

Ministry of Education

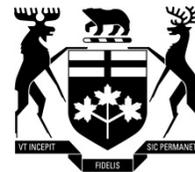
Minister

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Ministère de l'Éducation

Ministre

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Ontario

March 31, 2013

Dear Colleagues,

I am writing to inform you of the progress we have made in discussions with our teachers and support staff.

As you know, the new Ontario government has been having positive, collaborative discussions with our education partners. Those discussions have been critical to rebuilding important relationships inside and outside of our schools and have already delivered results for students, parents, teachers and support staff, with the gradual return of extra-curricular activities at both elementary and secondary schools.

Our objective since the beginning of these discussions has been clear – repair the relationship so that we can focus on continuing to build one of the best education systems in the world.

Our fiscal constraints have also been clear.

We have indicated on many occasions that anything we agree to with our partners must reflect our current fiscal situation and fit within the ministry's funding envelope. Recognizing this reality, our discussions have been focused on ensuring fairness and consistency in the application of the current agreement.

I am pleased to be able to inform you that we have come to an agreement in principle with OSSTF focused on the fair and consistent application of the existing collective agreements, while reflecting the ministry's fiscal situation. The government and OSSTF have been able to resolve implementation concerns identified in a number of areas including: sick leave, maternity leave, retirement gratuity, unpaid days, and local bargaining.

The details of the agreement will be shared with you as soon as we are in a position to do so. OSSTF and the government are operating under a media blackout and no further details or comments will be made public until after OSSTF has had an opportunity to share details with its members.

In the meantime, constructive discussions with ETFO continue and we are hopeful for a similarly productive outcome.

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We appreciate your patience and understanding as we continue to make adjustments to help ensure the effective, fair, and consistent implementation of the current collective agreements.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Liz Sandals". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Liz" and last name "Sandals" clearly distinguishable.

Liz Sandals
Minister

- c. Board Chairs
The Council of Ontario Directors of Education
Ontario Public School Boards' Association