

# The Rock

June Edition

## Message from Harvey Bischof,

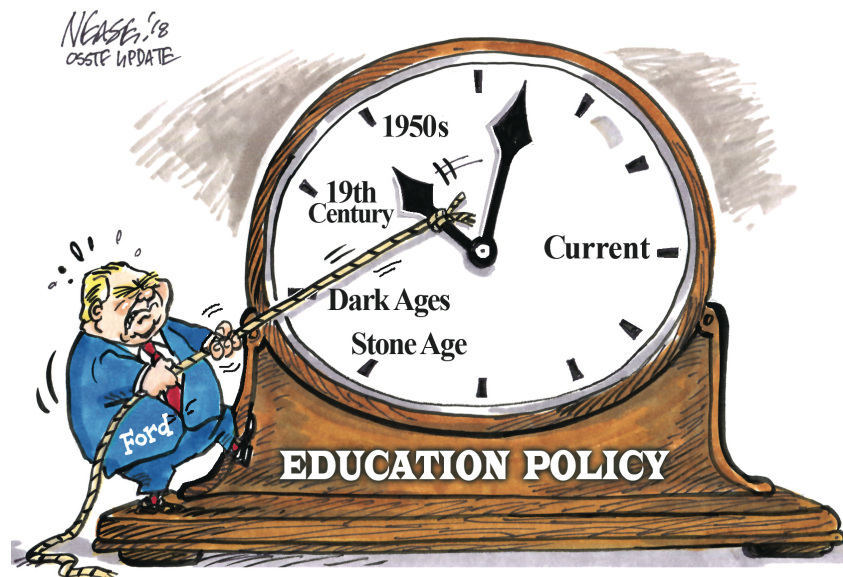
*Let us  
not take  
thought  
for our  
separate  
interests  
but let  
us help  
one  
another*

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As you know, OSSTF/FEESO has always been a strong proponent of local collective bargaining and local democracy, and our positions at the table reflect these principled beliefs. We recognize that a number of items - particularly those requiring funding - ought to be resolved at the central table because the government is at the table as the funder. However, we believe there is still a significant role for local boards and bargaining units to engage in local talks to establish and implement local priorities. Unfortunately, we have seen a continued push from the government to centralize more and more authority and decision making over the past number of years. While it is clear that the current government will continue in its attempts to marginalize local democracy generally and school boards in particular, it is shocking for us to witness the role that OPSBA has taken in driving the same agenda.

During the 2014 negotiations, OPSBA insisted that a multitude of items be brought to the central table, over the strong objections of the Federation. Although many issues were placed on the central table, many were frozen because central resolution was not possible. As we all know well, education is complex and does not lend itself well to cookie-cutter oversight. Despite the fact that bringing an expanded list to the central table was an abject failure, and rather than learn from this experience, OPSBA has decided to double down and bring even more issues to the central table this time.

School boards and bargaining units have negotiated for decades and made good decisions for local communities and local members. It has left us wondering why they believe that local boards and bargaining units are suddenly unable to make any decisions of consequence. It appears that OPSBA's pursuit of self-preservation has led it to cooperate with the government to undermine not only the importance of local decision making but Ontario's high quality publicly funded education system.



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*Warren Tilson –  
CPAC Chair*

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Education workers are under attack by the Ford government. If the membership is to survive this round of negotiations with our collective rights intact then we must fight the government's constant barrage of fear-mongering and misinformation with the most powerful tool available to educational staff - the truth.

Educators make very specific choices when presenting a politically contentious issue in front a classroom. Providing a safe and comfortable environment for open dialogue is an educator's primary concern in hopes that all participants engage. We strive to facilitate a civil discourse that respects varied viewpoints ensuring a robust discussion. Furthermore, educators encourage students to approach disagreement with a growth mindset in hopes that they consider all conflicting point of views. We recognize that civil discourse is the cornerstone of a strong democracy, and that civil discourse needs to be both modeled to and fostered in the youth of today.

