



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The OSBCU Calls for Real Investment After Ford Government's Deeply Inadequate Education Funding Announcement

The Ontario School Board Council of Unions (OSBCU) is deeply disappointed by the Ford government's 2026–27 Core Education Funding announcement released today. At a time when Ontario's publicly funded schools are facing an unprecedented staffing and funding crisis, this funding offers little more than austerity, uncertainty, and continued neglect for students and education workers.

The government's projected funding increase of just 1 per cent falls below inflation and does not come close to addressing the urgent realities facing students, families, and education workers across the province. Even accounting for projected enrolment declines, Ontario schools are once again being asked to do more with less.

Most alarming is the government's decision to cut the Classroom Staffing Fund by \$56.2 million. This fund supports the education workers and classroom resources students rely on every day. At a time when schools are struggling with chronic understaffing, increasing student needs, and burnout among frontline education staff, these cuts are egregious.

The government's increase to Special Education funding — a mere 0.1 per cent, well below inflation — is equally unacceptable. Just yesterday, the Auditor General confirmed what education workers, parents, and advocates have been saying for years: most school boards are spending far more on special education than they receive from the province, and students are not getting the supports they need. There are simply not enough Special Education workers in schools to meet growing demand.

"This funding announcement is profoundly disappointing, even by this government's standards," said Joe Tigani, President of the OSBCU. "Education workers are already stretched beyond their limits and students are paying the price for chronic underfunding and understaffing in our schools. This government has no meaningful plan to address the crisis facing public education."

According to the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, the Ford government has underfunded public education by \$6.3 billion through 2025–26. Another year of below-inflation funding will only deepen that shortfall. Despite repeated claims of "historic investments," student-to-staff ratios have failed to improve since 2018, and in some classifications have gotten much worse.

Compounding concerns, school boards are already warning unions that thousands of education worker jobs could be at risk for September 2026 once existing job protection agreements expire within the current collective agreement. Many CUPE school board locals have already been told of staffing cuts to custodians, clerical workers, Educational Assistants, Library Techs, Information Technology and Trades workers whose livelihoods are at risk. Without renewed commitments through bargaining, schools could face devastating layoffs that would further destabilize classrooms and reduce supports for students across Ontario.

Today's funding announcement makes one thing abundantly clear: the Ford government is choosing to maintain the status quo while Ontario schools fall further behind. The OSBCU will continue fighting for properly funded public education, a significant increase in staffing across all classifications in every community across the province and will make these issues a priority in upcoming negotiations with school boards and the provincial government.

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For more information, please contact:

Shannon Carranco, CUPE Communications, scarranco@cupe.ca, 514-703-8358

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