

Hansard Monday, May 4, 2026
(Budget Bill Royal Assent, Bill 101 Third Reading)

Royal assent

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I beg to inform the House that in the name of His Majesty the King, the Administrator has been pleased to assent to a certain bill in Her Honour's office.

The Clerk-at-the-Table (Mr. Christopher Tyrell): The following is the title of the bill to which Her Honour did assent:

An Act to implement Budget measures, to enact, amend or repeal various statutes and to revoke various regulations

Eric Roher

MPP Stephanie Smyth: I rise today to honour the life of Eric Roher, president of Holy Blossom Temple, a dedicated community leader and a dear friend.

Eric was a person who led with kindness, generosity and genuine care for others. He believed deeply in community and in the importance of showing up for people.

Through his leadership at Holy Blossom Temple, his involvement with our provincial Liberal association, and in the way he lived his life every day, Eric brought people together. He made people feel welcome, valued and supported.

Eric, along with his beautiful wife, Beth, opened his home and his heart to so many. He had a way of making everyone around him feel like they belonged. He believed in the good in people and carried that belief with him in absolutely everything that he did.

To me, Eric was not only a leader but a true friend. He was someone I could count on, someone who offered steady support and thoughtful advice, and someone who made a lasting impact on my life. I will miss him deeply.

Eric leaves behind a family who loved him so much, and he was so devoted to his children and grandchildren. Our thoughts are with them as they navigate this loss and carry forward his warmth, his values and his spirit.

He will be missed by me, by his loved ones, and by an entire community that is stronger because of him.

May his memory be a blessing.

Municipal elections

Mr. Ric Bresee: I'm proud to rise today, representing the people of Hastings–Lennox and Addington.

Speaker, as we know, on May 1, nominations opened for this fall's municipal elections. This milestone gives us a chance to reflect on the people who have stepped forward to serve their communities.

In my riding, I have the privilege of working with 18 lower-tier municipalities and one separated city. Across all of them, I have seen first-hand the dedication of local councillors. For most of them, this is not a full-time role; it's a commitment they take on because they care about their communities. They give their time and their energy to public service, and they work together to

Hansard Monday, May 4, 2026
(Budget Bill Royal Assent, Bill 101 Third Reading)

get things done. I want to sincerely thank each and every one of them, whether they choose to run again or not.

I also want to encourage more people to step forward to run for municipal office. When I first ran for council in the year 2000, I wanted to bring a different perspective—to represent young families like mine at the time. Over the years, I've seen how much stronger councils are when they include people from diverse backgrounds, experiences and walks of life. Better decisions are made when there are diverse voices at the table.

I especially want to encourage women to consider running. Women are at the heart of our communities yet too often feel that politics isn't for them; it is. Your leadership, your insight, and your perspectives are essential.

So to those who may not see themselves in local government, I say, your voice matters. This is your opportunity to step forward, to serve, and to help shape your community.

Putting Student Achievement First Act, 2026

Mr. Calandra moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 101, An Act to amend various Acts in respect of education and child care

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): I return to the minister to start debate.

Hon. Paul Calandra: Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the Minister of Colleges, Universities, Research Excellence and Security, the member for Whitby, the member for Markham–Unionville and the member for Kitchener South–Hespeler.

I appreciate the opportunity to give some brief words on Bill 101. Let me just begin by quickly saying that we had wonderful committee hearings last week where we were able to ascertain, get some diverse opinions on the bill. But ultimately what we saw from the bill was a great degree of unanimity, frankly, Madam Speaker, on some of the more important parts of the bill. Those parts that otherwise seemed to be divisive in nature when you listened to people in question period seemed to be less so when it was brought forward in committee, when it was explained properly.

The importance of Bill 101: It begins to provide a more consistent level of education across the province of Ontario. It brings our system back into check with respect to our trustees. It brings a professionalization of bargaining across the province of Ontario. And there are a whole host of measures, I think, that will lead to a much better education system. It also listens to our educators, specifically when it comes to things like attendance in our schools.

We heard a lot of different areas where there was agreement and some areas where there was some form of limited disagreement, but by and large, I think Bill 101 was vastly approved and respected by members on all sides of the House. I say that in part because many of the amendments that you would have thought you would have seen by some of the more challenging areas—in particular, I'd guide you to issues of bargaining. As you know, in part of the bill, it removes bargaining from trustees and it puts that back into the hands of the directors of education. There were no amendments, of course, that would have seen that moved.

Hansard Monday, May 4, 2026
(Budget Bill Royal Assent, Bill 101 Third Reading)

With respect to creation of a chief executive officer in boards of education so that we could have a chief executive officer in charge of the business part of it, the human resources part of it, there were no amendments to change that role.

As you know, Madam Speaker, we protect the academic parts of the education system by ensuring that there's a chief education officer—no amendments to that either, which I think is a really good indication that the government is moving in the right path, given the fact that there were no potential amendments on either of those two areas.

I will acknowledge that there were a couple of amendments that were brought forward, if I'm not mistaken, by the Liberal House leader. One of those amendments was with respect to French education. Obviously, we voted against those amendments only because the amendments do not supersede the Charter of Rights, and the charter guarantees French-language education not only in the province of Ontario but across the country. And of course there is nothing that the province of Ontario, through legislation—that can happen that would supersede the Charter of Rights. Of course, our members sought to protect the Charter of Rights and voted against those amendments, which I think were not necessarily meant to water down the charter—I understand that; I understand where the member was going—but it was reconfirming, at least for our position, that the charter remains supreme and that French education, through the charter, would be protected in that fashion. I don't think the member brought it forward in a way that was anything other than ensuring that French education would be protected across the province of Ontario.

Of course, there were a couple of other amendments, I think brought forward by the official opposition, with respect to accessibility in our schools. Again, those measures are protected already by legislation that would supersede any of the amendments that were brought forward.

So, by and large, Madam Speaker, I'm pleased with the direction that we are going in. I'm pleased that we seem to have achieved, if not a unilateral consensus that this is a good way forward—at least it seems that we are all headed in the correct direction with respect to how education, how a ministry that spends \$43 billion a year—its focus should be on student achievement; its focus should be on ensuring that our teachers have the resources that they need in order to provide the highest level of student achievement. This bill goes in that direction and, as I said, there are a number of other members that want to speak to it. So I think, with that, I will yield the floor to the member for Whitby.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): I recognize the member from Whitby.

Mr. Lorne Coe: I'm speaking today in support of third reading of the Putting Student Achievement First Act, and I do so as the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Colleges and Universities, Research Excellence and Security.

I'd like to take a moment to acknowledge the constructive debate that has taken place at second reading and committee. Those discussions made one thing clear across this chamber: We share a common goal, ensuring Ontario's education system continues to serve students and educators effectively. And Bill 101 is doing exactly that.

It's about keeping our education and post-secondary systems strong, responsive and centred on student success in today's classrooms and in the years ahead. It's about maintaining quality, strengthening accountability and ensuring our systems evolve as student needs evolve.

Hansard Monday, May 4, 2026
(Budget Bill Royal Assent, Bill 101 Third Reading)

Speaker, any conversation about education must begin with teachers. Teachers shape lives every single day. They are mentors, role models and leaders in our classrooms, and the strength of our education system depends on how well we prepare them. Ontario's teacher education system is recognized across Canada and beyond for its quality, but as classrooms evolve and student needs grow more complex, we must ensure that the system continues to evolve with them. That is what this legislation does.

Bill 101 builds upon that strong base. It does not replace it. Instead, it reinforces it by keeping teacher education focused on what matters most: readiness for the classroom, meaningful practical experience and positive outcomes for students.

Speaker, when teachers are well prepared, students benefit academically, socially and emotionally; parents gain confidence in the system; and schools are better equipped to respond to evolving needs in the classroom. That is why how we prepare teachers matters—not just to the profession, but to students, families and communities across Ontario, like Whitby and other parts of Durham region.

Let me be clear about why change is necessary. Student needs have become more complex, and expectations on educators continue to grow. At the same time, Ontario's current teacher education model is among the longest in the country. Since 2015, initial teacher education programs have typically required four academic semesters over two years. It has become clear that program length alone does not determine teacher readiness. Evidence, research and the lived experience of educators tell us that what truly makes a difference is the quality of practicum placements, strong mentorship and meaningful classroom experience. In fact, many jurisdictions across Canada offer shorter, well-designed post-degree teacher education programs while maintaining rigorous standards and strong outcomes.

Speaker, Bill 101 would enable a more focused and efficient teacher education model. Ontario would modernize teacher education by transitioning to a 12-month program delivered over three consecutive semesters, while maintaining Ontario's high professional standards.

All 14 public universities—like Ontario Tech and Trent Durham—and three private universities offering initial teacher education programs would adopt the new program for the first cohort beginning as early as May 2027. Importantly, this new model prioritizes in-classroom learning. It would allow teacher candidates to spend a greater part of their program gaining hands-on experience, supported by structured mentorship and strong practicum placements. It would also allow future teachers to complete their qualifications sooner and enter the workforce more efficiently, reducing time and cost barriers along the way.

Speaker, modernization also means ensuring the profession is accessible to those who already bring valuable experience into our classrooms. That is why Ontario is also exploring opportunities to implement advanced-standing pathways for teacher education applicants with prior credentials and experience. Across Ontario, there are passionate individuals with relevant backgrounds, such as early childhood educators, educational assistants like my daughter, and those with industry or skilled trades experience. Bill 101 supports exploring responsible ways to recognize prior learning, education and work experience, while maintaining standards and consistency. These kinds of pathways are not about shortcuts, Speaker. They're about acknowledging real-world experience and designing systems that are flexible, inclusive and aligned with workforce realities.

Hansard Monday, May 4, 2026
(Budget Bill Royal Assent, Bill 101 Third Reading)

Speaker, program reform alone is not enough. Our government knows it must be paired with investment. Over the last several years, our government has made significant investments to expand teacher education capacity, particularly in high-need areas such as French-language education, French as a second language, technological education, and northern and rural communities.

Through budget 2025, we invested nearly \$56 million to train 2,600 more teachers by 2027, especially for northern, rural and remote communities. From this investment, we're training more than 500 new teachers in French-language and French-as-a-second-language education programs. On top of this, we've doubled the amount of French-language teaching students enrolled at the Université de l'Ontario français.

Speaking of French teachers, I'll remind everyone here today that in 2021, our government launched a French teacher recruitment and retention strategy to increase the supply of French-language teachers in Ontario. To date, we've invested more than \$30 million to bring more French teachers to communities that need them the most. As a result of these critical investments, Speaker, the French-language teacher shortage has been reduced by 30% since its peak in 2022.

And of course, as part of our historic new funding model that will bring an additional \$6.4 billion to the sector—the single largest investment in post-secondary education, not only in Ontario but Canadian history—we're investing \$150 million into our teacher education program, funding 4,000 more seats and increasing per-student funding by 27%. We know if we want to protect Ontario families' access to high-quality K-to-12 education, we cannot only ensure the teacher program is efficient, well-focused, and responsive to parents' needs; we must also ensure that we're expanding enrolment and ensuring our schools have the support they need to deliver a world-class education.

Not only will our new funding model raise operating funding to \$7 billion this fall—which is a 30% increase over this year—it also includes \$1.7 billion in additional funding to support 70,000 more seats in economy-driving sectors like STEM, health care and the skilled trades and, of course, teacher education.

While today we're supporting over 12,000 teaching students across Ontario through this record-setting investment, we will expand capacity and train even more teachers for classrooms in the future. We're growing the programs students want while building the workforce Ontario needs because that is how we protect this province.

Speaker, moving away from teacher education for a moment, I also want to touch on another component of the bill related to the Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario.

Following the introduction of our government's historic \$6.4-billion new funding model that is supporting our post-secondary sector, we've modernized and strengthened our strategic mandate agreements with each post-secondary institution.

Those agreements include clear performance expectations and accountability measures, a role that was once central to the Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario's mandate but is now firmly carried out by the government.

As performance and accountability functions already exist within government, and research is conducted across the sector, Ontario is introducing changes that would enable a future wind-

Hansard Monday, May 4, 2026
(Budget Bill Royal Assent, Bill 101 Third Reading)

down of the Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario. These changes would reduce duplication of functions in the post-secondary education sector, ensuring resources are focused on where they matter most: on student outcomes.

Speaker, this legislation is about focus: focus on outcomes, focus on preparedness and focus on ensuring our education system continues to meet the needs of Ontario students. It supports a teacher education system that's rigorous, practical and responsive to today's classrooms. It also strengthens oversight and accountability across the post-secondary sector. Taken together, these changes support students, educators and institutions alike.

For those reasons, Speaker, I am pleased to support Bill 101 at third reading, and I encourage all members of this House to do the same.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): Further debate?

Hon. Nolan Quinn: I'm pleased to rise today to join my colleague Minister Calandra, as well as my parliamentary assistant, MPP Coe, as we deliver third reading of Bill 101, the Putting Student Achievement First Act, 2026.

At its core, Bill 101 is about ensuring Ontario's K-to-12 and post-secondary education remains strong, responsive and focused on student success, both in classrooms today and in the years ahead. It's about protecting quality, strengthening accountability and making sure our systems evolve as the needs of learners, families and communities evolve as well.

Speaker, before I speak to the substance of this bill, I want to take a moment to explain why student achievement and teacher readiness matter to me personally. My wife is a teacher. Every day I see the dedication, preparation and care that goes into supporting her students, not just academically but emotionally and socially as well. Through her work, I have a front-row seat to the realities of today's classrooms, the diverse needs students bring with them, the importance of strong preparation and the difference a confident, well-supported teacher can make.

I'm also the parent of three young children, all of whom are growing up in Ontario's education system. Like every parent in this province, I want to know that when my children walk into a classroom, they are met by teachers who are well prepared, supported and ready to help them succeed. That perspective, both as partner to a teacher and as a parent, shapes how I approach legislation like Bill 101. That is why this bill is focused on ensuring our education system continues to deliver high-quality outcomes for students today and for generations to come.

I'd like to begin by acknowledging that it has been an historic year for funding for Ontario's post-secondary institutions. Our teacher education programs are no exception. In February, we launched a historic \$6.4-billion funding model for the post-secondary sector. Through this new model, we're investing an additional \$150 million into our teaching education programs, funding 4,000 more seats and increasing per-student funding by 27%. Under this new funding model, we're investing \$1.7 billion to expand enrolment in key labour-market-driven programs, like teaching. Because we know Ontario needs more teachers, we're expanding seats to ensure our pipeline of highly qualified teachers remains strong, nimble and responsive to community needs today and into the future.

Now let's dive into how this bill strengthens that pipeline. Bill 101 would enable a more focused and efficient teacher education model. Under this legislation, we would modernize teacher

Hansard Monday, May 4, 2026
(Budget Bill Royal Assent, Bill 101 Third Reading)

education by transitioning to a one-year, 12-month program, reducing the time to launch meaningful, successful careers.

Since 2015, our teaching programs have been four academic semesters over two years. But our evidence shows that it's the in-classroom experience, not the length of the program, that creates a great teacher. By condensing teaching programs to one year, we're breaking down time and cost barriers to students, saving future teachers up to \$3,000 and enabling them to join the workforce sooner.

As I said earlier, our research shows that the strongest teachers spend the most time in the classroom during their education. That's why this legislation would enable us to identify a practicum length that best prepares future teachers for success. We would be consulting with the sector to maximize the length of time students spend in the classroom, getting the hands-on skills they need to thrive. Then we would build that practicum length into every single teaching program in Ontario so that every community has access to teachers who have the hands-on skills they need to give our kids an exceptional education.

Another critical piece of this bill is our intention to explore opportunities to implement advanced standing pathways for teacher education applicants with prior credentials and experience.

