESP/PSP/ALI members caring for a parent or other dependent adult
	51%	Teacher members active in their community
	64%	Most common activity: volunteer work
	53%	OT members active in their community
	72%	Most common activity: volunteer work
	60%	ESP/PSP/ALI members active in their community
	58%	Most common activity: volunteer work
	43%	DECE members active in their community
	70%	Most common activity: volunteer work

2025-2026 ETFO Local Presidents



Algoma

Occasional Teacher Local	Ryan Geick
Teacher Local	Shelly Predum

Avon Maitland

Occasional Teacher Local	Kim Finlayson
Teacher Local	Laura Inglis-Eickmeier

Bluewater

Occasional Teacher Local	Andrew Chittka
Teacher Local	Julie Stanley

Durham

DECE Local	Rayna Barrese
Catholic DECE Local	Kelly Mulville
Occasional Teacher Local	George Taylor
Teacher Local	Pamela Downward

Grand Erie

DECE Local	Stephanie Scott
Occasional Teacher Local	Amanda Gagnon
Teacher Local	Carolyn Proulx-Wootton

Greater Essex County

Occasional Teacher Local	Heather Latam
Teacher Local	Mario Spagnuolo

Halton

DECE Local	Amy Korzack
Occasional Teacher Local	Teri Caldwell-McCann
Teacher Local	Lisa Klimkowski

Hamilton-Wentworth

DECE Local	Tamara DuFour
Occasional Teacher Local	Barry Naidoo
Teacher Local	Cindy Gangaram

Hastings-Prince Edward

Occasional Teacher Local	Adrian Hogendoorn
Teacher Local	Jason Surgent

James Bay

Teacher Local	Liz Tomatuk
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Kawartha Pine Ridge

Occasional Teacher Local	Jennifer Deck
Teacher Local	David Berger

Keewatin-Patricia

Occasional Teacher Local	Paul Fregeau
Teacher Local	Kimberley Douglas

Lakehead

Occasional Teacher Local	Leah Nix
Teacher Local	Dave Paddington

Lambton Kent

Occasional Teacher Local	Karen Churcher
Teacher Local	Tracie Booth

Limestone

Occasional Teacher Local	Ken Gee
Teacher Local	Stephane Charron

Near North

Occasional Teacher Local	Margaret Soroye
Teacher Local	Rob Hammond

Niagara

Occasional Teacher Local	Mark Carter
Teacher Local	Brian Barker

2025-2026

ETFO Local Presidents continued



Ontario North East

Occasional Teacher Local	Tamara Shortt
Teacher Local	Lori Ridley

Ottawa-Carleton

Occasional Teacher Local	Jamieson Dyer
Teacher Local	Stephen Skoutajan

Peel

Occasional Teacher Local	Aloysius Okafor
Teacher Local	Nadia Goode

Rainbow

DECE Local	Gina McAfee
Occasional Teacher Local	Stacy Sullivan
Teacher Local	Liana Holm

Rainy River

ESP Local	Maureen Hayward
Occasional Teacher Local	Carla Lampi
Teacher Local	Nancy Mapledoram-Councillor

Renfrew County

ESP Local	Colleen Mackin
Occasional Teacher Local	K Elaine Neigel
PSP Local	Glen Mulvihill
Teacher Local	Kelly Melanson

Simcoe County

DECE Local	Amanda Judd
Occasional Teacher Local	Monique Weiss
Teacher Local	Donnie Mills

Superior-Greenstone

Occasional Teacher Local	David Passi
Teacher Local	Keith Hedlund

Thames Valley

Occasional Teacher Local	Terry Card
Teacher Local	Mike Thomas

Toronto

Catholic DECE Local	Diego Olmedo
Occasional Teacher Local	Marisa Gallippi
Teacher Local	Helen Victoros

Trillium Lakelands

DECE Local	Tina Matthews
Occasional Teacher Local	Lara Waterhouse
Teacher Local	Kellie Kirkpatrick

Upper Canada

Occasional Teacher Local	Sylvia van Campen
Teacher Local	Claire Church

Upper Grand

Occasional Teacher Local	Nkese Charles-Campbell
Teacher Local	Krista Pedersen

Waterloo Region

DECE Local	Jenn Wallage
Occasional Teacher Local	Nathan Core
Teacher Local	Joshua Dickson

York Region

Occasional Teacher Local	Nadia Ciacchi
Teacher Local	Jennifer Smalley Higgs



2026 ETFO Award Recipients



Anti-Bias Award

Stephanie Sadownik
York Region Occasional Teacher Local

Anti-Poverty Award

Yalda Schwartz
Elementary Teachers of Toronto Local

Anti-Racist and Equity Activism Award

Natasha Carter
Durham Teacher Local

Josh Hails
Simcoe County Teacher Local

Anti-Racist and Equity Activism Award – Women’s Program (WP)