Educators have become so accustomed to engaging and facilitating respectful dialogue that they expect it of all members of the general public. When publicly confronted by those who spread misinformation and engage in disrespectful conversation we often choose to simply disengage.

How often have you removed yourself from a public conversation when the topic turns to teachers' contracts? How many times have you held your tongue when a non-educator proceeded to tell you what needs to be done to fix education? How many times have we told each other not to feed the trolls?

The Ford government not only expects educators to disengage when faced with misinformation and disrespect, but they are counting on it. The government has weaponized fear and division in efforts to push its ultra-conservative agenda and are actively engaging in a communication strategy intended to disrupt OSSTF's membership.

This is why, now more than ever educators must choose to engage in all forms political discussion. If we remain silent though this round of negotiations, then we will lose the opportunity to participate in shaping the future of Ontario education. If we do not address the misinformation being spread through both traditional and social media platforms, then we risk losing any public support we currently have.

Engaging the public and fostering the truth is what educators do every day in our classrooms. The time has come for us to employ our specialized skill set in our everyday lives.

Keep yourself educated.

Engage in courageous conversations.

Reject fear-mongering and continue to fight ignorance with the truth

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# FACT CHECKING THE FORD GOVERNMENT

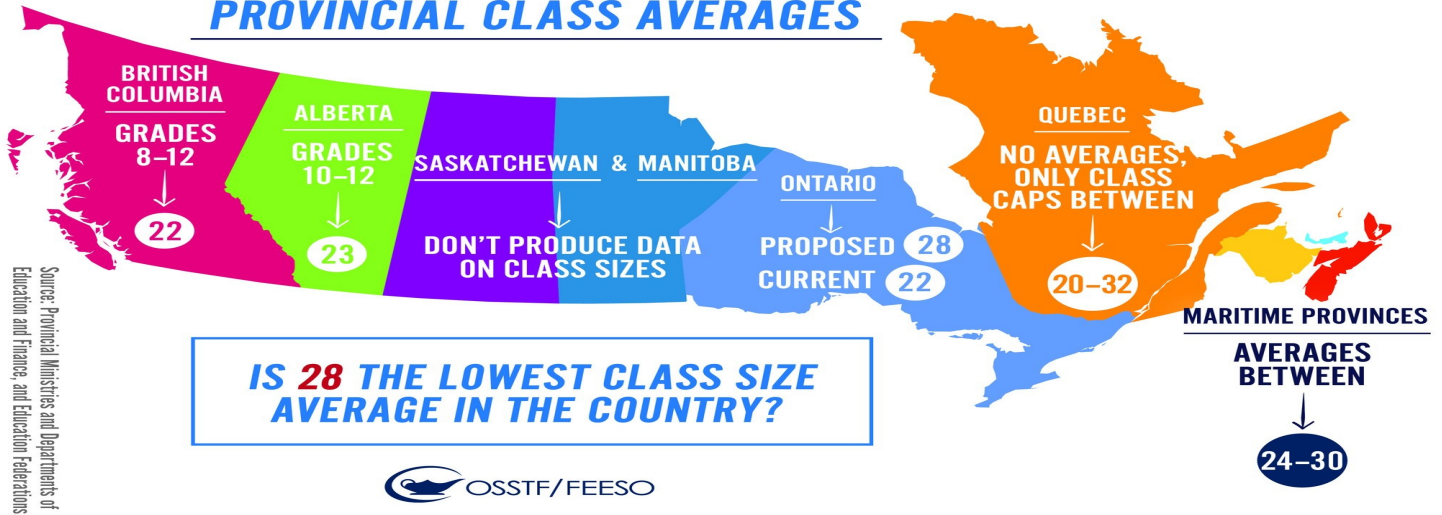


## Premier, Doug Ford

“...we will have the lowest class size in the entire country.”  
 “We’re proposing 28. **We will still be the lowest in high school anywhere in the entire country.**”

Source: Hansard, Legislative Assembly of Ontario—April 4, 2019

## PROVINCIAL CLASS AVERAGES



# FACT CHECKING THE FORD GOVERNMENT



## Premier, Doug Ford on class size changes

“I think the people of this province will be quite thrilled when they see the announcement...people will be quite happy with the minister's announcement, I think it's just thinking outside the box.”

