

Provincial Executive Liaison Report

To: District 10 Executive and Council

From: Jeff Denys
Treasurer

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1. Communications Strategies – Summer Update

Staff in the Professional Services Division deployed a number of communications strategies over the summer months and into the new school year. The communications strategies address our entry into public school sector bargaining, as well as education issues of concern.

The summer months are a challenging time to get public traction on education messaging. As we moved closer to September, we saw increased interest in education, especially given the Ford government's recent ad campaign about the return to school.

For OSSTF/FEESO, we continue to focus our messaging on narratives related to bargaining issues, while offering alternative messaging to the government's narrative on a return to stability in September. Our focus is to remain consistent in our messaging, keep our narrative simple and consumable for our members and the public, and to repeat our messaging in all venues.

Here For Students

We updated the *Here For Students* campaign website during the summer to reflect some of our key narratives leading into bargaining. In addition, we engaged in a digital ad spend in August with a focus on acquiring supporters through a new survey. The ad campaign has been highly successful in acquiring more supporters. This campaign is ongoing.

Our plan is to continue to concentrate on our bargaining messaging as they are more visible in the public sphere now, mainly due to the government's recent ad campaign about the return to school. The return to school is the top-of-mind issue for most of our supporters.

Charter Schools Communication Strategy

Staff implemented the communications strategy on charter schools. Weekly organic

social media posts related to the problems with charter schools in the United States were posted on our accounts since mid-July.

These posts received very little attention and engagement.

This suggests that the public concern about charter schools and other privatization measures in education is not apparent. Consultation with some of our third-party public relations vendors confirmed our analysis that the issue of charter schools and privatization in education is not a public concern as an issue on its own at this time.

We will continue to weave in some narratives around charter schools and privatization as we move along the bargaining process. We are in the process of engaging in additional public opinion research on these issues and continue to acquire research on these topics from other jurisdictions.

Earned Media Planning

An Op-Ed was produced and shared with various media outlets for publication. The Post Media Group (i.e. Toronto Sun) picked up our Op-Ed and it was published on September 3. To complement this article, we held in-person media availabilities in Toronto on September 6 and Ottawa on September 8, and media outlets from all regions of the province held interviews with President Littlewood throughout the week, including talk radio, print, digital and tv broadcast.

2. PE/Secretariat District/Bargaining Unit Liaison Assignments

Attached please find a listing of Field Secretary topics/questions broken down by Department: Protective Services; Educational Services; and Political Action/Communications. Your Field Secretaries for 2022-2023 are:

Protective Services	Educational Services	Political Action/Communications
Dan Staples Dan.Staples@osstf.ca	Ellen Hinan Ellen.Hinan@osstf.ca	Tracey Germa Tracey.Germa@osstf.ca

3. Lobby Day

With in-person events being permitted again, OSSTF/FEESO will return to Queen's Park for a Lobby Day to be held on Wednesday November 2, 2022. At this point, the issue(s) to be presented to MPPs has not yet been finalized.

Districts will be allocated the same number of delegates as in past OSSTF/FEESO Queen's Park Lobby Days. As part of OSSTF/FEESO's Action Plan to Support Equity and Anti-Oppression, we recommend that each District be granted one (1) additional participant that self-identifies as Black/African Black/Caribbean Black, First Nations, Métis, Inuit, 2SLGBTQI+, Person Living with a Disability, or Racialized. This will provide an opportunity for those voices and lived experiences that are not often recognized in the education system to be heard in the presence of policy makers. This one additional delegate will be selected by the District with expenses covered by Provincial Office.

Members of the Communications/Political Action Committee (CPAC) will also be invited to be part of Lobby Day and will not count against their local District complement.

The Queen's Park Lobby Day will commence on the evening of Tuesday November 1 at the downtown Toronto Courtyard Marriott with training sessions on the issue(s) to be presented and How to Lobby an MPP. The training sessions will also allow Districts to plan for the lobby session with MPPs.

On Wednesday morning, we will begin the day with a breakfast reception at Queen's Park beginning at 8:00 AM. The Minister of Education and the Education Critics from the four main political parties will be invited to address our delegation. As well, all MPPs will be invited to the breakfast to discuss issues with our local leaders. Afterwards, the lobby meetings, organized by Provincial staff, will be 30-minute appointments until approximately 4:00 PM.