Jessica Bloomfield
Durham Teacher Local

Devinder Panesar
Durham DECE Local

Arts and Culture Award

Kathleen Moll
Elementary Teachers of Toronto Local

Children’s Literature Award

Tamla Young
Elementary Teachers of Toronto Local

Environmental Education Award

Sheila Ducheck
York Region Teacher Local

Local Humanitarian Award for a Non-ETFO Member

Andrea Vasquez-Jimenez

Honorary Life Membership Award

Karen Brown
Past ETFO President

Erin Blair
Upper Canada Teacher Local

Mary Karchemny
Waterloo Region Occasional Teacher Local

Member Service and Engagement Award

Niagara Teacher Local
Trillium Lakelands Occasional Teacher Local

New Member Award

Alexandra Trinier
Greater Essex County Occasional Teacher Local

Professional Learning and Curriculum Development Award

Patrick Johnson
Simcoe County Teacher Local

Professional Learning and Curriculum Development Award – WP

Michelle Vidad
Peel Teacher Local

Women Who Develop Special Projects in Science and Technology Award – WP

Nicole Netherway
Niagara Teacher Local

Writer’s Award

Anika Guthrie
Lakehead Teacher Local

Writer’s Award – WP

Audrey Littlejohn
Peel Teacher Local

2026 ETFO Bursaries and Scholarships



Bachelor of Education Bursaries for Children of ETFO Members

Bryn Feldmann
Elementary Teachers of Toronto Local

Andrew Jackson
Waterloo Region Teacher Local

Lubna Abdallah
Thames Valley Occasional Teacher Local

Rebekkah Higgs
Thames Valley Teacher Local

Muhammad Uthman Nana
York Region Teacher Local

Macy Clements
Grand Erie Teacher Local

Madeleine Asselin
Durham DECE Local

Samuel Hartmans
Upper Grand Teacher Local

Emma-Kate Jessop
Kawartha Pine Ridge Teacher Local

Carly Huynh
Waterloo Region Teacher Local

Amelia Cook
Hastings-Prince Edward Teacher Local

Black Educator Bursary

Kyle Powell

Black Educator Bursary – Women’s Program

Christie Charles

Bursaries for Members of Designated Groups

Daren Tyrrell
Ellie Zapata Acosta
Ryan Kwan
Sepanta Karimian

Bursaries for Members of Designated Groups – Women’s Program

Nicole Legault
Andrea Kenny
Alexandra Suomela
Correna McCormick
Harleen Kalkat
Lise Levac
Daniel Bastiaan
Eleni Mitropoulos

Doctoral Scholarship

Kai Butterfield
Toronto Occasional Teacher Local

Doctoral Scholarship – Women’s Program

Allison Ramdial Ebanks
Durham Teacher Local

ETFO Member Bursaries

Vasha Shokeen
Upper Canada Occasional Teacher Local

Divya Gungadin
York Region Teacher Local

Brooke VandenHeuvel
Hamilton-Wentworth DECE Local

Amy Kolpak Walsh
York Region Teacher Local

Abby Vanderkum
Trillium Lakelands DECE Local

Cherine Kazoun
Greater Essex County Occasional
Teacher Local

Sandra Fenuta-Simone
Toronto Catholic DECE Local

First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Professional Learning Bursaries

Katherine KanTERS
Toronto Occasional Teacher Local

Alyssa Brunone
Lambton Kent Occasional Teacher Local

First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Women in Education Bursaries – Women’s Program

Justine Head
Ella Richard
Reagan Recollet
Helen Baillie

First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Women’s Scholarships – Women’s Program

Sophia Byers
Victoria Houle
Simcoe County Teacher Local

Learning and Leadership Bursary – Women’s Program

Jenn Wallage
Waterloo Region DECE Local

Master’s Scholarships

Kristi Black
York Region Teacher Local

Erin Little
Ontario North East Teacher Local

Susan Michaud
Simcoe County Teacher Local

Katherine Weber
Peel Teacher Local

Master’s Scholarships – Women’s Program

Kylene Higgins
Simcoe County Teacher Local

Asha Nagpal
Peel Teacher Local

Jennifer Vording
Waterloo Region Teacher Local

Amanda Mathias
Near North Teacher Local

Faculty of Education Awards

Juanita Ayerbe Lozano
Brock University

Irena Wilson
University of Windsor

Zehra Mirza
York University

Jenna MacLeod
University of Western Ontario

Mikaily Chute
Brock University – Hamilton

Shannon Brown
Lakehead University

Mayada Jamous
Queen’s University

Laydon Bursey
Laurentian University



2025-2026 Standing Committees



Annual Meeting

Julia Allen	Peel Teacher Local
Olive Creary-Satchell	Toronto Occasional Teacher Local
Valrie Estridge	Durham DECE Local
Tyler Hughes	Kawartha Pine Ridge Occasional Teacher Local
Susan Ritchie	Algoma Occasional Teacher Local