Across Ontario, there are passionate individuals with relevant backgrounds, such as early childhood educators, educational assistants and those with industry or skilled trades experience who want to become teachers and whose experience enriches the classroom. We think they should be recognized for that. With this legislation, we would explore opportunities to implement advanced standing pathways for teacher education applicants with prior credentials and experience.

The government would evaluate pathways consistently by applying a clear, standardized set of criteria developed with OCT and faculties of education to assess the relevance of applicants' prior credentials and experience, enabling more qualified, passionate individuals to jump-start their careers faster, bringing their valuable skill set into our classrooms, especially when it comes to second-career and mature applicants, who are bettering themselves through further education.

By bringing these three pillars together—a one-year teaching program, a longer standardized practicum and recognizing prior relevant learning—we would break down barriers, prioritize in-class learning and create a nimbler, more responsive pipeline to meet the needs of students and families.

We recognize that shifting program design requires careful implementation. That's why our government would work closely with the universities that offer teacher education, as well as the Ontario College of Teachers, to ensure a smooth transition. In addition, we would also provide funding to our institutions to support the costs of transitioning to the new program.

This program would not go into effect until May 2027, meaning all of the programs that begin before then, like the ones this fall, would follow the existing format, keeping things straightforward for our current students. Our proposed start date of May 2027 also means our first cohort of students under the new program would graduate by May 2028. This graduation date better aligns with the K-to-12 school calendar so that our students have finished their

Hansard Monday, May 4, 2026
(Budget Bill Royal Assent, Bill 101 Third Reading)

education right when our school boards are looking to hire for the fall, increasing graduates' ability to be hired and start their meaningful careers sooner.

Speaker, education is, at its heart, about students. It is about giving learners the support they need to succeed, whether they are children in our kindergarten classrooms, teenagers preparing for graduation or adults returning to post-secondary education to build new skills and new opportunities. It is about ensuring that every student, regardless of where they live or the pathway they choose, has access to high-quality instruction and meaningful opportunity. It is about ensuring that the professionals who guide them, our teachers, are well-prepared, confident in their abilities and supported by a system that values both excellence and fairness.

Bill 101 reflects that responsibility. It recognizes that a strong education system does not stand still. It evolves thoughtfully, guided by evidence, informed by experience and grounded in what works best for students in the classroom. This legislation modernizes teacher education while maintaining the high standards that Ontario families expect and that our educators deserve. It protects current students by ensuring stability, clarity and continuity during transition. It removes unnecessary barriers for future educators while preserving the professionalism and accountability that define the teaching profession. And, of course, it is backed by critical strategic investment, because when we invest in strong teachers, we invest in strong classrooms. When we support students effectively, we support families and communities.

Bill 101 brings these principles together. It reflects a careful balance between modernization and stability, between flexibility and rigour and between responding to today's realities and planning responsibly for the future. For those reasons, Speaker, I am proud to support Bill 101 at third reading, and I respectfully encourage all members of this House to do the same in the shared interest of Ontario's students, educators and their communities.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): Further debate?

Mr. Billy Pang: I will share the remaining government time with the member for Essex, after my speech.

I am pleased to rise today to speak to Bill 101, the Putting Student Achievement First Act, 2026.

Ontario's publicly funded education system plays an important role in shaping the lives of children and families across this province. Over the past several years, our government has taken meaningful steps to strengthen accountability. In 2023, we passed the Better Schools and Student Outcomes Act, recognizing that serious governance challenges were emerging in parts of the system. However, despite that action, incidents of poor judgment, financial mismanagement and governance breakdowns have continued to surface.

Since being sworn in as the Minister of Education, Minister Calandra has taken a close and careful look at how school boards across Ontario are operating. In too many cases, school boards had lost sight of their main purpose: supporting student achievement and well-being.

That's why, in November 2025, our government took another important step by passing the Supporting Children and Students Act. This legislation strengthened accountability measures for trustees and school boards and modernized the minister's oversight powers related to finance, governance and performance. Yet even after these reforms, troubling patterns persisted.

Hansard Monday, May 4, 2026
(Budget Bill Royal Assent, Bill 101 Third Reading)

Today, eight school boards are under provincial supervision. While this shows that the minister is prepared to act when boards fail to meet expectations, stronger oversight tools and clearer accountability measures are needed to protect public confidence and to ensure education funding supports students in classrooms. Speaker, Bill 101 responds directly to this need.

The cases I outlined today clearly demonstrate how stronger legislation is not only appropriate but essential. The most recent example is the York Catholic District School Board. For years, this board has experienced instability, frequent leadership changes and ongoing governance disputes. Over nine years, it had seven directors of education and trustees fail at stabilizing the situation. Trustee infighting at the board has resulted in more than \$300,000 in legal costs related to internal disputes and code-of-conduct investigations.

Despite the minister giving the board advance notice and time to respond to concerns, it wasn't able to find realistic solutions. They were unable to address growing deficits and depleted reserves caused by years of inadequate financial management. The minister had little choice but to step in and place the board under supervision.

At Peel District School Board, ongoing financial mismanagement resulted in five consecutive years of deficits. These challenges threatened the board's long-term sustainability and led to a proposed mid-year layoff plan that would have seen 60 classroom teachers lose their jobs, disrupting learning for nearly 1,400 students in the middle of the school year. We put a stop to that and placed the board under supervision to restore financial discipline.

The Near North District School Board presents one of the clearest examples of how governance failure directly affects students. A ministry review uncovered years of dysfunction, weak leadership and chronic mismanagement. These failures contributed to serious disruption in student learning during the opening of a new JK-to-grade-12 school in Parry Sound. Hundreds of students were forced to temporary classrooms, remote learning or unsafe facilities in a half-demolished high school.

A review found a deeply divided board with limited understanding of basic governance principles. The minister issued 15 binding directions to address these issues and attempt to restore accountability and strengthen governance. The board failed to comply with most of them within the required timelines. At that point, supervision was not optional; it was essential to restore accountability and ensure students' needs came first.

Unfortunately, financial missteps are not isolated events happening at one or two boards, they are happening even at the largest board. Financial and governance issues have also affected the Toronto District School Board, the largest board in Ontario. In December 2024, the Auditor General of Ontario issued an extensive report that examined school safety, financial management and capital planning at the board. That report revealed serious issues, including instances where purchases lacked proper documentation, multi-year financial planning was not consistently used to guide long-term sustainability, and the continued funding of programs without clear evidence of effectiveness.

These findings echoed many of the concerns the ministry had repeatedly raised with the board over the past few years. This includes a formal warning about the board's failure to meet its financial obligations under the Education Act.

Hansard Monday, May 4, 2026
(Budget Bill Royal Assent, Bill 101 Third Reading)

Despite these warnings, trustees failed to take significant corrective action. A financial investigation followed and made it clear that the board was relying on short-term, unsustainable measures such as selling off properties to present a balanced budget while underlying deficits remained unsolved.

Between 2021 and 2025, millions of dollars in proposed cost-saving measures were either rejected by trustees or fell short of addressing the board's ongoing deficits. As a result, the board's financial position became increasingly fragile and put students and taxpayers at greater risk.

Similar issues have emerged at other boards. In 2025, the Toronto Catholic District School Board tripled its in-year deficit compared to the previous year and was at risk of default in the coming years. The board could have done more to avoid this financial decline, but they didn't. It lacked a viable financial recovery plan.

Similarly, since the 2021-22 school year, the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board has been reporting in-year deficits. At the end of the 2023-24 school year, the board had completely depleted its reserves.

Perpetually running deficits and plans to use proceeds from asset sales to balance its books are not sustainable in the long run. Financial investigators recommended these three school boards—the Toronto District School Board, the Toronto Catholic District School Board and the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board—be placed under supervision.

The Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board has also exhibited instances of mismanagement and poor decision-making that put its long-term financial health at risk. Following concerns about the significant accumulated deficit, ministry staff conducted a financial investigation of the board in June 2025. Not only were there growing deficits and depleting reserves, but that report found that the board was at risk of defaulting on its payments and financial obligations. Because of this, the board was placed under supervision to help get the organization back on track.

Let me give you another example of how skewed some spending choices have become. One of the clearest and most troubling examples is the outrageous spending at the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board. Last fall, trustees spent nearly \$190,000 on a trip to Italy in July 2024 to buy religious art for two new schools, which also included expenses for luxury accommodations, fine dining, hospitality costs and legal fees to manage the fallout.

It was a shocking misuse of taxpayers' dollars, and our government could not ignore it. A governance review ordered by then-Minister of Education Jill Dunlop found mismanagement of public funds, poor transparency and failure to follow their own procurement policy. The minister was clear that taxpayer money had to be repaid and that accountability was non-negotiable.

When one trustee failed to meet the expectation, our government was forced to introduce proposed legislation that, if passed, would have vacated the office of the trustee who refused to repay the balance owed toward these travel expenses. The minister continues to closely monitor the situation at the school board.

Another example came from the Thames Valley District School Board. In August 2024, the board decided that sending 18 senior board officials on a three-day retreat to the former

Hansard Monday, May 4, 2026
(Budget Bill Royal Assent, Bill 101 Third Reading)

SkyDome hotel in downtown Toronto was a priority amid their multi-million-dollar budget deficit. This same board also chose to raise compensation levels for several executive members.

These actions triggered our government to order an investigation into the board's financial position and executive pay practices. It found instances of non-compliance with the Broader Public Sector Executive Compensation Act, 2014, and the board's own policies regarding compensation frameworks. Between 2020 and 2022, when the world was grappling with the challenges and uncertainty of COVID-19, several senior board officials decided to give themselves an additional 10% pay bonus, which ranged from \$15,000 to \$24,000.

In another instance, the school board promoted a superintendent role to associate director level without the approval of their own trustees—a position that offered an increased salary range of \$40,000. As a result, the investigator recommended the ministry place the school board under supervision.

Madam Speaker, Ontario's public education system is one of our most important public institutions. Its success depends on strong governance, responsible financial management, and a shared commitment to student success.

Bill 101 strengthens accountability, clarifies expectations for trustees and provides the tools needed to act before problems escalate. This proposed legislation, if passed, is a key part of our government's plan to make sure every dollar supports students in classrooms, especially those who need it most.

Thank you for your time, and I'd like to share the floor with the member from Essex.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): Further debate?

Mr. Anthony Leardi: I think I've said this enough times, but I'm going to say it again. I grew up on the 2nd Concession of Anderdon township, and when you head north on the 2nd Concession and you turn east on the middle side road, you go two concessions down, and there you'll find Anderdon Public School. That was the best school in the world. That's where I went to school. That's where my brother went to school. That's where my sisters went to school and we had the best teachers.

One of the best things about going to Anderdon Public School was going to the library. When we lined up to go to the library, we were so excited because the library was the most awesome place in all of Anderdon Public School. The teacher always warned us before we went to the library: "You must walk through the hallways. You must walk. And do not run in the library."

So we would walk diligently to the library, and as we got closer and closer, we'd start walking a little faster, and as we got to the doors of the library, the first student would open the door, and the first few students would kind of start trotting into the library. They had to get there fast, because everybody wanted to get the dinosaur books. And the dinosaur books, we all knew where it was; they were on the lower shelves on the right-hand side of the library. You had to get there fast, because if you were too slow, all of the dinosaur books would be gone. And me being the very diligent and rule-abiding student that I was, I was always too late to get to the dinosaur books, because everybody else didn't walk. They ran to the library.

We had a marvellous librarian, and she was your quintessential librarian. She had a pair of glasses on a chain that hung around her neck. We would gather around and she would have us

Hansard Monday, May 4, 2026
(Budget Bill Royal Assent, Bill 101 Third Reading)

sit down and cross our legs, and she would read books to us. She had the most marvellous, beautiful accent. She had an English accent, which to me, as a little Italian kid, I was mesmerized by this English accent. It was beautiful. It was everything. It was royal. It was a royal accent, and she would read books to us, and I remember her so well. Her name was Jessie Klein-Lebbink. She was a marvellous librarian and epitomized everything that I loved about school.

Many years later, after I had read and reread my absolute favourite story about 16 or 17 times, it came out as a movie, and I could not but help myself to pick up the phone and call my favourite librarian and one of my favourite teachers. I said, “I haven’t seen you since I left Anderdon Public School, but this movie has come out, and we have to go see it together. So I set up a date with Jessie Klein-Lebbink and Ms. Bland and the three of us went to go see *The Hobbit* on opening night, and it was the best experience. I am so glad that I did that with Jessie Klein-Lebbink.

It’s a great, great thing to have a dedicated professional like that. Jessie Klein-Lebbink passed away on April 14, 2026, and that is my ode to her and to all the great people in that profession, especially the great teachers from Anderdon Public School, who did a great job in raising so many fine children in and around Anderdon.

Now I’ll get more into the meat of our legislation today. I had the opportunity to participate in the committee hearing on Bill 101, and during that committee hearing, we heard from an individual named Domenic Scuglia—fitting name—and Mr. Scuglia is a retired educator. He had 41 years of experience in the education sector. He was, for eight years, a director of education. He spent five of those years in Saskatchewan and three in Ontario as a director of education. Mr. Scuglia said that “student learning, accountability and consistent standards must remain at the centre of our education system.” And that, Madam Speaker, is the foundation of Bill 101.

Mr. Scuglia talked about his experience as a director of education and, in particular, he made reference to his three years at the York Catholic board. Mr. Scuglia said this about his experience at the York Catholic board: “There were a number of decisions that were made by the elected officials that were not always in the best interests of children.” He said, “I don’t want to paint all the trustees with the same brush, but specifically, there was a majority in that particular situation that required the Minister of Education to intervene because decisions weren’t always being made in the best interests of children.”

This was coming from Mr. Scuglia, with 41 years of experience in the sector—a retired director with direct experience with that specific school board.

Mr. Scuglia touched on the provisions of Bill 101. He said that one of the strengths of the bill is that it responds to a real concern: the need for accountability in the school system. And he felt that Bill 101 was in fact seeking to address that strengthening of oversight and creating more consistency across Ontario. He said that consistency matters.

Mr. Scuglia took a moment to talk about financial pressures and operational inconsistency at school boards. He said this: “Decision-making that becomes disconnected from student outcomes”—when that happens, “the province has both the right and the responsibility to step in.” And he actually said that it was appropriate in those circumstances for the minister to step in.

Hansard Monday, May 4, 2026
(Budget Bill Royal Assent, Bill 101 Third Reading)

He also had this to say about the York Catholic school board. He said he was a witness to these challenges. He said he was a director of education there for three years, and “it was evident that not all of the elected officials were present to ensure student and staff success. Hence, the Minister of Education rightfully intervened.”

I think if there was one thing that I remember most about Mr. Scuglia’s presentation, it was that he said that there needs to be a reset. He said that trustees are responsible for multi-million-dollar budgets. They’re responsible for creating effective policies. They’re responsible for leading strategic planning and hiring, the performance of managing, and they might not have any formal qualifications to do any of this. In his words, “It is not surprising that the system needs to be reset.” I think that’s what Bill 101 does: It’s a reset.

He also touched upon the creation of a financial officer for school boards, and he had this to say: “Obviously, you need someone with strong financial acumen to help manage a multi-million-dollar—in some cases, billion-dollar—budget.” He said that at present, there was no requirement for financial acumen, there’s no requirement for human resources acumen, and that from time to time, an elected official, unless they take that training, won’t have it. And the training is voluntary, so even if you offer the training, they might not take you up on it.

He ended his presentation by saying that public education succeeds when it’s “guided by high expectations, responsible governance and a steadfast commitment to children. Bill 101 represents an opportunity to reaffirm those principles.” I agree with Mr. Scuglia.

