



# News Release

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## GOVERNMENT PLAYING GAMES AROUND EDUCATION SECTOR BARGAINING

TORONTO – The government should be ashamed of the games they are playing with the collective bargaining process and our publicly funded education system, says the Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association (OECTA).

"The inflammatory statements made by Minister of Education Lisa Thompson about teachers' organizations being unwilling to begin bargaining are a childish, desperate attempt to shift blame for the damage the government is doing to publicly funded education in Ontario," says Liz Stuart, President of OECTA.

"This statement is further evidence that this government has absolutely no grasp on the collective bargaining process and what 'good faith' actually means. It is stunts like this that erode public confidence and create anxiety," adds Stuart.

The government is currently in the midst of consultations around class size increases, compensation for public sector workers, and the fair hiring process for teachers. "These are matters that should properly be dealt with through collective bargaining, but discussions cannot begin while the government is still pretending that the matters are up for debate with other parties," says Stuart. The government also has not released the full Technical Paper for the 2019-20 Grants for Student Needs, which means teachers and school boards are not able to properly assess how schools will be funded in the coming school year.

"The government needs to step up and start acting responsibly. Nothing they have done thus far concerning education has been in good faith, and with their statements over the past few days they are obviously trying to bully teachers and mislead the public. Our Association wants to reach a fair agreement that will serve our members' interests and protect quality working and learning conditions, but we can only do this when we have all of the necessary information. I want parents to know that Catholic teachers want to be in their classrooms teaching come this September."

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OECTA represents the 45,000 passionate and qualified teachers in Ontario's publicly funded English Catholic schools, from Kindergarten to Grade 12.

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