Anti-Poverty

Christina Brassett	Greater Essex County Occasional Teacher Local
Steve Dell	Durham Teacher Local
Becky Laverance	Upper Canada Teacher Local
Sherry Pashko	Niagara Teacher Local
Teresa Weselake	Renfrew County Teacher Local

Anti-Racist Education

Shayna Brissett-Foster	Hamilton-Wentworth Occasional Teacher Local
Rukiya Mohamed	Elementary Teachers of Toronto Local
Cheryl Woolnough	Peel Teacher Local
Juliet Young	Durham Teacher Local

Arts

Geoff Core	Lambton Kent Teacher Local
Adrienne Deveau-Wachner	Hastings-Prince Edward Teacher Local
Barbara Dolanjski	Hamilton-Wentworth Teacher Local
Norlynda Owen	Upper Canada Teacher Local
Amy Whalen	Upper Canada Teacher Local

Awards

Mitzy Alarcon	Peel Teacher Local
Amanda Baker	Halton DECE Local
Jagvir Gehlaut	York Region Teacher Local
Tracey Mailloux	Limestone Teacher Local
Kristie Stanzel	Waterloo Region Teacher Local

Collective Bargaining

Brian Barker	Niagara Teacher Local
Claire Church	Upper Canada Teacher Local
Jamieson Dyer	Ottawa-Carleton Occasional Teacher Local
Amanda Judd	Simcoe County DECE Local
Dawn Lorbetskie	Renfrew County ESP Local

Disability and Accessibility Issues

Andrea Gerardi	Greater Essex County Teacher Local
Mike Jessop	Kawartha Pine Ridge Teacher Local
Marilena Murgan	York Region Teacher Local
Sarah-Jane Woods	Upper Canada Teacher Local
Ramesha Yogarajan	Peel Teacher Local

Early Years

Sierra Ainsley	Elementary Teachers of Toronto Local
Susan Dell	Waterloo Region DECE Local
Samia Javed	Hamilton-Wentworth DECE Local
Chinelo Nweke	Peel Teacher Local
Jolene Wilhelm	Lakehead Teacher Local

Education Support Personnel/Professional Support Personnel/Designated Early Childhood Educator

Michelle Brock	Hamilton-Wentworth DECE Local
Devinder Panesar	Durham DECE Local
Jennifer St. Denis	Renfrew County ESP Local
Leslie Stringer-Jenkins	Renfrew County PSP Local
Gillian Williams	Simcoe County DECE Local

English Language Programming for Multilingual Language Learners

Laurie Argent	Durham Teacher Local
Brittany Beneteau	Greater Essex County Teacher Local
Afarin Foroughymehr	York Region Teacher Local
Kimiko Shibata	Waterloo Region Teacher Local
Gian Whitcombe	Upper Grand Teacher Local

Environmental

Haley Higdon	Toronto Occasional Teacher Local
Manprit Rai	Peel Teacher Local
Jen Reid	Halton Teacher Local
Jacqueline Whelan	Ottawa-Carleton Teacher Local
Christina Wilson	Kawartha Pine Ridge Occasional Teacher Local

French as a Second Language

Kristine Gavrel-McKeague	Ottawa-Carleton Teacher Local
Asha Nagpal	Peel Teacher Local
Nicole Netherway	Niagara Teacher Local
Gabriella Szolnoki-Bourgeois	Halton Teacher Local
Amanda Walker	Kawartha Pine Ridge Teacher Local

Health and Physical Education

Jillian Janzen	Niagara Teacher Local
Lorrie Lombardi	Elementary Teachers of Toronto Local
Peter Luu	Peel Teacher Local
James McCallum	Ottawa-Carleton Teacher Local
Carl Oliver	York Region Teacher Local

Human Rights

Amelia Maharaj	Elementary Teachers of Toronto Local
Kristin Rahian	Waterloo Region Teacher Local
Tania Sanclemente	Elementary Teachers of Toronto Local
Shazia Sheikh	Peel Teacher Local
Sajah Stiller	Hamilton-Wentworth Teacher Local