During this committee hearing we also had an opportunity to hear from Judy Bornais. Judy Bornais is currently serving as vice-president, external, of the University of Windsor. She is in the nursing faculty. She has a pedagogical background, and her pedagogical background is in experiential learning. She spoke specifically to what this bill, Bill 101, does in terms of the training of professional educators. She said that there are four key reasons why our institutions—and when she said “our institutions,” I think she was referring to universities—“see this change in teachers’ education as a positive step for Ontario and students....”

What Bill 101 proposes to do is to change the teaching program to expand what I will call experiential learning. We can refer to that as practicum. We can refer to that as student teaching or practice teaching. She called it experiential learning. She commented quite favourably on that, and she said the following four points:

First, that it would reduce costs. And while that wasn’t the overriding principle at stake here, it was worth mentioning.

She also stated that “the proposed model looks to strengthen and standardize practicum which is central to teacher candidates’ development.” She said that there was an emphasis on that and that, in her opinion, it aligned with the philosophy of the University of Windsor. She said that it would assist in “integrating strong pedagogical in-class learning with high-quality, hands-on experiential learning for our students.” And when she said “students,” she meant those training to be teachers. She also underlined the fact that a strong practicum component, married with a really robust and thoughtful curriculum, as well as mentorship, were things that would ensure the success of people seeking to get training as professional educators, and she said that Bill 101 includes these components.

Hansard Monday, May 4, 2026
(Budget Bill Royal Assent, Bill 101 Third Reading)

She went on to talk about mentoring. She observed that our government is committing \$16.8 million to support associate teachers and mentoring teachers in the classroom, and she believed that this was supported by the research. She said that the “research supports the view that a high-quality practicum, focused on mentorship and reflective practice, matters more for teacher preparation than” the mere length of the program. In other words, even if we shorten the program from two years to one year, it is the quality of the program that matters more than the length of the program. That was her observation.

She went on to observe that we need to get some qualified teachers into the classroom faster, when Ontario needs them. She made specific reference to the expected retirement projections over the next few years and also made reference to shortages in the French-language system, which need to be replaced.

I appreciated the comments made by Judy Bornais as the vice-president of the University of Windsor, especially with respect to her qualifications in the realm of experiential learning.

It is worth it to touch momentarily on what a candidate goes through when training to become a qualified teacher in Ontario. There is what I will refer to as an experiential portion of the training. It’s often called practicum or student teaching or practice teaching. That is when the candidate actually goes into the classroom and takes responsibility for a class and teaches that class. Typically, when this occurs, the teacher who normally has the responsibility for that classroom is present in the classroom and observing the candidate as the candidate goes through the daily lesson or the daily activities that are happening in that classroom.

At the end of that experience, or throughout the progress of that experience, what I will refer to as the mentor teacher will then do a report to the candidate, and that is to assist the candidate in showing the candidate what they’re doing well, what they need to improve on, and assisting the candidate in improving their skills at a real level—that is to say, right in the classroom. A good mentor can give you very good advice but, even better, can show you exactly what needs to be done and how to do it. That is one portion of the training process that candidates go through in order to become teachers. At the end of that experience, they will even be marked.

Touching on, now, the other portion of the training, which is academic training, the candidate will be given certain courses at the university and take exams just like any other university course or any other university exam and, of course, be scored accordingly. One of those courses is typically a course in educational psychology. That is a method by which the candidates will learn how to properly manage their classrooms. We refer to it as classroom management. Some people might use the word “discipline,” but I don’t think “discipline” captures the entire understanding of what there is to be done. “Classroom management” is a better phrase because with proper management of a classroom, often teachers avoid disciplinary measures with their students.

And so those are some of the positive aspects that we heard at committee with regard to Bill 101. I’m pleased to support the bill and, of course, pleased to improve education in Ontario.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): Questions?

Ms. Chandra Pasma: My question is to the minister. The minister tried to claim in committee last week that the 43 references to liability in the bill and the sweeping immunity protections that the bill gives him are standard for cabinet ministers, but here’s what the Canadian Civil Liberties

Hansard Monday, May 4, 2026
(Budget Bill Royal Assent, Bill 101 Third Reading)

Association had to say about them: that they are “some of the most aggressive liability-shielding provisions seen in Ontario legislation in recent memory....

“This arrangement is fundamentally incompatible with the rule of law’s requirement that government be answerable for its actions. Bill 101’s liability provisions come dangerously close to insulating provincial decision-making from all meaningful legal accountability.”

Why would the minister need to protect himself from all meaningful legal accountability? Is it because he plans to cut education funding even further and fire more teachers?

Hon. Paul Calandra: Well, it’s clear that I disagree with them. Having said that, Madam Speaker, the member opposite had the opportunity to bring forward amendments that would have changed bargaining. They didn’t do that. The member opposite had the opportunity to bring forward amendments that would have eliminated the CEO position. That didn’t happen. They had the opportunity to bring forward amendments with respect to attendance. That didn’t happen.

Ultimately, what I think here is that the opposition is seizing on one part of the bill which they think they can make some noise about, with respect to crown liability. We already have that. Ministers are already inoculated from liability when it comes to their duties. This bill just reinforces that.

But at the same time, we’re bringing forward a bill—which I hope the member will appreciate and vote in favour of—that gives our teachers, students and parents the opportunity to ensure that they have the best ability to succeed going forward. I think the member would do well to support that bill, as she seemed to have done in committee.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): Questions?

M^{me} Lucille Collard: This bill is clearly applying a blanket control measure over all school boards because some of them misbehaved and didn’t look after their funds appropriately, and the minister just wants to punish everyone. I’m wondering why that is.

Moreover, can the minister acknowledge that what’s happening in our schools and our classrooms is a lack of support? The reason why our kids are not achieving their full potential is because their teachers don’t have the full potential. The teachers are not staying in the profession because the support is simply not there and the working conditions are untenable and these are ripple effects. Our kids are not being supported. There are not enough adults in our schools to support the kids, so why is he not putting forward legislation that will actually make an improvement in our school system?

Hon. Paul Calandra: This is one of a series of pieces of legislation that reverses 15 years of catastrophic administration by the previous Liberal government.

This bill, in co-operation with the budget bill, brings forward resources directly to the classroom. It restores attendance and participation as part of the marks for student achievement. It is based on things that we have been hearing from educators themselves.

When we talk about school board administration, the Liberal Party themselves—when we talked about eliminating fees and outside fees and memberships so that trustees pay millions of dollars back into the classroom, the Liberals actually sent out something saying that they disagree with that. They actually disagree with putting millions of dollars—so on the one hand, they say, “Put

Hansard Monday, May 4, 2026
(Budget Bill Royal Assent, Bill 101 Third Reading)

more money back into the classroom,” but on the opposite side, they say, “We disagree with anything that would take money away from trustees that goes back into the classroom.”

Look, I think we’re going to continue to do what we said we were going to do: more money into the classrooms; more money to support teachers; more money to support our students; less money for the things that divide our communities; and more to bringing our communities together and focusing on student achievement.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): Question?

Mr. Ric Bresee: I want to express my appreciation to all the members that spoke to this before, and I would have liked my question to actually involve the member for Essex and talking more about the books that he loved as a child because I also loved *The Hobbit* as well, but my question will be to the minister.

Speaker, people in my riding are telling me that there’s just too much infighting, too much politics at the school board level. We have seen so many examples—the York district school board being one of them—but can the minister please talk about how Bill 101’s new chief executive officer model will bring the kind of professionalism and qualified leadership to our school boards that we so desperately need?

Hon. Paul Calandra: I thank the member for that. It’s obviously something that we saw almost unanimity on that, because there were no amendments brought forward to eliminate the position of chief executive officer.

What it does is, the chief executive officer will handle the business of the board: the capital, human resources of the board, the budgeting and the finances. The chief education officer will be focused solely on student achievement. That’s it. Trustees will still have a role and trustees, we have heard over and over and over again, that they want to focus on representing students and parents; well, this bill allows them to do that.

I was very, very excited: One of the heads of one of the biggest unions in the province of Ontario also agreed with me that this bill would allow some of his members to be in charge of school boards, something that is not there. I don’t know why the NDP, who claim to be sympatico with some of our unions, would keep them away from leadership roles in our school boards. That’s not what Conservatives do. We believe that all people should have extraordinary opportunities, and this bill builds on that opportunity for even our best union members and our friends across the board.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): Question?

Ms. Chandra Pasma: The minister put on a pretty disrespectful display in committee last week, attacking teachers and education workers who are on the front lines of our education system every day, who had just come to share their perspectives on education and what’s in this bill and what’s needed. But the minister also got the facts wrong in a number of areas, including what happens in bargaining, who represents the employer’s side and who is actually bargaining on behalf of the employer.

That included very aggressively attacking a respected constitutional and labour lawyer, Paul Cavalluzzo—cutting him off, not even allowing him to talk. Although the Catholic trustees in the afternoon were able to confirm that the minister was incorrect, that trustees are currently full

Hansard Monday, May 4, 2026
(Budget Bill Royal Assent, Bill 101 Third Reading)

bargaining partners and that they use highly professional labour negotiators in order to conduct negotiations, will the minister correct his record and apologize to Paul Cavalluzzo?

Hon. Paul Calandra: Am I going to apologize to a lawyer who got his facts wrong? No, I'm not going to apologize to a lawyer who got his facts wrong. If the member felt so passionately about it, she could have simply brought an amendment to it, but she didn't.

Look, here's the reality: I believe that the Catholic trustees are going to maintain their ability to ensure the denominational rights are maintained. That is going to continue to happen through this legislation. The member opposite could have brought amendments forward, but they didn't bring those amendment forwards, which, to me, highlights the fact that they agree with the legislation.

The member for Essex—and a good Italian like me—if that was disrespectful, can you imagine these high-priced union lawyers, these high-priced union representatives, around our dinner table on a Sunday after the—come on. They wouldn't last five minutes around an Italian dinner table on a Sunday afternoon, my gosh. If that's the wallflowers that they have representing them, I look forward to negotiations in the fall.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): Question?

Mr. Anthony Leardi: I was in there in those committee meetings. I've got to say, I think that the questions put by the minister were actually very direct and pointed. I'm surprised that any member of the bar in Ontario would faint and fall on the floor simply by being asked a few hard questions—

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): My apologies for cutting you off. I understand, because you were part of the debate, you cannot ask a question.

Questions?

Mr. Tyler Allsopp: It's a pleasure to rise today and ask a question about this debate.

The member from Ottawa West–Nepean said that the minister was attacking a lawyer, wouldn't let him speak and was talking over him. The interesting thing is, I watched the minister. As you were asking your question, he sat there very silently. As soon as he started to give his answer, you were heckling him the whole time.

My question to you is, would you like to apologize for your rudeness to the minister, and would you like to withdraw that statement?

Hon. Paul Calandra: I agree. In the one sense, they're all bent out of shape. They're all bent out of shape that there—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): Order. Order.

Minister of Education.

Hon. Paul Calandra: Again, you saw right here, right? They heckle you. When they don't get the answer that they want, what they try to do is heckle you and shout you down.

Hansard Monday, May 4, 2026
(Budget Bill Royal Assent, Bill 101 Third Reading)

But as you know, colleagues, Conservatives will not be shut down. We will not be heckled out. We are going to continue to do what's right for students, parents and teachers, and that's why the—

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): Further debate?

Ms. Chandra Pasma: I want to note that I'll be sharing my time with the member for Windsor West. Also, given the government side's new-found appreciation for decorum, I look forward to delivering my remarks without any heckles or remarks from the government side.

Look, Speaker, I want to bring down the tone of this debate a little bit to reflect on what's really at stake here, because despite all of the minister's antics and theatrics, what we're talking about are very serious issues that have an incredibly profound impact on our kids, on their futures and on the many caring adults who support them every single day, on their parents, their families and their communities.

I just want to talk about the number of incidents I had over the past three days over the weekend in Ottawa West—Nepean and how that reflects on our education system. It started on Friday in my office in Ottawa, where my staff told me about a situation where a severely disabled 17-year-old student at Bell High School in Nepean—she's non-verbal. Like many disabled students, having a familiar location, familiar routine and adults that she knows caring for her every day are incredibly important. Her family moved not too long ago, and she was assured that she would be allowed to stay at Bell High School for the rest of her school career. This was incredibly important to her family. They were very grateful.

But since the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board came under the supervision of a Conservative appointee named by the minister with no experience in education, who has already started making cuts to special education, this family was informed that their student will not be allowed to stay at Bell High School. There was no consultation with the family. There's been no opportunity to develop a transition plan. This is going to have a huge impact on the life of this 17-year-old and her family. This is just one of many decisions that I hear about constantly in Ottawa, where our most vulnerable kids are paying the price again and again for the lack of heart from this government and from the people who it appoints, who it has given full control for all of the decisions in our schools.

On Saturday morning, I was at Woodroffe United Church for their spring sale and a parent stopped me to tell me her story about her son who has autism. He's extremely bright, but he has some regulation issues and he has not been allowed to be at school full-time in quite some time. As a result, this parent—who is a teacher—has had to take a leave of absence from her job. She told me about the stress and anxiety and the financial impact on her family. She was just one of three parents in four days who I heard from who have had to quit their job or take a leave of absence from their job because of the failures of this government on special education and the Ontario Autism Program. Their kids can't get supports. They're not allowed to be at school full-time, so parents are unable to work because they have to provide that care.

And yet, year after year, what we keep seeing is more cuts to special education, not investments that would allow these kids to succeed and give them the future that they deserve. But it's also having a huge financial impact and strain on these families. The most extreme example, of course, is Arizona, whom I've already spoken about, who ended up in a shelter with her parents. She's four years old and non-verbal. Maybe not every family is at the point of

Hansard Monday, May 4, 2026
(Budget Bill Royal Assent, Bill 101 Third Reading)

ending up in the shelter, but many of them are really paying the price financially and are at a point where they have no cushion, no resilience. One more thing happens and it may be them who are living in a shelter.

That afternoon, my daughter was at ringette tryouts, and my husband said a teacher from her school came up to talk to him, knowing that I am the shadow minister for education, because the teacher just wanted to share that she's on leave from Sir Robert Borden High School, because of the number of violent incidents that she has witnessed or experienced. It just became a source of burnout and moral injury to be doing your best to support kids every single day, but seeing that level of violence and just being expected to carry on and keep going.

My daughter's gym teacher also hasn't been at school since March break, so my husband took the opportunity to ask about him. My daughter loves her gym teacher; he's an absolutely great guy. Our whole family knows him. She said he is likely on leave as well, due to the same issue. That's something that I've heard from many teachers, as well: the fact that they love their jobs, but they need to take leaves because of burnout.

My oldest daughter Mira was listening in on this conversation, as teenagers do when you're talking about something else—not what they do when you're talking to them. But she popped in to the conversation to say that there's an EA at her school who checks in on her and her friends frequently. They sit in the same spot in the hallway at lunch, and this EA will just stop in and ask the girls how they're doing. They love her so much that at Thanksgiving they did a potluck lunch to say thank you to her for all their support. This EA was on leave for a while, again due to burnout and disability issues. She came back, they saw her one day and she's gone again, like many education workers across the province.

Then, yesterday, I received a few messages from teachers, one saying that things have never been this bad, in 30 years of teaching. They have never seen the conditions in our schools so bad, never seen schools so cash-strapped, and they're worried about younger teachers who have no idea what education can actually be like when it's properly funded. Another teacher said to me, "Why we don't seem to put student well-being above power-grabbing is truly beyond me." That's just a snapshot from three days about what our students, what our teachers and education workers and what parents are experiencing.

