



ONTARIO SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS' FEDERATION

DISTRICT 25 - OTTAWA-CARLETON

9 CORVUS COURT, OTTAWA, ON K2E 7Z4

T: (613) 729-7211 F: (613) 729-8565

Dear Trustees,

First and foremost, I hope that you and your families are safe and well. This has been a most challenging year, and the circumstances in which we now find ourselves are extremely difficult.

On behalf of the D.25 Teachers' Bargaining Unit, I am asking you to apply the use of the Board's budget surplus to the fullest extent possible, to protect staffing, and thereby to support the learning conditions of our students.

Over the past several years, we have all heard numerous examples of ongoing concerns in our schools. Secondary teachers from across the District have expressed the need for more EA's, more school psychologists and social workers, and greater access to improved infrastructure, physical resources and supplies. Classroom responsibilities and pressures have significantly increased in recent years. This is connected with many variables. Constantly changing education reforms and initiatives have impacted on teacher workload. There has been a rise in student mental health concerns, and corresponding challenges with student attendance and behaviour. There are more students with IEP's in each class, some of whom have increasingly complex special needs. In addition, there are higher proportions of students for whom English is a second language, which creates a requirement for more specialized support in the schools.

We have said, for years, that the whole school is a classroom. What this means is that all education workers are essential to providing a safe and supportive learning environment. That has never been more true than it is this year, as we contemplate a response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Regardless of whether there is a return to schools before the end of this school year, it is essential that systems are in place to mitigate the impacts on students once the schools are eventually reopened.

Now, more than ever before, is the time to ensure that class sizes are maintained or reduced next year. It is critical that funds are allocated to protect optimal levels of health, hygiene, and specialized supports in schools in aid of student learning. Students are going to require even more help next year in order to address the impacts that this pandemic will have on their learning and on their physical and mental well-being. If education funding is in any way reduced for next year, the use of the Board's surplus will be absolutely essential as a means of addressing the very real and growing needs and pressures in our schools.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this delegation.

Cathy Bailey

President
Teachers' Bargaining Unit
Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation
District 25, Ottawa-Carleton
[9 Corvus Court | Ottawa, Ontario | K2E 7Z4](#)
Phone: [613-729-7211 x 104](#)
Fax: [613-729-8565](#) | E-Mail: Cathy.Bailey@d25.osstf.ca