Indigenous Education

Joseph Belleau	Algoma Teacher Local
Anika Guthrie	Lakehead Teacher Local
Amanda Mathias	Near North Teacher Local
Jamie McIntyre	Waterloo Region Teacher Local
Robert Rooksby	Halton Teacher Local

Intermediate Division

Margaret Chung	Limestone Teacher Local
Tamre Deru	Peel Teacher Local
Anik Mackey	Ottawa-Carleton Teacher Local
Jarod Parlee	Thames Valley Teacher Local
Pawan Wander	Elementary Teachers of Toronto Local

2025-2026 Standing Committees

continued

International Assistance

Lindsay Freedman	Peel Teacher Local
Monica Goodfellow	Simcoe County Teacher Local
Tracey Henkenhaf	Waterloo Region Teacher Local
William Mboe	Upper Grand Teacher Local
Barbara Moran	Elementary Teachers of Toronto Local
Ann Pharazyn	Lambton Kent Teacher Local

Labour

Sarmistha Kundu	Peel Teacher Local
Jennifer Mackenzie-Miller	Waterloo Region Teacher Local
Antionette Payne	Durham Teacher Local
Jessamyn Samson	Limestone Teacher Local

Library

Debra Besner	York Region Teacher Local
Andrea Ryan	Near North Teacher Local
Kimberlee Hall	Near North Teacher Local
Sarisha Moodley	Elementary Teachers of Toronto Local
Katie Tompkins	Simcoe County Teacher Local

Men's Focus

Jamie Aguilar	Elementary Teachers of Toronto Local
Andrew Myers	Keewatin-Patricia Teacher Local
Jordan Smith	Thames Valley Teacher Local
Cameron Steltman	Halton Teacher Local
Edward Stewart	Upper Canada Teacher Local

New Members

Shiam Abdelaal	Halton Teacher Local
Sara Alshoibi	Greater Essex County Teacher Local
Leah Dallaire	Thames Valley Teacher Local
Katrina Howes	Kawartha Pine Ridge Occasional Teacher Local
Nitya Patel	Upper Grand Occasional Teacher Local

Occasional Teacher

Shipra Das	Greater Essex County Occasional Teacher Local
Loreen Gale	Bluewater Occasional Teacher Local
Jacqueline Gray	Avon Maitland Occasional Teacher Local
Katt Kaufman	Grand Erie Occasional Teacher Local
Krisanne Nunes	Thames Valley Occasional Teacher

Occupational Health and Safety

Matthew Craig	Keewatin-Patricia Teacher Local
Lisa Marie Gonsalves	Peel Teacher Local
Dana Grant	Kawartha Pine Ridge Occasional Teacher Local
Robyn Horowitz	Rainbow Teacher Local
Shelly Predum	Algoma Teacher Local

Pension

Shawn Crow	Ottawa-Carleton Occasional Teacher Local
Melissa Ellis Van Kooy	Near North Teacher Local
Ellie Miron	York Region Teacher Local
Kait Rainey-Strathy	Limestone Teacher Local
Jennifer Stocovaz	Bluewater Teacher Local

Political Action

Emma Carnegie	Kawartha Pine Ridge Teacher Local
Nina Merritt	Lakehead Occasional Teacher Local
Felipe Pareja	Peel Teacher Local
Teresa Rothwell	Grand Erie Teacher Local
Sarah Whalen	Kawartha Pine Ridge Teacher Local

Professional Learning/Curriculum

Hoda Ahmed	Ottawa-Carleton Occasional Teacher Local
Kenisha Bynoe	Elementary Teachers of Toronto Local
Ayesatta Conteh	Elementary Teachers of Toronto Local
Colleen Elep	Peel Teacher Local
Kat Honeywell	Ottawa-Carleton Teacher Local

Professional Relations and Discipline

Andrew Chittka	Bluewater Occasional Teacher Local
Kimberley Douglas	Keewatin-Patricia Teacher Local
Julius Julius-Edghill	Elementary Teachers of Toronto Local
Erin Oxland	Kawartha Pine Ridge Teacher Local
Sangeetha Stephen	York Region Occasional Teacher Local

Special Education

Cristol Bailey	Rainy River Teacher Local
Sherri Conley	Rainbow Teacher Local
Kathryn Lagerquist	Peel Teacher Local
Alison Rumball	York Region Teacher Local
Emily Stapleton	York Region Teacher Local

Status of Women

Nancy Barros	Waterloo Region DECE Local
Kandise Hayes	Thames Valley Occasional Teacher Local
Rashmee Karnad-Jani	York Region Teacher Local
Rebecca St-James	Limestone Teacher Local