I also want to share this submission from a teacher—Kimiko Shibata, who is an elementary teacher and parent from Kitchener, Ontario—which she shared with the social policy committee. I'm going to be sharing a lot from the social policy committee today because the government didn't allow hardly any time for people to share their perspectives, but I think this really provides the context for what our teachers and education workers are feeling right now. Kimiko says, "Educators and education workers are becoming increasingly burned out. We are tired of being given Kevlar and told that being injured on a regular basis is 'just part of the job.' We are tired of the moral injury of watching so many children's needs go unmet, day after day, and being told that we somehow need to teach academic and social skills while taking the place of trauma and grief counsellors, occupational therapists, speech-language pathologists and more ... often while also feeding and clothing many of the children in our care. We are already giving so much of our own time, money, resources and love to fill in the ever-widening gaps left by this government. We simply have no more to give."

I also want to share this from a teacher in the Peel District School Board, one of the 331 teachers who have been fired by the supervisor that the Minister of Education appointed—an

Hansard Monday, May 4, 2026
(Budget Bill Royal Assent, Bill 101 Third Reading)

appointment the minister supposedly made to save 50 or 60 jobs that would have been lost centrally. The supervisor then turned around and has fired 331 teachers from classrooms, and this is what one of them says:

“Losing my position within the PDSB has been a deeply destabilizing experience, especially after the immense effort it took to overcome my personal anxiety, and mental health struggles to start my career as an educator. I finally work in a school and classrooms where I feel safe and effective and now I am forced to leave. Being forced to leave a space where I am truly making a difference feels like a setback not just for my career, but for my well-being. The impact on my students is what weighs most heavily on me; seeing their devastation and hearing them question why their safe, caring adults are being removed is heartbreaking. They are losing their motivation to show up and learn because the supportive connections they rely on are being stripped away. This displacement doesn’t just affect my livelihood—it disrupts a vital support system for my kids and removes a ‘bright light’ from a staff community that is already struggling with the loss of dedicated educators.

“The hardest part is looking into my student’s eyes and having no good answer for why the person they finally felt safe with is being forced to walk away. It feels like I’m being asked to abandon a fire I worked so hard to light, leaving both my kids and myself back in the dark. Leaving my colleagues feels like losing a second family; we’ve leaned on each other through every challenge, and knowing my departure leaves a hole in our team’s heart is almost as painful as leaving the kids. It’s devastating to realize that the person my fellow teachers called a ‘bright light’ is being extinguished from the hallways we built together.

“It is terrifying to realize that after finally finding my light in the classroom, I’m now facing a future where I don’t know where my next paycheque or my next sense of purpose will come from, as this pattern is being seen in boards across the province.”

Again, this is just one of 331 teachers who’s being fired in the Peel District School Board, but they are among the thousands of teachers and education workers across the province who are being fired under this government right now.

I think that this really gives a sense of the urgency of the conditions in our schools: the crisis that our children, our students, our parents, our teachers, education workers, principals and community members are all experiencing. Things are pretty dire. What we really need to address this is, crucially, we need funding to reverse the repeated funding cuts that this government has made over the course of eight years in power—more than \$6.3 billion taken out of the system; \$500 million that was committed last year but not spent, despite the fact that these are the conditions in our schools; and the Financial Accountability Officer is saying another \$900 million was cut in the government’s most recent budget.

We need to bring down class sizes so kids can get academic supports that they need, and ensure that they have access to educational assistants and other supports that will help them succeed academically but also to keep them safe—child and youth workers and professional support staff who can address their mental health challenges and behavioural challenges and help keep them safe in the classroom supported in learning.

We need to address the health and safety of our schools, the fact that far too many of them are crumbling, are not in great shape and are overcrowded. We need to properly fund student transportation so that kids can get to school safely so that they can learn. And we need to

Hansard Monday, May 4, 2026
(Budget Bill Royal Assent, Bill 101 Third Reading)

properly fund special education so that our most vulnerable kids are even allowed to be at school, safe and supported in learning, with a meaningful education. Right now, 21,000 of them aren't even at our schools, and one in four of them is not allowed to attend school full time. That is a really shocking failure of the most vulnerable kids in our province.

That's what we need, but that's not what we're getting from this government and it's not what we're getting from this minister. Despite all of the funding cuts his government has made, despite the many areas where they are not funding what they know the costs of education are—whether it's the sick leave that they're bargaining or the CPP and EI premiums that the federal government sets, the student transportation costs that they require boards to bargain with private operators—they're not funding those full costs.

The Minister of Education refused in committee last week to commit to eliminating that gap and to properly funding education. He would not even commit to closing that \$850-million shortfall for special education that is leaving our kids suffering and excluded from school. That \$850 million would at least allow the boards to break even on special education. That wouldn't even begin to address the fact that so many of them are not safe or supported at school and that half of the parents don't feel that their child is getting any kind of meaningful education at school.

What we're getting from the minister is a power grab—centralization of power in his own hands without any kind of accountability. That's despite the fact that he does not have any education experience himself and that on every occasion he profoundly disrespects the people who are partners in delivering our education system every single day: the education workers, the teachers, the principals, who are on the front lines of our schools every single day, interacting with our kids, who know exactly what our kids need, the trustees, who are elected by their communities to be local voices, who are bringing the concerns of parents, of municipalities, of communities to the table and ensuring that they're reflected in education decisions. The minister has no respect for those partners whatsoever, and he is doing everything he can to squeeze them out of decision-making, despite the fact that it's really his government's decisions that are responsible for the challenges and crises that we're seeing in education today.

As I mentioned, he's showing a profound, sweeping disrespect for teachers and education workers, attacking them in committee when they came to share their perspectives on this legislation and what is needed, using those attacks to run attack ads—including against his own teacher, Speaker, which shows you exactly what this Minister of Education thinks of teachers and the work that they do.

He's creating new layers of bureaucracy, both within school boards, with the creation of now two executive roles, chief executive officers and chief education officers, and within the Ministry of Education, where all of the government's new red tape—which apparently they like eliminating elsewhere but they like creating in education. All of these new layers of bureaucracy—he said he's not going to add a single penny to our school boards to cover those costs. He said, "The ministry will not be providing boards ... with any additional funding" for "administration."

We know what that means, Speaker. When the costs go up at a school board and no funding goes up, that means the money is coming out of our kids' classrooms instead. That means fewer educators. It means fewer education workers. It means fewer custodians in the school. It means less paper, less pencils, less books, when our kids already hardly have enough to get by.

Hansard Monday, May 4, 2026
(Budget Bill Royal Assent, Bill 101 Third Reading)

The bill gives the minister sweeping immunity from the consequences of all of his actions. And I have to say again, Speaker, I don't think a minister who is genuinely committed to working with parents, with students, with teachers and education workers and principals to address the very real challenges in our education system needs to provide himself with sweeping immunity protections. Nobody is going to sue the Minister of Education in court if he properly funds education. Nobody is going to sue him if he makes sure that every class has a qualified teacher or education worker in it, if he brings down those class sizes. Nobody is going to sue him if he makes sure that there are mental health supports available in every single school on a regularly scheduled basis. Nobody is going to sue him if he makes sure that school buses are running on time and that routes are reasonable. The only reason that the minister would need such sweeping immunity protections is because he does not actually want to do the things that will make our education system safer and healthier for our kids or because he wants to actively do the opposite.

When the minister so viciously attacked teachers and education workers in committee, he was asked by journalists outside the room why he had done that, and he said he shouldn't be silenced, which was pretty ironic because there was only one day of committee hearings after the minister's one hour. That left only five hours for members of the public and for education partners to come and share their perspectives on the bill. So the vast majority of people who wanted to share their perspective on this legislation never had the opportunity; they were deliberately silenced by this government. And yet, somehow, the minister thought that he was the victim here, that he was being silenced and he needed more airtime.

He got his facts completely wrong, but that didn't stop him from yelling at witnesses. But this is part of the problem, because all of the partners who came to speak at committee confirmed that they had not been consulted on this bill. He didn't talk to education workers, he didn't talk to teachers, he didn't talk to principals, he didn't talk to parents and he didn't talk to trustees. And when you don't talk to anybody who is responsible for delivering education on the ground, who is in our schools every single day, who are in our communities around the province, who know their kids, who know what their kids need, who know what's happening in their kids' schools—when you don't consult them, then you're going to get facts wrong. And that's what happened to the minister.

And it's just one of the additional risks with this bill. When he's giving himself sweeping power over many, many things, but he thinks he knows everything and doesn't need to consult a single person, then we're going to continue to see more harmful decisions being made, more errors being made. Because the minister fundamentally does not understand education, does not know what is happening in our schools and does not care to work with the people who do.

And you know what that means, Speaker: It means, effectively, that we have a dictator in education. We have an emperor of education. Because fundamentally, education should be a partnership that respects student voices about what they need, that respects the professional expertise of teachers and education workers who have training and experience in the classroom, that respects the community voices that trustees bring to the table and the accountability that trustees demonstrate towards the people that elect them, that respects the voices of parents and advocates, whether they're advocating for accessibility for students with disabilities, whether they're advocating for equity and respect for the human rights of Black, racialized and Indigenous students, whether they're advocating for the fundamental

Hansard Monday, May 4, 2026
(Budget Bill Royal Assent, Bill 101 Third Reading)

constitutional rights of Franco-Ontarians. Those voices all need to be involved in education decision-making.

Education functions best as a partnership, but this minister doesn't like partnerships. He doesn't see any value in partnerships. He thinks he knows better than everybody else, despite the fact that he can't even get his facts straight.

And then, Speaker, there was the fact that when he was asked about the 21,000 kids who are excluded from our schools every single day and how he can possibly mandate that attendance be part of a student's grade when he won't even take action to ensure that every child in Ontario can be at school, his response was just that kids with disabilities will be exempted from the attendance requirement.

Parents of kids with disabilities don't want their kids exempted. They want their kids to have the same right that every other child in Ontario has: the right to be at school and the right to a meaningful education and the right to safety and support while at school.

So the minister's continued lack of respect for these kids by saying, "Don't worry, we just won't count it towards your grade," is incredibly problematic. I mean, these kids aren't even going to get grades if they can't be at school. The minister actually needs to listen to parents. He needs to listen to advocates and he needs to listen to students with disabilities about what they actually need.

And since the government didn't care to allow many voices at committee, I'm going to spend some time here sharing about the concerns that the committee heard, whether it was from the testimony that we did get to hear in person or whether it's from the over 100 written submissions that the committee received. More than 90% of them opposed the government's bill and said that the government should go back to the drawing table. So I'm going to talk about what concerns people raised in hopes that the government members will actually listen to the people of Ontario, listen to the people who are deeply affected by the measures in Bill 101, and do the right thing and vote against this bill at third reading.

The first thing I want to flag is that there are several parts of this bill that are potentially unconstitutional. And beside the fact that no government should be adopting legislation that is unconstitutional, what this also means is that if the government proceeds with this, then the people of Ontario are once again going to have to pay for this government to defend itself in court—for who knows how long, for who knows how many lawyer hours—when they could simply listen to people upfront and not adopt legislation that's unconstitutional.

They voted against numerous amendments in clause-by-clause that would have addressed unconstitutional provisions and would have ensured that the legislation respected constitutional rights. The committee members from the government side wouldn't even speak up to defend the government's position and why they thought unconstitutional measures should be in the bill.

I'm going to talk about the different areas where this bill may potentially be unconstitutional. The first is the impact that it has on francophone school boards, because we know that francophones have the constitutional right to an equitable education that is governed by and for Franco-Ontarians. And it's not a right that was given to them by the government; it is a right that they fought for, for decades, and won.

Hansard Monday, May 4, 2026
(Budget Bill Royal Assent, Bill 101 Third Reading)

But this bill gives the government power over French school boards in a number of areas which infringe on their right to govern their own education system, “par et pour les Franco-Ontariens.” And that includes the minister giving himself the power to determine where school boards may and may not buy land and whether or not they are allowed to do repairs.

Currently, they need to have the minister’s approval to build or expand a school, but not to repair a school. This legislation says even for repairs, now, they need to go to the minister. But the Association des enseignantes et des enseignants franco-ontariens says, “Ces mesures réduisent l’autonomie décisionnelle des conseils scolaires et limitent leur capacité à répondre rapidement et efficacement aux besoins des communautés francophones qu’ils desservent.”

They also note that when it comes to francophone materials or materials in the classroom, it’s very important that any such materials actually reflect the reality of Franco-Ontarians and the language of Franco-Ontarians: “Ces nouveaux pouvoirs centralisent des décisions pédagogiques essentielles et risquent d’imposer des approches uniformes qui ne tiennent pas compte des réalités linguistiques et culturelles du système francophone ni de l’expertise des professionnelles et professionnels de l’éducation.”

And finally, like many others, the AEFO raised concerns about the elimination of the “commission des langues d’enseignement” and the centralization of that power in the hands of the minister. They say, “Le remplacement d’un mécanisme spécialisé par une prise de décision ministérielle centralisée soulève des préoccupations quant à la protection des droits linguistiques et à la prise en compte des besoins éducatifs et culturels des francophones.”

FESFO, which is the Fédération de la jeunesse franco-ontarienne and represents francophone high school students in Ontario, says that they are also very concerned about the fact that the law does not respect the right of Franco-Ontarians to their own resources and materials in the classroom, “par et pour les francophones.”

“Plusieurs élèves s’inquiètent du fait que le projet de loi ne précise pas suffisamment si ces ressources seront créées par des francophones en Ontario. Ils et elles craignent que certains contenus soient simplement traduits de l’anglais, sans vraiment tenir compte des réalités culturelles vécues par les jeunes francophones de la province. Pour eux, il est important que les ressources ne soient pas seulement en français, mais qu’elles soient aussi pensées pour la francophonie ontarienne.”

And I just want to say, Speaker, one concern I frequently heard from francophone youth is that, far too often, their materials for the classroom, their textbooks, are available only in English or very poorly translated French. So the fact that the minister is giving himself the power to dictate what materials, textbooks and resources a francophone teacher in Ontario can use in a francophone school is incredibly concerning.

And this is what ADFO, who represents the francophone principals and vice-principals in the province, says about the elimination of the Languages of Instruction Commission and to the minister: “The dissolution of the Languages of Instruction Commission of Ontario removes an important specialized mechanism that supports equitable access to French-language education in minority settings and risks weakening safeguards aligned with section 23 charter obligations.

Hansard Monday, May 4, 2026
(Budget Bill Royal Assent, Bill 101 Third Reading)

“Increased centralization of authority at the ministry level may reduce responsiveness to the demographic, cultural and territorial realities that shape student success in French-language minority communities.

“The introduction of different employer governance models and labour relations may undermine staffing stability and labour relations in French-language schools, which already operate in a constrained recruitment environment.”

So they are also concerned, Speaker, about the fact that they are changing the governance model for bargaining for English boards but not in French boards, creating a dual structure where it's going to be difficult for francophone boards to maintain their rights when the dominant majority is seeing a change. So that's the rights of francophones.

Then there are concerns about the impact on the denominational rights of Catholics, who also have a right under section 93 of the Constitution Act to govern their own education system.

This is what the Catholic teachers say about the bargaining changes: “Under the proposed legislation, CODE becomes the employer bargaining agency. However, CODE is not independent of the government, insofar that the government may substitute another person or body for CODE—and also may make decisions regarding the authority of CODE's bargaining committee, its processes for decision-making under the legislation, and requirements to provide information to the government.

“This lack of independence from government control demonstrates that CODE cannot be a steward of denominational rights protecting Catholics from government intrusive actions....

“In short, the body enshrined by our constitution to protect the Catholicity of the system has been sidelined by the government, which has been constitutionally prohibited from interfering in the system....