Source: [www.iheartradio.ca](http://www.iheartradio.ca)—March 13, 2019

**IN THREE SEPARATE POLLS, ONTARIANS HAVE MADE IT CLEAR, THEY DO NOT SUPPORT INCREASING CLASS SIZES IN ONTARIO'S SCHOOLS.**

**FACT**



**Doug Ford's education plan DOESN'T work for Ontarians.**





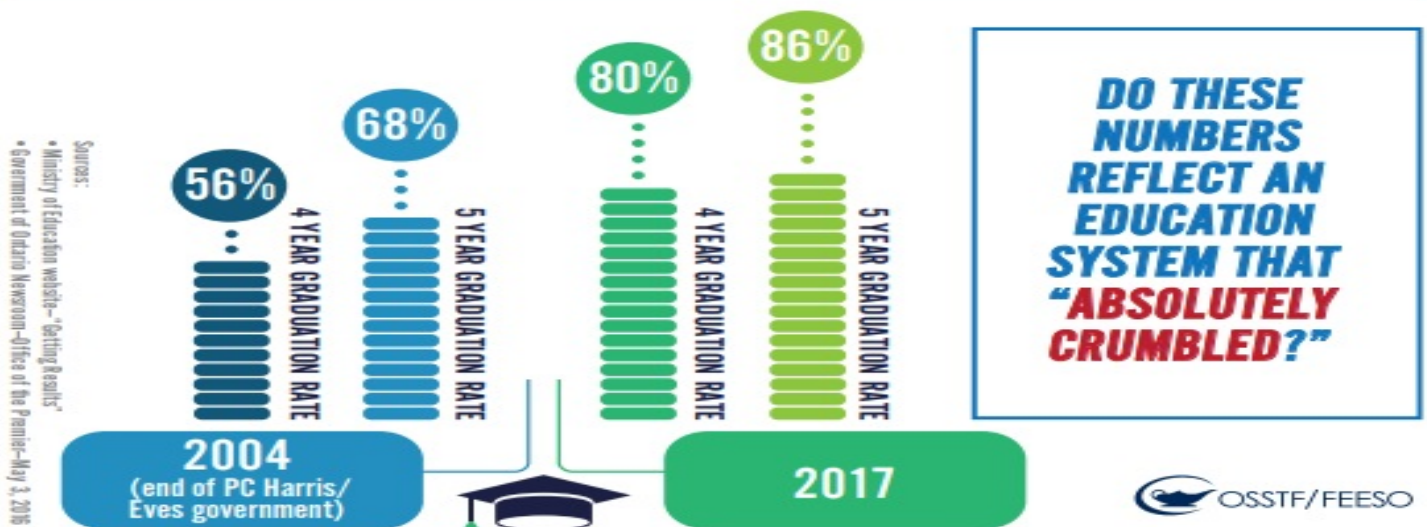
# FACT CHECKING THE FORD GOVERNMENT



**Minister of Education, Lisa Thompson**

"I understand the system is broken, as minister of education. We inherited an education system that **absolutely crumbled** over the last 15 years..."

Source—CTV News Toronto—April 4, 2019



# FACT CHECKING THE FORD GOVERNMENT



**Lisa Thompson** ✓

@LisaThompsonMPP

11:39 AM · Apr 7, 2019

Costs in the education sector have been rising while enrolment and **academic quality have been falling**, with more than half of Grade 6 students, for example, failing to meet the provincial standard in math.

