

OSSTF/FEESO Central Bargaining Update:

Arbitration Decision Released for Teacher/Occasional Teacher Central Agreement

As reported in recent Bargaining Bulletins, OSSTF/FEESO completed the Voluntary Binding Interest Arbitration hearing for the Teacher/Occasional Teacher 2022-2026 collective agreement on April 8, 2024.

At the hearing, OSSTF/FEESO argued that any new agreement needed to address the growing staffing issues affecting teachers/occasional teachers across Ontario's public schools. We supported our position through an overwhelming amount of evidence that clearly showed how suppressed wages are driving a severe recruitment and retention crisis in schools across Ontario.

The Crown and the Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA) argued for salary increases of \$1 an hour, a proposal that would have ensured that teachers salaries failed to keep up with inflation and would worsen the recruitment and retention crisis in education.

The arbitrated decision for the Teacher/Occasional Teacher central agreement was released today and awards a far higher compensation package for teachers than the one tabled by the Ford government. Members will receive the following wage increases for the 2022-2026 central agreement:

2022-2023: 3%
2023-2024: 3%
2024-2025: 2.75%
2025-2026: 2.5%

This represents a total compounded salary increase of 11.73% over four years.

Occasional teachers will also receive the same percentage increases. In addition, beginning in September 2024, any occasional teacher daily rate that is less than the OSSTF/FEESO provincial average will be brought up to the average. Those bargaining units where the daily rate is above the provincial average will still have their rate increased by the above percentage increases.

These increases are higher than any percentage increase that OSSTF/FEESO teacher/occasional teachers have received in over a decade.

However, the arbitrator disappointingly refused to establish new class sizes for de-streamed classes. The Ford government has so far refused to provide the necessary investments and resources needed to make the transition to de-streamed courses successful for all students. OSSTF/FEESO will continue to fight for needed investments for de-streaming.

Merely introducing de-streaming without providing the necessary supports negatively impacts students. We will continue to work with partners and community allies to make supports for de-streaming a priority issue for Ontario's public education system.

Despite this setback, OSSTF/FEESO is proud of the many gains obtained in this round of bargaining. In particular, the compensation numbers are far better than what the Ford government ever wanted to give teacher/occasional teacher members.

We were also successful in preventing the Ford government from grossly increasing the class size for the province's most vulnerable students, those attending the Provincial Schools for Deaf, Blind, and DeafBlind students.

The unique bargaining pathway that members voted for last fall led to the above wins, as well as the arbitrated Bill 124 remedy, which OSSTF/FEESO members would not have already obtained without a Bill 124 remedy already secured without choosing voluntary binding interest arbitration.

Teacher and occasional teacher members will receive their Bill 124 remedy by **June 10, 2024**, and then also receive retroactive pay from today's award within 60 days of today, the release of the arbitrated award. Please see the attached *Frequently Asked Questions* (FAQ) document for more information.

OSSTF/FEESO Presidents and Chief Negotiators of **teacher/occasional teacher** bargaining units are called to attend a meeting in-person on June 6, 2024, in Toronto, to receive the details of both the negotiated and arbitrated parts of the 2022-2026 collective agreement.

For members, attached is a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) document that will address questions regarding today's decision and payment of retroactive wage increases, dating back to the start of the central agreement in July 2022. Also attached is the full arbitrated decision and a summary of the decision.

We will also share information through explainer videos about the 2022-2026 Teacher/Occasional Teacher Central Agreement. Stay tuned!

Bargaining Bulletins are available on the [myOSSTF](#) section of the OSSTF/FEESO website. Please check *myOSSTF* for updates.