“To remove the custodian of denominational rights from collective bargaining and replace it with a government-controlled body creates the conditions for unconstitutional intrusion.”

This was a concern that was echoed by the Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association as well, when the minister got his fact wrong about how Catholic trustees are actually engaged in bargaining currently.

There are also concerns raised by both sides about the impact of the government's changes to bargaining on the rights to free and fair collective bargaining in Ontario.

This is what the Catholic teachers have to say:

“The Supreme Court of Canada has repeatedly affirmed that s.2(d) includes the right to meaningful collective bargaining, including the ability of employees to engage in a process that is independent, in good faith, and free from substantial interference by the state. Legislation that undermines the capacity of one party to bargain freely or that gives the state undue control over the process may constitute an infringement of this right.

“In this context, Bill 101 raises concerns that:

“—the minister's ability to override or replace the employer bargaining agent may constitute substantial interference in the bargaining process;

Hansard Monday, May 4, 2026
(Budget Bill Royal Assent, Bill 101 Third Reading)

“—the regulation-making authority over bargaining structures may limit the independence and autonomy of the employer side; and

“—taken together, these provisions may undermine the meaningful nature of collective bargaining, as required by the charter.”

But when the NDP moved amendments to say that the government was going to keep collective bargaining free of any political interference and that it would abide by section 2(d) of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the government members voted against those amendments.

Another area where the government voted against an amendment is the minister’s unprecedented control over board communications. The Canadian Civil Liberties Association particularly flagged the minister’s ability to control the communications of individual trustees, especially given that trustees are an elected level of government in Canada, saying that this is possible infringement of freedom of expression under section 2(b) of the Charter.

This is what CCLA has to say: “Ministerial control over the public communications of elected trustees is particularly alarming. Elected officials have a fundamental right—and responsibility—to communicate with their constituents. Restrictions on that communication interfere with the free flow of information between public representatives and those they represent and may also raise concerns under section 2(b) of the charter.”

Again, this is a pretty profound infringement of a fundamental right in Canada, which is setting the government up for a potential charter challenge that we’re all going to have to pay for. That’s money that will be going to pay government lawyers that should be going into our classrooms to make sure that our children have EA and mental health supports.

So the government is attacking all of these constitutional rights—of francophones, of Catholics, of unionized workers, of freedom of expression and freedom of speech—in the province, which might be why they have to give themselves such sweeping immunity provisions. As I’ve noted before, the bill says “liability” 43 times, but only says “student” five times, and it doesn’t mention classrooms, mental health or special education at all. In committee, the minister tried to claim that the liability provisions of this bill—none of which appear in the Education Act, which has existed for 36 years and has been in place under Ministers of Education of all parties, who have managed to function without these liability provisions—the minister still tried to claim that these are “standard” for ministers, but here is what the civil liberties association said:

“Proposed sections 17.2 and 17.3 contain some of the most aggressive liability-shielding provisions seen in Ontario legislation in recent memory. These sections extinguish causes of action against ministers and crown agents personally, bar most tort and related remedies in court, and eliminate causes of action against the crown for acts of third parties related to functions under the act.

“By barring claims in tort, contract, restitution, unjust enrichment, breach of trust, and fiduciary duty—while simultaneously deeming government-appointed supervisors to be officers of the board for vicarious liability purposes—the bill transfers financial risk to local boards while insulating the province from legal consequences for its own decisions. This arrangement is fundamentally incompatible with the rule of law’s requirement that government be answerable for its actions. Bill 101’s liability provisions come dangerously close to insulating provincial decision-making from all meaningful legal accountability.”

Hansard Monday, May 4, 2026
(Budget Bill Royal Assent, Bill 101 Third Reading)

“Fundamentally incompatible with the rule of law’s requirement that government be answerable for its actions,” Speaker: It’s hard to be more clear than that about the dangers of this government’s legislation.

We also heard concerns from parent groups like Parents of Black Children Canada, who said that the “expanded liability protections for the minister and decision-makers, including ‘good faith’ provisions”—which means that the minister and the supervisors don’t even have to demonstrate that they acted in good faith—“do not require any consideration of equity,” which “reduces families’ ability to seek redress and weakens accountability when harm occurs.” And Parents of Black Children Canada raised concerns that, over a year after the human rights commissioner said there is systemic anti-Black racism in our education system, the minister has still not implemented the Dreams Delayed road map to address that systemic anti-Black racism. So when the government is doing that on one hand and providing itself with these sweeping protections on the other, then you have to think that there is no intent at all to address anti-Black racism and that what the government is trying to do is to protect themselves from any attempt to hold them accountable for that failure.

The AODA Alliance, the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act Alliance, also raised concerns for the liability protections, saying:

“Bill 101 gives the education minister and cabinet a vast amount of highly discretionary power. Yet it imposes few if any legislative guardrails limiting or constraining how these sweeping and arbitrary powers are to be used. In large government bureaucracies such power too often risks bad decisions and troubling abuses.

“At the same time, this bill is replete with unnecessary and harmful provisions that are designed to insulate Ontario government officials and some others as much as possible from legal liability in the courts for their actions. This substantially reduces the important checks and balances that the court system provides in a democracy. It is a cruel irony that Bil 101 aggressively protects the power of the Ontario government to sue others.”

So again, just like with consultation, if you want to centralize 100% of the power in your own hands and you want to have zero accountability for your own actions, then essentially you are demanding to be a dictator. You are demanding power with no accountability and no consequences for your own actions. There’s really no other word for it.

The informal association of parent involvement councils also raised some significant concerns on behalf of parents, noting that there have been a few deaths of students in Ontario schools that have been related to the lack of funding and the lack of supports at school to keep people safe. They say that these limitations of liability therefore “raise grave concerns about minimum levels of funding to ensure that all students are able to learn to capacity and be safe at school.” They want the bill to be amended to allow the crown and the Ministry of Education to be held legally and financially accountable for remedies imposed by courts, tribunals and/or arbitral remedies so that they may be compelled to make financial adjustments to ensure all our children have enough qualified teachers and staff at school and can return home safely.

And again, Speaker, if it was your intention to have enough qualified teachers, to have enough qualified staff to ensure that every child could return home safely at the end of the day, why would you need immunity protections? No parent is going to be upset with you for making sure their kid comes home safely at the end of the day.

Hansard Monday, May 4, 2026
(Budget Bill Royal Assent, Bill 101 Third Reading)

But while the minister is busy shielding himself from any kinds of consequences for his actions, he is grossly overreaching in powers in the education system, particularly for someone who has no educational experience and who does not consult. As I already mentioned, he's giving himself the power to include attendance as part of a student's grade. But there are more than 21,000 students in our province who are not in school every single day because the funding is not there and the resources are not there to allow them to be at school safely and supported. Yet the minister isn't going to do anything about that except to exempt them from the attendance requirement.

The ARCH Disability Law Centre raised concerns that uniform rules around attendance do not take into account the needs of students with disabilities.

The Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation also raised equity concerns, saying, "It is unclear that students who have a history of low attendance would be positively affected by a corresponding low mark bestowed on them for their lack of attendance. What is clear, however, is the fact that many of our students do not attend school regularly due to factors such as mental health issues, anxiety brought on by overcrowded classrooms and few support systems, violence in the schools, bullying and other factors that are the root causes of the student absenteeism so keenly obvious in our school system. OSSTF/FEESO encourages the government to devote more resources to the classroom in support of our most vulnerable students instead of exacerbating the issue even further by tying their absenteeism to an even lower mark which does nothing to promote their success."

And I also want to add some more feedback from my own 15-year-old, Speaker. She noted that one of her teachers has regularly not been at school this year—which is something that's happening between increased rates of illness and injury among teachers—but that there's not always a qualified substitute that is in place. So students in her class have just stopped attending those classes because they've come to expect that nothing meaningful will happen in those classes. That's something I heard from student trustees as well, that if three out of your four classes for the day don't have a qualified teacher, if you keep being sent every day to the library, along with a number of other classes, to essentially be babysat, you're going to stop going to school. So that's another area where the government is failing to address one of the root causes of student absenteeism.

And then this is also an important point that's raised by the informal association of parent involvement councils, which is about student transportation: that, far too often, student transportation is not reliable, whether that's due to the underfunding, which means that there's a shortage of qualified drivers; or whether that's due to the lack of investment in northern and rural highways, which means that an accident can shut down the road for the entire community and students can't get to and from school; or whether it is socio-economic and cultural barriers such as parents who are working multiple jobs and therefore don't have the opportunity to take their kids to school when the bus is running. They offered a few examples of this, such as one Ontario school board that serves 5,000 students that had more than 100 bus cancellations in the 2025-26 school year, which isn't done yet. So that's more than 100 bus cancellations to date, which represents a significant disruption in the ability of students to get to school.

There are also weather-related service suspensions, particularly in the north. Within one board: at least 10 full days this year with little or no bus service across multiple communities, although the schools don't always close, so kids are supposed to be there but they have no way of

Hansard Monday, May 4, 2026
(Budget Bill Royal Assent, Bill 101 Third Reading)

getting there. So they are asking the government to properly fund student transportation and to address the issue of highway safety and also to ensure that there are opportunities for students who genuinely can't get through due to transportation limitations, including high-quality hybrid video conferencing and guaranteed telecommunications access for rural areas.

I also want to share these comments from a student Noah Rosenthal, who is 16 years old and a student at Michael Power–St. Joseph High School in Etobicoke. He said that this bill “doesn't attack the root problem of truancy. Research shows that truancy is rarely about laziness or not caring, it's about the environment a student is in. For example, mental health issues (such as anxiety, depression, and social anxiety), home circumstances (such as unstable housing, family responsibilities like caring for a sibling, parents with illness or addiction, poverty), bullying, chronic illness and disengagement.” Noah is 16, but he gets it, so why can't the government get it?

Noah was also one of many students who raised the concern about eliminating school climate surveys, eliminating the voice of students. He says, “I personally find these surveys a relief, they let me voice my opinions and concerns so they can be heard and analyzed.”

The Franco-Ontarian students, FESFO, raised similar concerns, and the principals also noted that, because these surveys offer an opportunity for students to provide feedback anonymously, they're able to hear about more concerns that students may not feel comfortable bringing forward on the record with their name and face attached to it. And if we truly want to address all of the conditions in our schools, including the problem of bullying and of mental health challenges like anxiety, then we need to know what's going on and we need to be able to track over time whether our measures are addressing them or not. But this government is taking away that capacity to do that, ending that student voice.

By giving itself the power to require school boards to use certain materials, require educators to use materials—I've already spoken about the risk of this government introducing a book ban much like their friends in Alberta. But teachers and education workers and parents and students have also raised significant concerns about the impact on the ability of teachers to use their professional expertise and judgment, but also to deliver responsive, inclusive and effective instruction.

This is what the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario says: “Restricting the range of resources that educators can use to deliver the curriculum limits their ability to reflect the diversity of Ontario's classrooms. Students come from a wide range of cultural, linguistic, and socio-economic backgrounds, and effective teaching requires the flexibility to select resources that are relevant, inclusive, and responsive to those identities and experiences....

“Limiting access to diverse resources undermines these efforts and will disproportionately impact students from historically marginalized communities.”

The government is also giving itself the power to approve or not approve or direct school boards' ability to acquire new land. This is what a parent, Lu-Anne da Costa, says about that ministerial power: “This approach undermines the rule of law”—oh, sorry. Wrong one—but she's also concerned about the minister undermining the rule of law with his liability provisions. She says, “Granting the Minister of Education unilateral authority over the land sales of schools erases the essential checks and balances and local input from communities. Decisions about

Hansard Monday, May 4, 2026
(Budget Bill Royal Assent, Bill 101 Third Reading)

public assets should involve local community voices and be transparent to ensure that the best interests of students and communities are protected.”

There were many, many, many concerns raised about the government’s new corporatization of education, Speaker, and their addition of new layers of bureaucracy. This is a parent from Toronto, Sara Blumenstein: “This legislation involves having CEOs run our school boards. C-level executives tend to be very costly, and in a time when Ontario is laying off staff and removing programs for multilingual language learners and children with special needs, I just don’t understand how we can afford to pay for additional staff in every school board who will not be working directly with children.”

She goes on to say, “Children are not lines in a spreadsheet or inventory items to be stocked, tracked, and shipped. Schools are not factories or warehouses, and school boards are not businesses. Addressing public education with a rigid business model ignores the humanity of our schools and risks further alienation of vulnerable children and families in our communities.”

Sara was one of many, many, many parents to raise these concerns, Speaker. In fact, there were many people who talked about the fact that education should be a public good. They’re deeply concerned about this government’s move to treat it like a business and how that impacts our kids.

CUPE education workers also share this concern, saying, “The legislation intends to divorce the role of financial and administrative oversight from academic governance. The vision appears to be one where school boards are run like businesses, with financial considerations taking primacy over education quality—a big step in the wrong direction.

“School board managers should be educators, working to increase service quality. Board finances are a means to that end, not an end in themselves. Students must come first.”

There are many, many, many other concerns that were raised, Speaker—more than I can possibly raise here; more than we could have possibly heard in a single day of hearings, although I think that was deliberate on the part of the government to make sure that many of the voices never had the opportunity to be heard.

One of the concerns was about losing local accountability and local voice, reflecting that trustees are the ones who are elected by the community to bring their voices to the table, but these new CEOs will have the power to override their voices and prevent them from even being able to bring forward a concern, let alone to adopt a motion or a budget that reflects those concerns.

Just in the last two minutes I have, Speaker, I want to talk about the fact that the government talks about how they want every dollar going into classrooms, and yet they are creating this new level of bureaucracy that will cost a great deal of money. They are also making other decisions that make no financial sense, including their attacks on the trustee associations, which seems like it’s just personal on the part of the minister, particularly as these trustee associations result in significant financial savings for our school boards. For every dollar that members in the Ontario Public School Boards’ Association and in the Ontario Catholic School Trustees’ Association—for every dollar of membership, they return more than four dollars of savings through shared services that enhance system efficiency and support responsible use of public

Hansard Monday, May 4, 2026
(Budget Bill Royal Assent, Bill 101 Third Reading)

resources, such as the policies that they've negotiated around copyright, which reduces the fees for school boards in Ontario, and around energy savings.

When you take those numbers, Speaker, and you calculate at the level of just one board, like for the Peel District School Board, that amounts to \$1 million in direct savings to a board like Peel's. The government may be saving \$250,000 in Peel by not paying membership fees to the Ontario Public School Boards' Association, but that's actually going to cost the board \$750,000. Again, if the government is not going to give a single penny more to school boards, then that is money that is coming out of our kids' classrooms.

This is fundamentally not about good financial management. It is not about supporting our kids. It is about a partisan power grab by the minister and being vindictive to people who have advocated against his government's policies and whom he simply does not like.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): Further debate?

MPP Lisa Gretzky: It's my pleasure to rise on behalf of my constituents to talk to Bill 101, which is titled Putting Student Achievement First Act, which is not at all what this bill is about, Speaker. As my colleague from Ottawa West–Nepean just spoke to, this is about the government—the minister specifically—consolidating power to himself and then abdicating any responsibility for the decisions he makes. It is about isolating himself and this government from the decisions they make that are detrimental to the public education system here in Ontario.

Speaker, in the budget we saw huge cuts to education. There is an over \$17-billion school repair backlog, and yet, there is nothing in this bill to address that, absolutely nothing. So as we get into warmer weather, we have students in sweltering hot classrooms. We have teachers and education workers in sweltering hot classrooms. How do students concentrate on learning in those conditions? We have students in colder weather who are freezing in the classroom and having to wear coats. How is that conducive to learning?

