

News Release

97% Vote “YES”: Catholic Teachers Deliver Overwhelming Strike Mandate

October 19, 2023

In a province-wide vote conducted on October 18 and 19, Catholic teachers – the members of the Ontario English Catholic Teachers’ Association (OECTA) – delivered an overwhelming strike mandate, with 97 per cent voting in favour of authorizing strike action, if necessary.

OECTA has issued the following statement from President René Jansen in de Wal:

“Our overwhelming strike mandate sends a clear message to the Ford Conservative government and the representatives of Catholic school boards that Catholic teachers want to see meaningful progress and results at the bargaining table that address the lack of resources, supports, and time teachers need to best serve their students.

As we move forward with our next bargaining dates, the Ford Conservative government and Catholic trustee representatives need to understand that Catholic teachers – 45,000-strong – are united in solidarity, and prepared to do whatever is necessary to reach an agreement that supports all students, families, and teachers – one that addresses the pressing issues faced in classrooms across the province.

Contrary to Minister of Education Stephen Lecce’s ongoing misinformation campaign, taking a strike vote and receiving a strong strike mandate does not necessarily mean that Catholic teachers will take job action. In fact, such a strong strike mandate may make job action less likely – but only if the Minister and Catholic school board representatives heed the message being sent. And it will enable the Association to proceed forward in negotiations with the full confidence of Catholic teachers. This is something the Minister would know if he was focused on reaching a fair deal, and not devoting his time and energy to yet another failed attempt to deceive and divide parents, students, teachers, and communities.

Our goal, as always, is to negotiate a fair collective agreement: one that recognizes Catholic teachers’ vital contributions to Ontario’s society and economy, and makes the proper investment – in our students, in our schools, and in the future Ontario deserves.”

- 30 -

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

For more information, contact: Michelle Despault. Director of Member Communications and Public Affairs
Tel.: 416.925.2493 x 509, E.: m.despault@catholicteachers.ca