

World Teachers' Day 2023

On this World Teachers' Day 2023, the Ontario Secondary School Teacher's Federation joins with educators across the globe to celebrate the profound impact that teachers have on society. This year, we celebrate the theme, "**Making Sense of Our World**," acknowledging the pivotal role teachers play in helping students explore their identities, their world, and their communities. It is a day to say thank you to teachers for helping students better navigate the complexities of an ever-changing world and helping them feel safe and accepted.

In the face of the myriad challenges our world presents, teachers act as beacons of hope and resilience. They inspire and empower the next generation to think critically, explore diverse perspectives, seek truth, and work collaboratively towards a better world.

Teachers, alongside the whole education team, also play a crucial role in defending the rights of 2SLGBTQI+ students in schools and communities. Teachers help communities take on and challenge oppression of all forms, including anti-Black racism, racism, and colonialism. They foster inclusive environments, educate on diversity, challenge discrimination, and provide support. By advocating for equality and acceptance, teachers empower these students to thrive, creating a safer and more inclusive community for all.

Yet, increasingly, teachers and the entire education team need their own defenders and supporters. Globally, teachers are facing underfunding and privatization of publicly funded education systems that exist to protect and enhance the lives of students and communities, and to provide access to one of the most basic rights, a full and open education.

In Ontario and across Canada, public education is increasingly under attack and being undermined by populist governments and radical political and social movements fueled by hate, misinformation, greed, and fear.

We are watching a crisis develop as staffing and retention issues continue to worsen across the country. We must ask ourselves why thousands of dedicated, trained educators are choosing to leave a profession that was once so highly regarded and remains pivotal for our society.

Public education is the reason that Ontario and Canada have experienced a high standard of living and many of Canada's core ideals, including acceptance, inclusion, free expression, and multiculturalism, were established and strengthened through world-class public education systems. However, the public education systems that we have come to rely on and expect are being deliberately shortchanged and underfunded by various governments and decision makers across the country who want to put profits in the pockets of private enterprise more than they want to invest in student well-being and success.

On this World Teachers' Day, we express our gratitude to all educators who continue to work tirelessly, advocating for their students, and inspiring the pursuit of knowledge. We call on



everyone to commit to supporting students, educators, and the essential value of public education. We also recommend for all OSSTF/FEESO Members and interested community members to take part in the Canadian Teachers' Federation's town hall this evening, titled '[The Empty Classroom: Challenges and Solutions to the Teacher Recruitment and Retention Crisis](#)'.

As we look to the future, let us commit to supporting and valuing our teachers, recognizing that they are the key to a brighter, more informed, and compassionate world. Today, and every day, we honor the teachers who light the way for the leaders, innovators, and change-makers of tomorrow.

Happy World Teachers' Day!