Now, Speaker, I want to talk about this government's history when it comes to education. It is not surprising at all to me—it is shameful, the behaviour from the minister, but it is not at all surprising—that when people would come forward during the one day that the government provided to hear from the public on this—they didn't consult the public before bringing this legislation forward—the minister then took it upon himself to attack the witnesses that came forward to speak to this. He was incredibly aggressive.

Again, it's shameful, but it's not surprising to those of us on this side of the House because the government and the minister have already shown us and the public what they think about education workers in this province. We saw it with Bill 124, when they attacked education workers and others through legislation that trampled on their collective bargaining rights. We saw it again with Bill 28, when they attacked the lowest-paid education workers in this province and tried to trample on their collective bargaining rights. We've seen this behaviour from the government. This is not new. So regardless of what they say, their behaviour shows differently.

I want to talk about one of the provisions in the bill where it gives the minister and the government sweeping powers to do whatever they want but have protected themselves from liability. Now, Speaker, this is also not new. We just saw it when the government changed the freedom-of-information laws to protect themselves from having to release information about the greenbelt scandal. The news just broke—just broke—that they're doing it again over the Skills

Hansard Monday, May 4, 2026
(Budget Bill Royal Assent, Bill 101 Third Reading)

Development Fund scandal. They're hiding behind their change, their legal change, to protect themselves from having to release that information.

What we've seen is a government who likes to point fingers at others, who likes to accuse others, such as trustees—duly elected school board trustees, those that are elected in their communities. We've seen them point fingers at them and level accusations. But we have a government who is under an active RCMP investigation—an active investigation. This government has been under OPP investigation. And what do they do? They change the law to protect themselves. That's what we see.

So it's a little rich when the Minister of Education stands up, all holier than thou, mister high-and-mighty, and claims to be one of the most principled and above-reproach people in the entire province. Yet we see this legislation that they brought forward specifically so the minister can protect his own hide from any type of legal action taken or any consequences caused by this legislation. And that would apply to any of the government members who have spoken up in favour of this legislation, defended this legislation and will ultimately vote for this legislation. It's very, very much a "do as I say, not as I do" situation. Anybody here have parents who used to say that to you? Do as I say, not as I do? That's the government; that's the government.

Speaker, I want to talk about another piece of this legislation, which is around the attendance of students. It is completely out of touch with the realities of this province—completely out of touch.

Actually, I'm going to back up a little bit. When we're talking about the underfunding of the education system, I also want to point out, as they're firing teachers and education workers, that the Premier and his entire cabinet decided that it was okay for the Premier to spend nearly \$30 million dollars on a private jet—on a private jet—when we have ballooning class sizes, when we have an increase in violence in the schools. StatsCan has released numbers that show that Ontario has the third-highest poverty rate in the entire country—the entire country—but the Premier buys himself a jet.

They're spending money on a privately owned luxury spa in downtown Toronto, building some fantasy island, probably a Ferris wheel—\$17 billion in a repair backlog in our schools. We have children going to food banks and relying on school nutrition programs. That's not this government, by the way; that's community that's taking care of these children. And the government is pointing fingers at duly elected trustees, saying they're the problem.

Special education has long been underfunded under the previous Liberal government and even worse under this Conservative government.

Speaker, I'm going to go back to StatsCan—the third-highest poverty rate in Canada. We have a record number of people visiting food banks. We have a record number of people experiencing homelessness. Some of them are education workers, by the way. And this government is saying, "We're going to go after student attendance." When a student and families cannot afford a roof over their heads or food on the table, that impacts a student's ability to not only attend school but to be successful in their education if they can get to school.

We have students with disabilities who are being excluded from participating in school—their right to an education. That right doesn't mean that they're told that, because they do not have the staff to be able to support those students, that that parent, that student is going to be sent home after an hour in school because there's no supports. It doesn't mean that parents have to

Hansard Monday, May 4, 2026
(Budget Bill Royal Assent, Bill 101 Third Reading)

come and sit outside the principal's office just in case their child needs to be sent home because there isn't proper support. It means they have a right to be in classrooms and have a meaningful education with a fully, properly funded education system that provides all the supports that that student needs. That is not in this bill.

There is nothing in this bill that will actually help with student achievement—nothing. Absolutely nothing.

Speaker, when I was a trustee many, many years ago, the one thing that we grappled with the most, aside from the abysmal special education funding, were the situations when families who were lower-income—when their child had to work in order to help support the household; when there was violence in the household and the student couldn't access the community supports, the mental health supports, or the victim supports that they needed. Or their mother couldn't flee a violent situation because there were no supports for them in community.

So we had to think of creative ideas in order to let those students still receive an education but understanding that not every student is going to be able to attend every single day during regular school hours. There is nothing in this bill that addresses that huge gap. My colleague from Essex would probably know that there are many farms in our area where those students actually work on the family farm and we had to make accommodations for them to be able to attend school outside of those hours.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): Questions?

MPP Stephanie Smyth: I wanted to ask the member from Ottawa West–Nepean—and the presentation was so detailed this afternoon. So many angles covered by yourself and the member as well from Windsor West.

If Bill 101 passes largely unchanged, what long-term impacts on local school board democracy concern you the most?

Ms. Chandra Pasma: Thank you to the member from Toronto–St. Paul's for that question.

I think the lack of power of trustees, who are the voice of local communities, to actually make changes in policies to reflect local needs and concerns is what worries me most at the local level of all of the changes that are happening in Bill 101.

Trustees don't just take phone calls to answer questions or to arrange a sit-down mediation with a superintendent or a principal. They take all of that feedback that they're hearing from the community—whether it's systemic issues or they're hearing a concern from many, many community members—and they can address that through local policies, through motions that they bring forward, through programs that they put in the budget, through the hiring and allocation of resources. Now an unelected, unaccountable person who does not reflect the voices of the community and is in no way responsive to them can simply overrule them when they try to do that. So what we're seeing is the removal of any reflection of community needs and community voices in our schools, and the people making decisions will be accountable only to the Minister of Education in downtown Toronto, who clearly does not know the reality on the ground across our province.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): Questions?

Hansard Monday, May 4, 2026
(Budget Bill Royal Assent, Bill 101 Third Reading)

Hon. Michael S. Kerzner: To the member from Ottawa West–Nepean: My view on the trustees is that our Minister of Education has finally realized that they have overstepped in so many ways. We see this in Toronto. We see this where they bring in conversations into meetings that have nothing to do with the welfare of the students. We see that they never sanctioned egregious spending by so many school boards.

I think what is important is that part of the changes for the trustees is to say, yes, they have a role, but it is not to do what they have done in the past couple of years: turned a blind eye on one thing, and that's the students.

Ms. Chandra Pasma: What I find pretty rich is that there are over a million people in this province who are using a food bank, and yet the Premier thought it was a good use of our hard-earned taxpayer dollars to buy himself a \$30-million private luxury jet that can't even land at 90% of the airports in the province.

I think it's pretty rich that at the same time he was going to use our taxpayer dollars to build a convention centre in the middle of Lake Ontario, a \$2.4-billion spa to be run by a bankrupt Austrian spa company that we're all paying \$400 for, even though most of us across the province will never go there. By the minister's logic, what we should be doing is asking the federal government to step in and remove this government from power because they have clearly lost sight of the priorities of the people of Ontario, what the needs of the people are, and they are shielding themselves from any accountability or consequences for their actions, including hiding from freedom-of-information laws and changing the rules so that they can hide.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): Questions?

MPP Catherine McKenney: Thank you to my two colleagues. Almost every student, teacher, education worker that we speak to these days talks to us about feeling less safe in very overcrowded classrooms. We hear that any time we're out and talking to anyone. I've had parents even wonder out loud whether pulling their kids out of the public system is the direction that they have to go to if things don't improve.

Do you see a pattern here where this government is eroding the public system, pulling resources out of the public system and pushing people and pushing, whether it's health care or education, those public services toward privatization?

MPP Lisa Gretzky: I appreciate the question from my colleague. Absolutely—what this government is doing is purposefully underfunding the education system in order to push a privatization agenda. We have seen it in the health care system. I suspect at some point they're going to be talking about private jails. They're talking about jails a lot; they're probably going to be talking about a privatized justice system as well.

When this government purposely underfunds our public education system by \$6.3 billion during their eight years of government, when we are seeing crumbling schools, when we are seeing ballooning class sizes and an increase in violence in our schools, when we see a minister at committee who is attacking the very people who work within the education system and trying to discredit the parents and students and education workers who have been raising alarm bells for years, what we see is a government that is intentionally eroding a public system in order to create this narrative that, somehow, privatization would be better.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): Questions?

Hansard Monday, May 4, 2026
(Budget Bill Royal Assent, Bill 101 Third Reading)

MPP Stephanie Smyth: I wanted to ask the member from Windsor West—you talked about student attendance. It made me feel so sad, because sometimes you miss school, sure, the odd time you want to skip a class or whatever, but what we're dealing with right now, where we're talking about affordability, kids not being in the classroom for reasons beyond, say, being lazy, and not deserving a passing because they weren't there three quarters of the time—can you talk again about the impact of poverty—one in 10 going to food banks, including children—on attendance, and how this is just so out of touch of this government?

MPP Lisa Gretzky: I appreciate the question from my colleague.

I would say that this government is not just out of touch, they're entitled. Buying a \$30-million private luxury jet for the Premier is entitlement. He's not looking at all of those students who are hungry, who can't access food or have to go to food banks. He's not taking into consideration the number of families that are struggling just to get by and how that impacts students.

They're not looking at—or, frankly, I don't think they care about the reality for so many in this province. We saw it earlier today when my colleague asked a question about the justice system failing sexual assault survivors and the Attorney General gaslit her, and said, "They're doing wonderfully. The government is doing everything right." This is what we see from this government. Rather than looking at what's truly impacting education in our province, rather than looking at what actually might keep students out of school—whether that is health issues, whether that is that they're hungry, they don't have a place to live, perhaps there's violence in the home—this government is simply pointing the finger and saying somehow the students and the parents and the education workers are failing because those students aren't attending class.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): Question?

Mr. Joseph Racinsky: Thank you to the members for their comments this afternoon. I want to talk about trustees, and I just want to share some numbers with the members.

Over the last four years, the York Catholic District School Board trustees have burned through \$340,000 in legal fees fighting amongst themselves; Grand Erie has spent at least \$300,000; Hastings and Prince Edward has spent \$175,000—that's nearly \$1 million wasted by these trustees. Bill 101 puts a stop to this dysfunction.

Could the members please explain to parents in York region, Brant, Belleville and other places across the province why they should keep paying for this trustee infighting?

MPP Lisa Gretzky: Speaker, the gall of the Conservative members to get up and ask a question like that, when we have seen this government bring forward unconstitutional bills that have cost the taxpayers money because they continue to have to go to court to defend their decisions. When millions, hundreds of millions of dollars—but you know what? We won't know the entire cost, the total cost of this government's court costs because they changed the laws in order for the people of this province to be able to access that information through freedom-of-information requests, so that we could see how much this government is actually costing taxpayers rather than investing it into our education system, our health care system, our justice system, ensuring that people have wages where they can have a roof over their head and put food on their table.

Hansard Monday, May 4, 2026
(Budget Bill Royal Assent, Bill 101 Third Reading)

I cannot believe that a government member, of all people, would get up and ask a question about somebody else's legal costs when this government is the number one employer for lawyers in this province as they defend your record.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): Further debate?

M^{me} Lucille Collard: It's nice to be here this afternoon with colleagues to talk about such an important issue: Bill 101, an education bill, which should be the focus of a lot of attention here in this chamber. I will start by indicating that I will be sharing my time with the member from Ottawa South.

As we're moving into third reading of Bill 101, I have to say that I'm quite frustrated with the process—our legislative process that is not delivering on what it is meant to accomplish.

I'm just going to go back to second reading, during which, when we debated this bill, many members of this House raised serious concerns about the bill—concerns about centralizing power, about weakening local voices in education, about threatening francophone control over key aspects of French-language education and advancing policy without clear evidence that it will improve outcomes.

After second reading, we went to committee, which was actually a good thing, and we were all looking forward to contributing to the committee work and hearing from stakeholders. They came, and those stakeholders who came to committee actually echoed these concerns across the sector.

That process in committee actually also gave us an opportunity to bring forward some thoughtful, constructive amendments a couple of days later, a lot based on what we heard, but also based on what stakeholders had been saying. But unfortunately, I guess, members who were also at the committee with me were a little bit disappointed to see that the government committee members had no intention of engaging. So what we saw during committee is that amendments of the opposition were dismissed without discussion, without debate. They were simply voted down every single time. It's as if they didn't even listen to the amendments that we were putting forward and that we were explaining at length.

That is not meaningful legislative review. And in addition to that, the government also brought forward some amendments that gave the minister even more powers, with no explanation at all.

So I will say, Madam Speaker, that despite its title, this bill does not put student achievement first. Instead, it shifts blame onto trustees while ignoring the real challenges facing our education system.

For a government that claims to believe in smaller government, it's striking how much this bill expands centralized control. And while the reduction in the length of teacher training may help address the shortage of French-language teachers that's putting a lot of pressure on access to quality education, this actually does not address the root of the problem, because the real issue here that we have with teachers is retention. Too many teachers are leaving the profession within the first five years, not because they lack commitment, but because the working conditions make it unsustainable. I have to say—I've said that often enough to teachers especially—that I have four children, and you could never pay me enough to be a teacher in a classroom today with the conditions that we have.

Hansard Monday, May 4, 2026
(Budget Bill Royal Assent, Bill 101 Third Reading)

A recent report from the Ontario Teachers' Federation estimates that approximately 40,000 qualified teachers are not working in Ontario's kindergarten-to-12 system, so that's nearly actually 18% of those certified. But "qualified" does not mean available, and it certainly does not mean willing to stay. Many have moved on because workloads are too heavy, supports are insufficient and classroom challenges continue to grow without the resources to match. We've been hearing that a lot: The teachers are just exhausted and are losing motivation because they feel like they're beyond being stretched thin. That is the reality in our schools today.

Bill 101, unfortunately, despite its title, does nothing to change this. It does not reduce class sizes, it does not increase support for students with complex needs, and it does not improve working conditions for educators. Instead, it removes decision-making from those closest to students and concentrates it at Queen's Park. I don't know if the minister intends to spend a lot of time in our schools and in classrooms with teachers, to truly understand what their real need is, because he's going to have the responsibility of making those decisions to try to improve our education system.

Madam Speaker, if we're serious about student success, we must focus on what actually keeps teachers in the classroom, and that is support, stability and an environment where both students and educators can succeed. If we don't have that, we will continue to see teachers leave, not because they cannot teach, but because the system is not set up to support them.

We also have to consider the financial pressures facing new teachers. Now that the government has cut OSAP, graduates are carrying higher levels of debt. That reality will also influence those career choices. Maybe people that would have chosen education will move towards another, higher-paying profession that offers more sustainable working conditions. So we're not helping here in training and keeping teachers.

Meanwhile, the government continues to claim that governance issues are the root of the problem. But that's when even the minister has actually acknowledged that francophone boards—boards with strong governance; he said it himself—are facing deficits. How is that? If francophone boards that have great governance, that are managing the education system properly, that don't deserve the worth of the minister, why is it that they are still facing deficit?

I would argue, Madam Speaker, that it is not a question of government; it's clearly a question of underfunding. And these rising costs, such as transportation for French boards because there are few and less between, are creating pressure, and that kind of pressure cannot be solved through centralization.

Je veux maintenant aborder plus précisément en français les impacts que ce projet de loi va avoir sur l'éducation de langue française.