4. CTF AGM

OSSTF/FEESO participated in the Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF/FCE) Annual General Meeting July 6-8. This meeting was an opportunity for all the CTF affiliates to come together to share information, to identify directions for the upcoming year, and to make any changes to the CTF/FCE constitution, policies, and procedures. Sarain Fox, a Canadian Anishinaabe activist and storyteller was the guest speaker on July 6 and Randi Weingarten, President of the American Federation of Teachers spoke to the delegates on July 5.

OSSTF/FEESO submitted the following on time motions, spoke to them, and they subsequently all passed:

1. BE IT RESOLVED THAT the CTF/FCE conduct a research scan with the collaboration of CTF/FCE Member and Associate organizations on the future impacts of artificial intelligence (AI) on education workers.
2. BE IT RESOLVED THAT the CTF develop, in consultation with its affiliated education organizations, a campaign discouraging the use of the model of hybrid teaching in public schools in Canada.
3. THAT the CTF/FCE continue its priority of bringing public attention to the need for all members of school communities to work, learn, and live in a safe and healthy environment by being inclusive of teachers, education workers, and school leaders in its external communications and research, as appropriate.

5. Migrant Rights Network

The Migrant Rights Network, a coalition made up of labour union justice advocates and organizers who combat racism and fight for migrant justice, has reached out to OSSTF/FEESO to take action after years of organizing for migrant worker rights.

Recently, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has asked the Immigration Minister Sean Fraser to create a "Regularization Program" to give permanent resident status to undocumented people living in Canada by this Fall.

OSSTF/FEESO, along with other labour organizations, will write an open letter to Prime Minister Trudeau and Immigration Minister Fraser to:

- 1) Regularize all undocumented people in the country without exception and;
- 2) Ensure that all low-wage migrants in Canada have immediate access to permanent residency

In addition to the letter, OSSTF/FEESO will publicly share the petition widely over social media and to our members. The petition can be found on www.statusforall.ca.

Whereas OSSTF/FEESO has previously written a letter to Minister Stephen Lecce on unencumbered access to public education for all undocumented people living in Ontario. This is a unique time to ensure the Federal government does not miss a key opportunity to ensure undocumented youth and mature students have access to K-12 education. Currently in Ontario, adult learners must provide a proof of status in order to even be considered for adult day school.

We can imagine that there will be push back from corporate and private interests who benefits off of precarious, undocumented peoples.

6. Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) Council Meeting – June 2022

On June 16, 2022, the OCT Council met via Zoom from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm. Staff were present.

OTF Presentation

Chris Cowley, Ontario Teachers' Federation (OTF) President, provided a public presentation to the new Council highlighting the importance of OTF and affiliates to the OCT and within Ontario's Public Education system. The presentation included current concerns with the OCT's response rate to members, delays in certification and potential overreaching of mandates by the College that impact members. Additionally, OTF encouraged the council to work collaboratively with the OTF workgroups.

The OCT Chair, Chantal Belisle, reported highlights of the College's actions during the governance restructuring and onboarding of the new Council. In conjunction with the Council's **Training and Development Plan**, an overview of the labour market for teachers in Ontario was provided, you can view the document at <https://oct.ca/about-the-college/council/-/media/3A162721DB4547DDA35A9AFA51BF7C4C.ashx>. Council had many questions regarding the effectiveness of issuing Temporary Teaching Certificates and the effectiveness of the extension of Ontario faculty programs to two-years from one-year.

Investigations and Hearings

The following is a summary of the disposition of cases by the Investigation Committee between January 1, 2022 and March 31, 2022.

Disposition of Cases	Jan.-Mar. 2022
Referred to Discipline Committee under subsection 26(5)(a)	12
Referred to Fitness to Practice Committee under subsection 26(5)(a)	1
Admonishment in person under subsection 26(5)(c)	18
Written admonishment under subsection 26(5)(d)	5
Caution in person under 26(5)(c)	5
Written caution under subsection 26(5)(d)	9
Advice under subsection 26(5)(d)	2
Reminder under subsection 26(5)(d)	4

Not referred following an investigation and no further action taken under subsection 26(5)(b)	11
Refused to investigate: not related to professional misconduct or incapacity under subsection 26(2)(a), OR, frivolous, vexatious, abuse of process, manifestly without substance or made for an improper purpose under subsection 26(2)(b) (Request for Direction)	1
Undertaking to Resign and Never to Reapply	5
Teacher Performance Appraisal Undertaking	0
Complaint Resolution	9
Total	82

Strategic Priorities

Council approved a review of the College's strategic priorities going forward. The last review completed was in 2018.