Teacher Education/Faculty Liaison

Stephane Charron	Limestone Teacher Local
Fadumo Deria	Ottawa-Carleton Occasional Teacher Local
Michael Frankfort	York Region Teacher Local
Roz Geridis	Elementary Teachers of Toronto Local
Skye Goulbourne	Near North Teacher Local
Sai Amrita Kaul	York Region Teacher Local
Michele Kleinschuck	Waterloo Region Occasional Teacher Local
Marnie Meloche	Thames Valley Teacher Local
Susan Michaud	Simcoe County Teacher Local
Dave Paddington	Lakehead Teacher Local
Emily Sturgeon	Kawartha Pine Ridge Teacher Local
Stacy Sullivan	Rainbow Occasional Teacher Local
Wes Vickers	Greater Essex County Teacher Local
Lianne Wyatt	Niagara Occasional Teacher Local

Two-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning, Plus (2SLGBTQ+) Members

Natasha Carter	Durham Teacher Local
Nathan King	Upper Grand Teacher Local
Joanne Noble	Lakehead Occasional Teacher Local
Shawna Rothgeb	Ottawa-Carleton Teacher Local
Vinh (David) Tran	Peel Teacher Local



as of June 30, 2026

Accounting Services

Andrea Francis
Sagar Goswami
Michael Humphries
Bewick Karkada
Geeta Mistry
Molly Ng
Arlene Padernilla
Kinjal Patel (.5)
Rosario Rodrigo
Priyanka Sawant
Nicole Thomson
Ping Xie

Administration Services

Jennifer Althouse
Sophie Costa
Hamna Hassan (.5)
Lorna Larmour
June Miller
Sharon O'Halloran
Kathy Pigeon
Salama Rajab
Mona Renzone (.5)
Jasmeen Sandhu
Sabrina Sawyer
Lauren Silver
Christina Smith-Thomas
Mandy Wojcik
Eva Wong

Collective Bargaining Services

Ahlam Abd-Al-Sttar
Heather Aggus
Gail Bannister-Clarke
Mark Butt
Cynthia Chorzepa
Jessica Cooper
Pam Dogra
Zoey Jones

Claudia Legiec
Michelle Leonard
Toby Molouba
Wilma Pereira (.5)
Todd Rimmington
Allison Ryan
Christina Shakir
Jamie Thom (.5)
Tui-Sem Won

Communications and Political Action Services

Aida Azarakhsh
Yatri Bhatt
Federico Carvajal
Dory Cerny
Michelle Goddard
Denise Hammond
Bill Hewitt (secondment)
Rachel Lee
Nyomee Noel
Carla Pereira
Meagan Perry
Inessa Petersen
Shirley Radebach
James Taylor
Izida Zorde

Equity and Women's Services

Carol Aldover
Punita Bhardwaj
Mandisa Bromfield (.5)
Sonia Ellis-Seguín
Catherine Inglis
Althea Jensen
Kyla King
Fifi Ng (temporary) (.5)
Erin Orida
Dawn Samuel-Prescod (.5)*
Matthew Sinclair

Event Services

Liny Antwi
Megan Brohm
Navneet Dhaliwal
Hamna Hassan (.5)

Health and Safety Services

Elizabeth Mitchell
Maria Fernandez
Paul Rabelo

Member Records & Release Administration

Liz Malczak
Kinjal Patel (.5)
Tina Safari (.5)
Valerie Shaw
Donna Turney

Operations

Joe Bigley
Anu Gilhotra
Brie Laita
Maryna Leuchanka
Vasan Mahalingam
Daniel Page
Tina Safari (.5)
Tristan Tanfelix

Professional Learning/ Curriculum Services

Zaiba Beg
Mandisa Bromfield (.5)
Rita Cohen
Michelle Colacrai
Jennifer Colenutt
Kelly Hayes
Leah Kearney
Julie Millan
Fifi Ng (temporary) (.5)

Kelli Parton*
Sultan Rana
Mona Renzone (.5)
Hailey Roxby
Denise Vaughan
Tara Zwolinski

Professional Relations Services

Tracy Blodgett
Susy Costa
Erin Doucette
Alex Hardy
Tania Kerr
Michelle Konior
Jeff Pelich
Dawn Samuel-Prescod (.5)*
Rob Smolenaars*
Jennifer Stewart
Jamie Thom (.5)
Greg Weiler
Agnes Wintersinger

Staffing and Office Services

Erika Kanduth
Wilma Pereira (.5)

Technology and Computer Services

Bob Basra
Jasraj Chahal
George Jayakumar
Sharanjit Kareer
Phi Phung

*On leave

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