Même si la gouvernance des conseils scolaires francophones n'est pas directement modifiée, plusieurs pouvoirs sont centralisés et s'appliqueront à eux avec un risque réel d'empiéter sur leurs droits constitutionnels. Je sais que le ministre argumente constamment que ce n'est pas le cas, mais la loi n'est pas claire à cet effet. J'ai proposé plusieurs amendements lors de la révision en comité pour s'assurer qu'on mettait noir sur blanc que ces droits seraient protégés. Parce qu'à la fin de la journée, ce qui va arriver, c'est que le ministre a les pouvoirs d'apporter toutes sortes de changements, et les détails vont être dans la réglementation ou dans des directives aux conseils scolaires. Comment est-ce qu'on peut avoir une garantie que les francophones ne seront pas affectés négativement?

Hansard Monday, May 4, 2026
(Budget Bill Royal Assent, Bill 101 Third Reading)

Le ministre va pouvoir maintenant imposer des politiques sur différents domaines qui vont toucher tous les conseils francophones : des politiques sur l'évaluation du rendement des élèves, sur les dépenses des conseils scolaires, sur le matériel pédagogique utilisé—il y a une grande préoccupation ici—et sur les communications publiques.

Et comme je l'ai dit, ces pouvoirs-là vont s'appliquer à tous les conseils, y compris les conseils francophones. Ce qui est préoccupant n'est pas seulement l'existence de ces pouvoirs, mais leur portée potentielle qui va être définie par règlement à un autre temps où le public ne portera pas nécessairement l'attention nécessaire.

Madame la Présidente, il faut rappeler que l'article 23 de la Charte canadienne protège non seulement l'accès à l'éducation en français, mais aussi le droit des communautés francophones de gérer et contrôler leurs institutions scolaires. Or, plusieurs mesures du projet de loi 101 viennent fragiliser ce principe. Les limites imposées aux allocations des conseillers pourraient décourager la participation démocratique. Les conseillers scolaires ne font déjà pas beaucoup d'argent avec leurs allocations, mais si on est pour les réduire encore, je me pose vraiment la question : y a-t-il des gens qui vont être encore motivés de mettre leurs noms de l'avant pour être représentants comme conseillers scolaires?

Les restrictions sur les associations comme l'ACÉPO, qui est l'association qui représente les conseils scolaires publics de langue française en Ontario—si on les empêche de fonctionner parce qu'on limiterait la cotisation des conseils scolaires envers leur association, ça pourrait définitivement avoir comme effet d'affaiblir la capacité des conseils de défendre leurs intérêts collectifs à travers cette même association-là, qui fait un travail remarquable d'ailleurs, et qui vient souvent à Queen's Park pour rappeler aux élus que le système francophone a besoin de plus d'appui et a de grands besoins parce qu'on est en croissance constante. Alors c'est une bonne chose, mais on a besoin d'un appui si on ne veut pas perdre les élèves.

Il y a également des nouveaux pouvoirs en matière d'infrastructure qui pourraient permettre une ingérence dans les priorités locales; la même chose pour le contrôle des communications qui pourrait limiter la capacité des élus de jouer leur rôle de porte-parole. Alors on ne peut pas les museler alors que leur rôle c'est justement de faire valoir les droits en éducation.

On est également très préoccupé par la centralisation du matériel pédagogique qui risque de ne pas répondre aux réalités linguistiques et culturelles des communautés francophones. On l'a répété assez souvent, je pense : les francophones ne veulent pas avoir du matériel anglais qui est traduit, puis souvent mal traduit, en français. Ça ne répondrait pas aux besoins des francophones.

Et je dois ajouter également que l'obligation qui serait contenue dans la loi si elle est adoptée—on fait confiance que ça va arriver. Mais les conseils scolaires vont devoir obtenir l'approbation du ministre pour des projets immobiliers.

Il faut savoir que dans un contexte où les conseils francophones doivent agir rapidement pour répondre à une croissance importante de leurs effectifs, d'avoir un délai pour pouvoir acquérir un immobilier ou un terrain, ça pourrait faire toute la différence et réduire l'accès à l'éducation en français.

Madame la Présidente, ce ne sont pas des préoccupations isolées; c'est l'accumulation de ces mesures qui pose problème. Parce qu'en matière de droits linguistiques, les reculs ne sont pas

Hansard Monday, May 4, 2026
(Budget Bill Royal Assent, Bill 101 Third Reading)

toujours brutaux, mais ils sont souvent progressifs—une décision à la fois, une contrainte à la fois—jusqu'à ce que les droits perdent leur substance. Et c'est quelque chose qu'on ne peut pas ignorer, parce que c'est une érosion qui est sournoise et qui vient gruger vraiment dans les pouvoirs des francophones à gérer leur éducation.

At the same time, the bill ignores the issues that actually affect student achievement, the reasons for absenteeism, rising class sizes, lack of support for students with special needs, increasing violence in school. These are the realities students and educators are facing every day. When these pressures build, the consequences are predictable: burnout among teachers, disengagement among students and declining outcomes.

Instead of addressing these root causes, the government is using isolated cases of mismanagement to justify broad, disproportionate changes—changes that concentrate power rather than solve problems. This is not reform; it's a distraction.

Over the past eight years, we've seen a gradual erosion of our education system, and now, instead of investing in solutions, the government is simply rearranging structures and calling it progress.

So I ask the government: Will this bill reduce class sizes? Will it increase mental health support? Will it ensure that every child who needs mental health support or support in the classroom will get it? If the answer is no, then this bill will not improve student outcomes.

I would like to cite a few of the submissions that we got from different interveners that we heard from. I think they haven't been heard enough, because obviously we're not seeing a listening mode from the government to address what they've been raising at committee or elsewhere.

Je vais commencer avec la soumission de l'ADFO avec les conseils de direction anglophones. Ils ont mis dans leur soumission : « L'uniformisation à l'échelle provinciale risque d'imposer une approche standardisée limitant la capacité de répondre aux besoins spécifiques des communautés et des élèves. Les groupes les plus susceptibles d'être touchés sont notamment les élèves traditionnellement mal desservis et les élèves ayant des besoins particuliers.

« De façon générale, bien que ce projet de loi vise à modifier un système éducatif en difficulté et sous-financé, il le fait d'une manière superficielle qui risque d'accentuer l'écart entre les décideurs et les éducatrices et éducateurs sur le terrain. »

The Canadian Civil Liberties Association's written submission included a quote that says, "Ministerial control over the public communications of elected trustees is particularly concerning and may infringe freedom of expression under section 2(b) of the charter.

"Ministerial control over the public communications of elected trustees is particularly alarming. Elected officials have a fundamental right—and responsibility—to communicate with their constituents. Restrictions on that communication interfere with the free flow of information between public representatives and those they represent and may also raise concerns under section 2(b) of the charter.

"The power to make retroactive regulations also raises some rule-of-law concerns. Retroactive legislation undermines legal certainty, prejudices parties who have acted in reliance on existing law and constitutes a departure from foundational principles of legislative governance."

Hansard Monday, May 4, 2026
(Budget Bill Royal Assent, Bill 101 Third Reading)

OECTA actually, during the public hearing, said: “Bill 101 centralization extends in the class, giving the minister authority over student assessment and threatening teachers’ professional judgment. By creating a framework that potentially mandates materials used in the class by teachers, it would perpetuate a deprofessionalized teaching. It would turn teaching into a one-way scripted session devoid of the very spark that brings learning to the students’ lives, shifting the profession from grounded in expertise and relationships to the model of government control that we have seen fail down south. Teaching is about real, authentic interactions with students, and that’s how we improve students’ achievement.”

This is also from OECTA representatives: “Well, the concern for me is that it’s being framed as a business—it’s not; it’s a common good. This is a community value, and it’s based on people. Kids aren’t standard. All of the people in schools are caring adults, and we have less caring adults. So when you unspend that money, you put less people in the class.

“Every parent knows, if you have three siblings in the house and one of them starts to get dysregulated, you want to pick up on that early and deal with it and you can cut that off. If you don’t get to it, the two kids start fighting.

“Every parent in Ontario is struggling with the issues of social media, screen time, dysregulation because of technology and cellphones etc. Every community has that, and the schools are in the community, so we’re dealing with the same thing.

“There is this collective social effort we need to undertake, and it is being exacerbated—at a time when kids need us more, we have withdrawn the money and the time for human beings to show care and to deal with these kids and that’s a real problem.

“This bill deals with governance and control and other things, but it doesn’t address what we need. It’s about the spending cuts. It’s about not having caring adults.”

Sound familiar? This is what we all been saying here in the House.

Madam Speaker, if we truly want to put student achievement first, then we must start by listening to educators, to families, to communities. We must invest in what works and we must respect the constitutional rights of francophone communities to shape their own educational future. Because, in the end, education is not about control from the top; it’s about supporting students where they are, empowering those who work with them every day and building a system that reflects the realities of the communities it serves.

This bill does none of that and because of that, I can’t support this.

I’ll yield the time to my colleague from Ottawa South.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): I recognize the member from Ottawa South.

Mr. John Fraser: I’m glad to be able to be debating Bill 101 this afternoon. I do want to say that, in this debate, we’re debating under a shadow—under the shadow of the Premier’s private luxury jet. It’s actually a shadow that casts over everything we do here now. And it’s a symbol, right? It’s a symbol of a Premier and a government that’s tired, out of touch, losing it, has lost its way. The government has lost its way, and Bill 101—it’s not a physical symbol like the plane, but it’s also an indication that the government has lost its way.

Hansard Monday, May 4, 2026
(Budget Bill Royal Assent, Bill 101 Third Reading)

After eight long years of starving education, taking \$6.3 billion out of it, the 5,000 schools, the two million students that we have here in Ontario, the chickens are finally coming home to roost. So what does the minister do? The minister says, "It's not our fault. We didn't do this. We didn't create this problem. It's them. It's not that we didn't put enough gas in the engine. It's not that we didn't give people enough to work with. It's not that we didn't hire enough teachers. It's those folks over there. So I'll cherry-pick some of those folks over there and I'll make them the bad guy." And do you know what? That's not going to work, because the reality is, we're looking at outcomes.

Here's the thing I know about our schools. Here's what the problem is in our schools: Class sizes are too big. This government has allowed them to grow. Special education has been starved. Trustees had to find \$800 million that wasn't given to them for special education in other envelopes. And there's a mental health crisis in our schools that's just reflective of what's going on in our society and the things affecting our kids that's not being addressed.

There are things that are happening in our schools right now that none of us have any context for, like a primary grade class being shut down because of one child's behaviour because there's not enough adults in that classroom, there isn't enough educational support for that student that has an exceptional need and maybe a behavioural need. Everybody's learning is getting interrupted.

Schools are not safe places to learn or to work because of those three things. Class sizes that are too big, special education that's been starved—we're not meeting kids' needs. We know that. And even with what the trustees were able to find, we're still not meeting those needs. And we're not addressing the mental health crisis that exists in our schools.

When I look at Bill 101, do you know what? Here are the questions I ask myself: Is Bill 101 going to make any child's class size smaller? Not one. It's not going to do a thing. There are 1,000 classes between grades 4 and 8 in Ontario that are more than 30 kids. Think about that. Think about a little less than half your caucus having one person trying to keep them in control—not that you guys are kids, but you get the idea. It gets hard; I know. There's only 14 of us, and that's hard enough. Think about it. I'm only trying to tease it out of you and get you to laugh because we're asking teachers in classes of 30 and larger to do something that we couldn't do, that we wouldn't want to do. It's not about the work that they're doing; it's about what the kids are getting. It's about what the kids are getting, and they're not getting enough. They aren't getting enough.

Then I ask myself, what's the next question? The next question is: Is any child whose exceptional need is not being met going to have that exceptional need met because of Bill 101? No, not one—not a single thing.

Then I ask myself—we have a mental health crisis in our schools. I think we can all agree our kids are under a lot of pressure. There's a lot of stuff happening to them right now that never happened to us. The minister even admitted that there was a mental health crisis in our schools at committee, but there's no answer. "But I'm going to do this thing where I'm going to centralize power in one corner office of Queen's Park." That's not going to help any child with a mental health need. There are 5,000 schools in Ontario. There are two million students. Ontario is a big place. Schools are different in Thunder Bay than they are in Windsor, than they are in Timiskaming, than they are in Ottawa, than they are in Niagara—they're different. And schools

Hansard Monday, May 4, 2026
(Budget Bill Royal Assent, Bill 101 Third Reading)

belong not to this place at Queen's Park, not to us, not to someone in the corner office, not to the Premier; they belong to the families and the communities they serve.

What this government is doing with this bill is centralizing power and not making schools respond to the community. The government won't respond to the community; it will respond to the corner office at Queen's Park. The CEO doesn't work for the community; he works for the minister. The new CEO is going to work for the minister. It's not going to be a board that that CEO works for; it's going to be the minister.

I'll give you an example of why this isn't going to work: the EQAO results. The minister, this current minister, said, "I've got the EQAO results on my desk. I want to look at them a little bit more." Well, he didn't really quite understand that those results actually go to families and to educators to help the kids who took the test. But no, no, they could sit on his desk. He's like, "I'm looking at it. I'm the big guy. I can look at it. I'll give them to you when you need them. I've got to think about it. And you know what, I'll tell you all exactly how it is"—it's unbelievable. It's unbelievable that a Minister of Education would not fundamentally understand the thing that was in front of him.

I'll give you another example of that. This is why it's bad to centralize power in one place. I asked the minister—first question in committee: He's been talking about absenteeism and the rise in absenteeism, and how bad it actually is. So I said, "Minister, can you please tell me what the top three reasons are for absenteeism in our schools?" The member from Essex was there; he would know. I couldn't get an answer. He gave me a bunch of anecdotal stuff—"It could be this and that, and over there, it's this."

No, no. You're doing something to attach attendance and participation to people's marks, and saying that's going to be a solution to a problem that you do not fundamentally understand. You don't know why that thing is happening, but you're pretending you're going to fix it, because it's a nice, easy answer: "Let's just put it on the kids. Let's just make the kids bad. It's their problem." No, it's not, actually. It's our problem. As adults, it's our problem.

I was shocked at the minister's response. It makes me believe that he does not—EQAO results, absenteeism—fundamentally understand the thing that he's running, and what's needed.

I do want to thank the member from Essex, because after four hours of putting forward amendments, we got the first response to I don't know how many amendments—it was about 30 amendments, right? At first, not one word; even on the government's amendments, they wouldn't explain them. What? You're putting forward an amendment and you're not going to say, "Please vote for this amendment because I'm going to do this and this"? It's just, "Here's our amendment. We're going to vote. You don't need to know." Besides, the thing that you're putting forward that we don't like, there may be a good reason that you don't like it, but you can't tell us?

But I will give it to the member from Essex, because when he saw that problem, he would respond. And he responded after that, but it took half a meeting to get there, just to get a simple answer.

Interjection.

Mr. John Fraser: Well, we did call them out, but that's okay. As my former boss said, "It's never too late to do the right thing," right?

Hansard Monday, May 4, 2026
(Budget Bill Royal Assent, Bill 101 Third Reading)

The other thing I saw in committee—and this is what really concerns me about the minister. I have been here for a while and I've been working around this place since 1999. I cannot remember a minister staying after their deposition before committee to cross-examine witnesses. The Catholic trustees, or the Catholic educators, came in and there was a constitutional lawyer—I can't remember his name right now; great constitutional lawyer. So the minister was arguing with a constitutional lawyer. It was almost ridiculous. It was. There were five members on the committee. Maybe they had to get warmed up because they couldn't actually give us any responses, so maybe that's why the minister was there. But it was like, are you trying to pick a fight? Are you trying to pick a fight? Is that what you're here for? Because that's what the minister was doing. There are five members on the committee—smart people, good people. They can think on their own. They know what they're doing. But the minister had to hang around. What's with that? Give me a break. It's not the minister's show; it's the committee's show—honestly.

