



News Release

CATHOLIC TEACHERS TO BEGIN ROTATING STRIKES FEBRUARY 24

February 18, 2020

TORONTO - The Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association (OECTA) has announced that if an agreement is not reached, members will participate in rotating full withdrawals of service the week of February 24. (The rotation schedule is below. All OECTA bargaining units within each Catholic district school board will engage in a full withdrawal of service on their assigned day.)

"Teachers and education workers across the province are united, and the public are firmly behind us," says OECTA President Liz Stuart. "Everyone is saying we do not support the Ford government's destructive agenda for publicly funded education, and everyone knows the solution is for the government to back away from their reckless cuts and come up with a real plan to reach a fair agreement. But the government still is not listening. All we can do is continue to demonstrate our determination and solidarity."

In addition to the upcoming province-wide walkout on February 21, OECTA members engaged in full withdrawals of service on January 21 and February 4, and have been taking administrative job action since January 13. At the request of the Ministry of Labour-appointed mediator, the OECTA Provincial Bargaining Team will meet with representatives of the government and the Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association on Wednesday, February 19 to continue negotiations.

"We are ready to get back to the table, but the government needs to recognize that these discussions must be about protecting our world-renowned publicly funded education system," says Stuart. "They keep talking about being reasonable, but there is nothing reasonable about cutting supports for vulnerable students, nothing reasonable about increasing class sizes and reducing course options, and nothing reasonable about imposing mandatory e-learning. Catholic teachers have done our part to move these negotiations forward, but we cannot accept the government's agenda to take resources out of the classroom."

The announcement of a new bargaining date, and potential additional job action, comes as polling continues to show the Ford government's popularity plummeting. "Nobody voted for what this government is trying to impose. People clearly do not want it," says Stuart. "The government may have thought they could drag these negotiations out and wear everyone down, but their scheme is not working. Ontarians want an agreement to be reached, but not at the expense of the long-term interests of our students and schools."

OECTA Strike Rotation Schedule

Monday, February 24

Huron-Superior Catholic District School Board
Niagara Catholic District School Board
Northwest Catholic District School Board
St. Clair Catholic District School Board
Toronto Catholic District School Board
Waterloo Catholic District School Board

Thursday, February 27

Algonquin & Lakeshore Catholic District School Board
Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board
Bruce-Grey Catholic District School Board
Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board
Northeastern Catholic District School Board
Renfrew County Catholic District School Board
Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board
Superior North Catholic District School Board

Tuesday, February 25

Durham Catholic District School Board
Halton Catholic District School Board
Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board
Kenora Catholic District School Board
Nipissing-Parry Sound Catholic District School Board
Ottawa Catholic District School Board
Peterborough VNC Catholic District School Board
Sudbury Catholic District School Board
Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board

Friday, February 28

Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario
Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board
London District Catholic School Board
York Catholic District School Board
Wellington Catholic District School Board
Windsor-Essex Catholic District School Board