Finances

In March 2022, the College approved the expenditure of \$850,000 to increase staffing on a temporary basis to address workload pressures due to the SAPP, the Math Proficiency test and temporary certificates. The College believes they now have sufficient ability to respond to these needs and member inquiries. The Audit and Finance Subcommittee will be meeting in June 2023 to prepare the final proposed budget for 2023, to be considered by Council at the December 2022 meeting. Additionally, the Audit Finding Report was presented to council. Of note, the review included exploring options of selling the current OCT real estate and leasing the space.

Relevant Correspondence

Communication between Deputy Minister, Nancy Taylor, regarding the clarification delays and a response from the OCT summarizing their progress to date and changes in technology to improve response rates. The College maintains in this correspondence that there are no certification delays at this time on the College's behalf and that delays are due to members not providing sufficient documentation, dated June 2, 2022, You can view the document at <https://oct.ca/about-the-college/council/-media/ACB82D5F7C8446698247072B39F74EC9.ashx>. Additional restraints have been placed on the College due to the recent changes to the ***Fair Access to Regulated Professions and Compulsory Trades Act (FARPACTA)***. They highlighted their frustration that the changes to FARPACTA do not take into consideration "the unique nature of each profession's application process" and the fact that "application timelines are not often affected by both the applicant's and third party responses". The College also asks the Ministry to increase the number of seats available for teacher candidates at Ontario Faculties of Education in order to address any teacher needs within the system.

Regulation Changes

Council received an overview of proposed amendments to the Accreditation Regulation (O. Reg. 347/02) and the General Regulation (O. Reg 563/21) to transfer the authority to determine whether Additional Qualifications continue to qualify for accreditation from the

Accreditation Committee to the Standards of Practice and Education Committee. The OCT believes this accurately reflects the work and distinct roles of each committee. The authority to grant initial accreditation to Additional Qualifications would remain with the Registrar.

The Council meeting concluded with a closed in-camera Special Meeting of Council.

7. **Summary of FAO Expenditure Monitor 2021-22: Q4**

On July 19, 2021, the Financial Accountability Office of Ontario (FAO) released its Expenditure Monitor for the fourth quarter of 2021-22. The FAO report provides information on unaudited spending by the province for the year ending March 31, 2021. Included in their report are: A) changes to the government's spending plan; B) a comparison of actual spending vs. planned spending for the fiscal year; C) 2021-22 spending vs. 2020-21 spending; and D) the 2021-22 budget deficit projection.

The complete report, briefing deck, and press release are available at [https://www.fao-on.org/en/Blog/Publications/2021-22-expenditure-monitor-q4](https://www.fao.on.org/en/Blog/Publications/2021-22-expenditure-monitor-q4).

A. Changes to the 2021-22 Spending Plan

The government's original budget contained a spending plan of \$178.3 billion, which was increased to \$185.1 billion by the end of the fiscal year, an increase of \$6.8 billion (3.8%). The largest increase was in the Health sector, primarily for the operation of hospitals (\$3.0 billion). Other programs received an increase of \$1.1 billion in the fourth quarter, including liability adjustments for solid waste landfills and contaminated mine sites (\$0.4 billion increase) and the Ontario Small Business Relief Program Grant (\$0.3 billion). The largest decrease was a \$0.7 billion decrease in Children's and Social Services, with a \$0.4 billion decrease in spending for Ontario Works and a \$0.2 billion decrease in spending for the Ontario Disability Support Program.

There was a \$373 million net decrease in planned spending for the Education sector, with increases of \$95 million in *Priorities and Partnerships Funding – School Boards*, \$79 million in services, and \$34 million in *Priorities and Partnerships Funding – Third Parties* and net decreases of \$52 million for *Child Care and Early Years Programs* and \$533 million for *Support for Elementary and Secondary Education (Capital)*.

In Postsecondary there was a \$303 million net decrease for Colleges, Universities and Student Support, largely due to a decrease of \$368 million for Student Financial Assistance Programs.

The bulk of the spending plan changes can be attributed to the fourth wave of COVID-19 in early 2022, which resulted in higher costs in health care, but generated savings in social services, along with the lower cost of Postsecondary Student Financial Assistance as many students continued to learn remotely.

Changes in Other programs are likely due to priorities from the Fall Budget update and pre-election spending.