And then, here's the kicker: Using clips from that committee—because that's why he did it—and putting it on social media to attack educators. Are you the minister? You're in government, guys—you're in government. Sometimes you have to play defence; you don't play offence the whole time. Just think about that. I've never seen that. There was no need for that, I thought. But then if you want those social media clips, then that's what you do.

I just think our students and our families deserve more than a minister who's going to be there to attack educators; to fight constitutional law with a constitutional lawyer who, I am sure, understands more than he does—definitely more than I do, but I would hazard a guess that more than the minister knows about constitutional law. I'm not an expert and I don't pretend to be. I was just shocked at seeing that.

My colleague the member from Ottawa–Vanier did raise the issue of the lack of clarity around the constitutional rights of francophones in this province around education. Those comments are very fair. I think that they were dismissed. There's too much that's being left in this bill to, “We'll put it in regulations; we'll figure it out when we get there. Don't worry; trust us. Don't worry; trust us.”

Here's another comment the minister made—not in committee, but in the public. Someone said to him, “When you do this bill and you have these CEOs and you do all this centralization of power, won't this be like supervision?” And the minister said, “Yes, it will be like supervision; they will be like supervisors there. They work for me.” Well, here's something that I found—well, first of all, supervisors are firing teachers, gutting programs, disposing of property. But, besides that, this was a real shocker that I heard. The Toronto District School Board—the supervisor says, “Oh, they're not going to report to parents on class sizes.” What? They're not going to report on class sizes. Like, I think everybody knows—I'm not an educator, but it's just common sense that when class sizes are too big, kids don't get as much. It's not as easy for them to learn. That's why class sizes are important. These supervisors basically shut down public reporting. Anything being online that had to do with special education advisory committees: “Public doesn't need to know.” I guess it follows suit since this government just gutted freedom of information. The public doesn't need to know, right?

That's what the minister believes. That's what the Premier believes. I don't know if the rest of my colleagues here believe that. I would like to think that they don't. I would like to think that if they had a child at school that the people running the board would be local and that they would

Hansard Monday, May 4, 2026
(Budget Bill Royal Assent, Bill 101 Third Reading)

respond to them about the concerns that they have and report to them some measurement of how things were going.

The other concern that I have—and it has to do with Bill 33 and Bill 101 together—is what's going to happen with regard to properties and schools that boards own right now? By my reading of it, the minister will have much more power around the disposition of property.

I have two concerns with that, because those properties belong to the community. The community owns it. It's not for the government to take value out of that and then use that to backfill money that they're not giving. "Oh, you got \$20 million for that property? Well, we're not going to send you this money now because you got the \$20 million." That's the first problem.

The second problem is this government and how they treat things like property, like the greenbelt, like MZOs. It's not that it will be disposed of; it's who gets it and who has the inside track. That's the risk that's in this bill as well, too. School boards are two different things, right? They are an organization that educates kids, young people, but they're also these gigantic property corporations. They're property managers, property owners. They're real estate. And we know, this government, they're interested in real estate. Toronto Islands—I digress.

What did I say today? It's like Ford-walk Empire. I've got to keep saying it until I get out of it today. I'm stuck on it. I know the show is about 16 years old, but it's stuck in my brain. It will be gone by tomorrow, so don't worry, folks.

MPP Paul Vickers: Okay.

Mr. John Fraser: Thank you. Thanks for coming out, guys.

MPP Paul Vickers: These Ottawa guys.

Mr. John Fraser: These Ottawa guys. So, Speaker—

Interjections.

Mr. John Fraser: You know, I just love hearing your voice down there. It just eggs me on even further.

So let's recap here, folks, because I don't want you all to fall asleep. I know that you seem to be drifting off. I can tell—

Interjection.

Mr. John Fraser: There's a nice sigh. There we go. It's late afternoon. While we're here, we might as well enjoy ourselves, right? We might as well enjoy ourselves.

So to recap, here we go: I'm not going to support Bill 101 because it's not going to make one child's class smaller. It's not going to get one child with exceptional needs' needs met. And it's not going to address the mental health crisis in our schools. I'm not going to support it because of that.

The other piece—I'm so glad. I almost forgot this. I do like the change that they made to teachers' college. I like to say good things. The problem is, it's the back end that you're not getting. When there's something like 70,000 teachers not teaching in this province, there's a reason. And you know what those reasons are? I just mentioned them: Class sizes are too big,

Hansard Monday, May 4, 2026
(Budget Bill Royal Assent, Bill 101 Third Reading)

special education has been starved and there's a mental health crisis not being addressed. Schools aren't safe places to work or to learn. So you can front-end it all you want, but if you don't fix the back end by making classes smaller and safer, and addressing kids' needs, you're going to have a hard time keeping teachers. You will educate them, but they won't stay. They leave after five years. You will have to do something about teacher retention if you want it to work.

So, to sum up, I want to thank you for giving me this time. I want to leave some time for questions. I will yield the floor, and I look forward to people's questions.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): Questions?

Mr. Tyler Allsopp: I appreciate the opportunity to ask some questions this afternoon, and I want to say thank you to the member for Ottawa South for leaving us some time to ask some questions.

One of the things that struck me is the rhetoric that both the opposition and the third party used when discussing our schools. They say that there's a mental health crisis. I'm thinking, well, no wonder. Look at the way that you talk about these places. So I thought, well, why don't we take a look at the results, see where our students stack up globally against the rest of the world.

Well, there's something called the PISA rankings; you may have heard of them. We consistently rank above the international average, consistently ranking among the top jurisdictions globally, within the top 15 internationally in math, within the top 10 internationally in both reading and science.

So how do you square the comments that you've made, which seem largely to be out of touch and not associated with what's actually going on in our schools, with the rhetoric that you've produced?

Mr. John Fraser: Our schools have been declining for eight years, number one. Number two, go to a school. Number three, I'll give you a story: I've got a principal who lives around the corner from me, and I was talking about the issue of—I say it's violence in school, but it's behaviours. So, Speaker, he says to me, "There's a 12-year-old girl in my office, and she threw a chair"—

Interjection.

Mr. John Fraser: Well, good. I hope you hear it again.

"She threw a chair at me." And then he said in the next breath, "It's just another day." That's what's happening in our schools. There is a mental health crisis. There's not enough support for special education. They aren't safe places to work.

I take no joy in saying this, but a government that's wilfully blind to these things is putting forward a bill that's not going to make one of those things better.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): Questions?

MPP Wayne Gates: Bill 101: I want to say to the leader of the third party—no disrespect—my wife was a principal. Listen to this: My wife was a principal; my daughter is a teacher in a Catholic school board in St. Catharines, and I can tell you, class sizes are too big. They can't

Hansard Monday, May 4, 2026
(Budget Bill Royal Assent, Bill 101 Third Reading)

get to the students that they need. They have mental health issues in their classes. They continue to face violence every single day. Every single day, a teacher is getting hurt at school—every day. My daughter is coming home with bruises because of what's going on, because the class sizes are too big, because they're not addressing the real issues that are going on in our schools.

So when you stand up and you say what's going on in our schools—nothing in this bill is going to correct that. And they've got to smarten up and understand what's going on in our schools instead of attacking teachers, trustees, the unions. Everybody else has got a problem but them, and the problem is them.

My question to you: Do you agree with all that?

Mr. John Fraser: Yes.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): Questions?

MPP Stephanie Smyth: I sit and look and wonder, how could it just be us? I've got four kids. They all went to school—all class sizes, too big. Has anybody else had kids in school or a family member who does? Have you never heard anybody complain about class sizes? If you say no, I don't believe you, because it's epidemic in schools, and it has been for years.

And I want to ask the member from Ottawa South: \$6.3 billion has been taken out of schools. What is this government's priority? They can't admit that anything is wrong and it's all wonderful in schools. What is the priority here for this government?

Mr. John Fraser: Well, they took their eye off the ball and focused on a luxury private jet.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): Questions?

MPP Paul Vickers: We're talking a lot about not being able to fund the schools properly and everything else, but we have examples of—the York Catholic District School Board has burned through more than \$340,000 in legal fees fighting amongst themselves over the last four years. The Grand Erie has spent at least \$300,000. Hastings and Prince Edward has spent \$175,000 fighting amongst themselves and lawyers. This is nearly a million dollars spent by trustees suing each other instead of supporting the students that we care so much about. Bill 101 puts a stop to this dysfunction by professionalizing board leadership, ensuring decisions are made by qualified CEOs, not by trustees locked in personal vendettas.

Will the member opposite explain to the parents in York region, Brant region and Belleville why they should keep paying for trustees' infighting instead of investing that money in their children's classrooms?

Mr. John Fraser: I will as soon as the Premier explains how he's lost more court cases and spent more money—more millions and millions—on losing court cases than any Premier in the history of this province. He's spent a ton of money and he's lost every case, just about—he might have won one.

Now, what I would like is for this member to understand that class sizes are too big. It's this government. It's the gas you put in the engine, right? You're not giving them enough money. Special education has been starved. If you don't put gas in the engine, the tractor doesn't run, and that's what's happening.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): Questions?

MPP Jamie West: Thank you to my colleague. It's interesting: In the budget, people were talking about record-high unemployment, record-high unemployment for youth and the fact that people can't put food on the table, and the Premier's answer was he bought a \$30-million jet.

In this situation, for this bill, you have parents saying, "What my kid needs is more attention and smaller class sizes." You have teachers saying, "What we need to be successful is more attention for the children and smaller class sizes." And then the Premier hears, "Well, what we need is trustees making about \$400,000 a year and a bunch of stuff that doesn't address class sizes or more attention for the students." What's being lost in translation here?

Mr. John Fraser: Just about everything, actually. We're talking about, like, a glass of orange juice in an expense compared to a luxury private jet.

I told the story about Marigold, who is a girl who's six now, who came to school with an assessment. For two years, she has received no services. When Marigold's parents look at that, and then they look at the Premier purchasing a luxury private jet, what do you think they think? Maybe a member on the other side, in their question, could answer that question.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): Questions?

MPP George Darouze: My question is for the leader of the third party and the member from Ottawa South. I heard you talking about the minister being at committee. Do you know what? It's so nice, a breath of fresh air, to see a minister going to committee answering question, not hiding behind his bill.

At the end of the day, you have a minister answering questions and you have a minister—also, he's an MPP—defending his community, protecting our kids and explaining his bill. How do you explain that?

Mr. John Fraser: Well, he should come to committee and answer for what his bill is, and he did that. It was the staying after that I had a problem with. He had five members on the committee who actually were mute until that point—actually, until 2 o'clock—so maybe that was the reason that he stayed.

I just have never, ever, ever seen a minister stay and badger witnesses and cross-examine witnesses and pick fights with people. He's supposed to be bringing people together. So that was my point, not that he was there. I wasn't upset that he was there; I was upset that he stayed and didn't give the members of his party who were on the committee the opportunity to ask questions of these witnesses. They had to sit there silently and listen to the minister.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): We have time for one more quick question and response.

Hon. Michael S. Kerzner: Very quickly to my friend opposite: Let's go back to the trustees. Let's go back to exactly what this bill says about holding the trustees to account, to make sure that they don't use their pulpit, as they have been in certain boards, to authorize ridiculous expenses and bring indoctrination into discussions that should not have been there. I want to ask my friend to comment on the trustees.

Hansard Monday, May 4, 2026
(Budget Bill Royal Assent, Bill 101 Third Reading)

Mr. John Fraser: Well, look, here's what I think: The cabinet lined up in a conga line to approve the Premier's luxury private jet. I will leave it at that. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): Further debate?

Ms. Jess Dixon: It's a pleasure to rise and speak on this bill. I confess, I'm mystified by the criticism of our Minister of Education coming in to address his own bill in committee. It really does feel like you simply can do nothing right. They're either absent and not answering questions, and if they do come and actually lead debate and lead questioning, they're offended by that as well.

It generally mystifies me why we would not want to have the minister. In fact, I actually was expecting the Liberals would want to make it regular practice that ministers always attend and lead questioning on their own bills. Frankly, I enjoyed having a minister who is so informed and competent in his subject matter leading questioning on that. I found it refreshing. I did ask him why he didn't bother also becoming a lawyer, but I know myself and the member from Essex were enjoying seeing him work.

This is one of those bills where I found so much of the opposition to it just, frankly, mystifying. There is one thing in particular, though, that I keep coming back to, which is this idea that it's not in some ways delivering for students and not delivering for the classroom, which to me is at odds with what classrooms and our education system are supposed to do, which is very much actually deliver learning.

One of the things that this bill is doing that I am so in support of is this idea of making sure that we are standardizing and providing learning resources to our teachers, to our educators to use in their classrooms.

Now, it's amusing because so many of us, when we talk about education, end up referencing our own school days. With the exception of a handful of the young 'uns in my caucus, for many of us that has actually been quite a long ways away. I was thinking about the days where you would get your textbook and then you would cover your textbook with brown paper or wrapping paper in order to customize it and put stickers on it and stuff like that. But actually, to be honest, I didn't realize that the days of the standardized textbook had in some ways passed in a way.

I want to talk about something that a friend of mine brought up in relation to her daughter, who was going into grade—I think she would have been in grade 6 at the time. This is a resource called Teachers Pay Teachers—P-A-Y—and it is a service where Ontario teachers can go online and purchase learning resources because they have not had the time or the ability to put their own learning resources together. I get it—our teachers are working in an incredibly fast-paced environment and one of the things that we have heard over and over again is that teachers are being expected to parent even more before they are asked to teach.

But anyway, this Teachers Pay Teachers resource: My friend literally brought it to me—it was, of course, on a Chromebook; it is not even a written resource—to look at it. And this was an approved resource, essentially approved by the school and the teacher, that she had sent home. But it was all American. It was all in imperial and asking the kids to do their work in Fahrenheit. And then it was asking them to comment on media sources, and the media sources were all Fox News. And the two of us were looking at it, thinking, "How is this an appropriate

Hansard Monday, May 4, 2026
(Budget Bill Royal Assent, Bill 101 Third Reading)

learning resource to give to kids? It's not even in our actual unit of measure." Really, that is one of the things that this bill is working to combat.

I also want to put in my own little plug for some of the work that we've done on intimate partner violence. There's a program that is particularly close to my heart called the Fourth R, which provides curriculum content for an existing section of Ontario's health and physical education curriculum. It's Ontario-developed. It's a great program, and a few years ago, this government—thanks to our at-the-time Minister of Education, now our wonderful Minister of Energy—provided some funding for this resource to allow more schools and more boards to access it. Again, evidence-based, randomized control trials—an incredible program. What happened? Well, a number of boards declined to offer it. They said that they didn't feel that teen dating violence was an issue in their region. They felt that they were already appropriately serving that through some program that they may have developed in conjunction with a local partner. And it boggled my mind to have this Ontario-developed incredible program paid for by the Ontario government rejected by the boards and the educators that were actually given money in order to provide it.

That's something that I'm actually very excited about in this bill because it now gives us the opportunity to take what previously would have been a learning resource that we can't mandate, in a sense, and actually gives us the ability to do that. From a crime-and-violence-prevention perspective, which, as many in this House know, is my pet project and passion, the ability to take that type of curriculum material, those types of learning resources, mandate them, make sure that they are being delivered in every publicly funded school across the province is an incredibly exciting opportunity that we didn't have the ability to do before this bill actually comes in.

I did also want to address something that—

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): I'm sorry to cut off the member.

Third reading debate deemed adjourned.