

The campaign school board locals have been waging to fix the funding formula has proven to be a success. Today, the Premier announced an injection of \$309 million over two years for school boards in Ontario. School board locals contributed time and money to this campaign over the last year and they should be proud of their work as its paying off in new funding dedicated to support staff. Although this money doesn't go far enough it is a downpayment towards fixing the funding formula. Many thanks to the School Board Chair, Committee, Coordinator, Researcher and all staff and membership who worked so hard to make this campaign a success, We need to continue the pressure until the funding formula is totally redesigned.



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MEDIA RELEASE

Liberals bow to CUPE pressure with school funding announcement Pre-election hype is a start but doesn't meet education need

TORONTO, Ont. – Premier Dalton McGuinty's school board funding announcement today is his government's response to direct CUPE pressure, but the details are more about the October 10 election than they are about meeting the needs of the education system, says Sid Ryan, Ontario President of the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE).

“We raised the alarm last month that 60% of school boards were issuing layoffs due to insufficient provincial funding,” Ryan said. “With today's announcement, the government has now agreed with us that the funding formula is flawed, and we can take credit for that.”

“But \$309 million over two years doesn't go nearly far enough,” Ryan said. “The Liberals came to office in 2003 promising to fix the mess created by the Conservatives. Where has the Liberal government been all these years? Why do Ontario families have to wait four years before the Liberals act?”

“Ontarians can consider the money announced today as a down payment for fixing the funding formula,” Ryan said. “It's a step towards fixing it, but first we must demand that this money be used to stop the layoffs that are happening in our schools.”

“School board workers have been hit with 535 layoff notices in the past several months,” Ryan said. “If the government is serious about fixing the flawed Conservative funding formula, the province must demand that school boards rescind these layoffs before kids are put at risk with slipping standards of cleanliness, health and safety.”

More money is welcomed to address the dire needs of schools, Ryan said, so any new funding will be useful. However, the \$20 million pledged towards educational assistants (EAs), for example, will just scratch the surface of what is needed. EAs in the province need at least \$63 million per year to raise their number of hours to seven-per-day to meet the needs of special needs students.

“Today's announcement leaves parents, teachers, staff and students cold, even as the Liberal election machine heats up,” Ryan said. “We must ensure that politicians of all stripes are held accountable for our kids' real needs. We can do that on October 10.”

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