In Education, there was an increase in *Priorities and Partnerships Funding* from a planned \$288 million investment in the 2021-22 Grants for Student Needs (GSNs) to \$501 million as reported in the fourth quarter. No details are provided, but this may be due to the tutoring programs announced in the 2022-23 GSNs, which were scheduled to begin being implemented in April of 2022, during the 2021-22 school year.

The \$522 million decrease in planned spending on Education capital projects is concerning as the school repair backlog continues to grow.

B. Comparison of Actual Spending vs. Planned Spending

The province actually spent \$177.9 billion, which was \$7.2 billion (3.9%) less than planned. All sectors spent less than planned, as listed below:

- Health – \$1,817 million less than planned (-2.4%);
- Education – \$124 million less than planned (-0.4%);
- Postsecondary Education – \$134 million less than planned (-2.0%);
- Children's and Social Services – \$173 million less than planned (-1.0%);
- Justice – \$80 million less than planned (-1.4%); and
- Other Programs – \$2,406 million less than planned (-7.2%).

This net saving generated by underspending is lower than the \$10.3 billion generated in 2020-21 but higher than the pre-COVID-19 historical annual average of \$2.8 billion.

C. 2021-22 Spending vs. 2020-21 Spending

The province spent \$177.9 billion in 2021-22, which was \$0.8 billion (0.4 per cent) less than was spent in 2020-21. The largest year-over-year spending decrease was in Other programs (-\$4,421 million, -12.5%), followed by Education (-\$907 million, -2.7%) and Children's and Social Services (-\$446 million, -2.5%). Conversely, Health (\$4,329 million, 6.3%), Justice (\$171 million; 3.2%) and Postsecondary Education (\$1 million) all spent more in 2021-22 compared to 2020-21.

The government had billed the 2021-22 GSNs as the largest ever, however, consistent with the pattern established by this government in the previous years, underspending in education by large amounts has created savings and shortchanged students.

D. 2021-22 Budget Deficit Projection

The FAO has updated its 2021-22 budget deficit projection to \$8.1 billion. In comparison, in the 2022 Ontario Budget, the government projected a 2021-22 budget deficit of \$13.5 billion. The difference between the FAO's and the Province's 2021-22 budget deficit projections is \$5.4 billion.

The province's finances profited from a fiscal year in which the economy rebounded much more than had been predicted and from the results of inflation and economic growth. Coupled with underspending, this has led to a much lower deficit than projected. As previously reported, the FAO predicts a balanced budget by the 2024 fiscal year.

8. Education Worker and Teacher/Occasional Teacher Central Table Negotiations

Five days of negotiations took place over the summer to determine what items would be negotiated at the Central Table for Teachers/Occasional Teachers and Education Workers.

July 20 (Teachers/Occasional Teachers & Education Workers)

August 11 (Teachers/Occasional Teachers)

August 12 (Education Workers)

August 24 (Education Workers)

August 25 (Education Workers & Teachers/Occasional Teachers)

On August 25th, an agreement was reached for Education Workers on what will be negotiated at the Central Table. Subsequently, we were also able to reach an agreement on what will be negotiated at the Teacher/Occasional Teacher central bargaining table.

Our next scheduled dates for central bargaining are September 12-14 and 27-28, and October 12-14 and 19-21. We will be issuing regular updates via Bargaining Bulletins.

9. DBU Memos Issued

1	Benevolent Council Dates
2	River Run 2022: Walk with Grassy Narrows for Mercury Justice
3	Cal for OFL Committee Applications
4	2022 Round of Collective Bargaining Term of Operation Update
5	SSAP: Upcoming Deadline, Requesting an Extensions and PA Days
6	Labour Day 2022 - Forward Together: This is our moment
7	OSSTF/FEESO Recognizes Orange Shirt Day, National Day and Week for Truth and Reconciliation
8	Media Templates and Messaging Support
9	Judicial Council Vacancies
10	Equity Mentorship Program 2022-2024 Statement of Interest: Mentor
11	New Member Engagement Advisory Work Group 2022
12	Professional Activity Days - Key Messages and Additional Resources
13	Union Training Academy
14	School Mental Health Ontario Resources
15	First Nations, Métis and Inuit Advisory Work Group Vacancies
16	OSSTF/FEESO Inclusion Symposium
17	Student Achievement Awards 2023
18	Recent Awards in the Education Sector