## EQAO TEST SCORES SINCE 2003

- GRADE 3 reading UP 25%
- GRADE 3 writing UP 17%
- GRADE 3 math UP 4%
- GRADE 6 reading UP 26%
- GRADE 6 writing UP 26%
- GRADE 6 math DOWN 4%
- GRADE 9 academic math UP 18%
- GRADE 9 applied math UP 24%

## FACTS

- ✓ Academic quality has been **RISING**.
- ✓ EQAO scores in Grade 3 & 9 math are **UP**.
- ✓ EQAO scores at all grades for reading & writing are **UP**.

**DO THESE SCORES REALLY LOOK LIKE AN EDUCATION SYSTEM THAT IS FAILING?**

## Message from the Editor.....

First of all, let me introduce myself. My name is Kelly Morrow and I am a member of the Sudbury Student Services Consortium (SSSC). I have been actively involved in some form with the District for the last 15 years. I've taken on editing The Rock and sitting on various committees in our district as a challenge to be more politically involved during these tough times in education for all of us. Every single member in District 3 is directly affected by the Ford cuts to education. We as a membership need to have our voices heard. Whether it's by participating in Red for ED days, contacting your MPP, attending an OFL meeting or getting involved with your bargaining unit, we need to shout loud and clear that we will not accept these cuts that are going to affect the future of the province of Ontario. These cuts will affect your students, your children and your grandchildren. The education of our future leaders is at stake and we need to show this government that we will not go down without a fight...

Follow OSSTF district 3 on twitter and Instagram @osstfdistrict3. And make sure to visit our local website at <http://www.d03.osstf.ca/>.



**1 UNION**

**60,000 MEMBERS**

**230 JOB CLASSES**

**151 BARGAINING UNITS**

**37 DISTRICTS**

Final thoughts...

The 2019-2020 school year will be a time of change within our district as we say goodbye to long-time activists within our union, both provincially and locally. Our Secretariat members, Jane Ste. Marie and Joel Hirscheegger are both entering retirement at the end of the school year. We wish to thank them for their years of dedicated service to the federation. Your hard work has never gone unnoticed or unappreciated.

On a district level, we raise our glasses to our past CPAC Chair, Lynne Montpellier and our TBU/OT & District President, James Clyke. I can say personally, I have worked closely with both of you during very contentious times not only with the government, but our employers as well. You have always treated our unit with respect, regardless of the size or the issue. A member is a member is a member. You have both fulfilled that mandate in spades. I think I speak for everyone when I say we wish you the happiness and relaxation you deserve now that you are retiring. We look forward to seeing you becoming members of ARM in the future.

And now for our bargaining units – the following members will lead each bargaining unit in September:

Educational Support Staff Unit (ESSU)	Professional Students Service Personnel (PSSP)
Phil Crowe, President	Shawna Rajotte, President
Stephanie Daoust, Vice-President	Lauretta Miller, Vice-President
Leah Rachkowski, Secretary-Treasurer	Stefanie Goulet, Treasurer
	Sandra Brosseau, Secretary
Sudbury Student Services Consortium (SSSC)	Teacher/Occasional Teacher (T/OTBU)
Leona Gervais, President	Eric Laberge, President
Laurie Barrette, Vice-President & Treasurer	Lynne Montpellier, Vice-President
	Katrina Ross, Treasurer
	Kelly Rodriguez, Secretary
District Executive	
Eric Laberge, District President	Katrina Ross, District Treasurer
Todd Sintic, District Vice-President	Shawn Piette, District Secretary

We would also like to take this opportunity to thank the following members for their dedication to serving on their bargaining unit executives: Lucie Bisson, who has led the SSSC bargaining unit as President for many years, Donna Viianen, ESSU Secretary-Treasurer, Shelley Buckland, PSSP Secretary, and Marisa Costanzo, T/OTBU Secretary. Best wishes as you move on to other challenges!