

Statement By Education Minister Kathleen Wynne On Final Proposal For English Public Elementary Teachers And Ontario Public School Boards

February 10, 2009

No one in Ontario wants labour disruption in our schools. Not teachers. Not students. Not parents. Not me. All of us want teachers teaching and students learning.

That's why I met with the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO) and the Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA) earlier today. At our meeting, I presented a new and final proposal from the government to support four-year collective agreements. I have asked ETFO and OPSBA for their response by 4:00 p.m. on Thursday, February 12.

The proposal includes a 10.4 per cent salary increase over four years for English public elementary teachers – two per cent in each of the first two years, three per cent in each of the last two years. It also includes all of the funding supports that other elementary teachers will receive in the last three years of their provincial framework agreements.

The new proposal addresses ETFO's continued concerns about preparation time and supervision. It still contains fair salary increases, more preparation time, smaller class sizes, more grade 7 and 8 teachers, more time to do report cards, improved working conditions for occasional teachers and guaranteed enhancements to benefits.

Most importantly, English public elementary teachers, students and their parents would be able to look forward to four more years of peace and progress – right through to August 2012.

Our government has been upfront about its projection of a significant deficit and is facing very challenging economic times. For example, 71,000 Ontarians lost their jobs in the last month alone.

English public elementary teachers must ask themselves: "In this economy and with government deficits, will my local bargaining unit be able to secure a 10.4 per cent salary increase over the next four years without a provincial framework agreement?"

English public school boards must ask themselves: "In this economy and with government deficits, would we be able to provide these additional supports for students without a provincial framework agreement?"

So, I am calling upon ETFO and OPSBA to carefully consider this fair proposal. I hope to be able to report on Thursday that a framework agreement has been signed and local agreements can be finalized. In the meantime, our [proposal](#) is posted on the Ministry of Education's website so anyone who wants the details can find them there.

