



# Fact-checking Ontario teachers' unions' claims

## Ever heard any of these?

**"The Ontario government is making cuts to education"**

**FALSE**

The current government has brought education funding to a historic high in this province. This government has increased spending by \$1.2 billion over the former Ontario government.

**"Per-student funding has gone down"**

**TRUE**

Although total funding for education has gone up, there was a slight increase in enrollment this year which means per student funding changed by 0.4%, from \$12,300 last year to \$12,246. For a class of 25 students, that's over \$300,000. The problem isn't a lack of funding – it's how that money is being spent.

**"It's not about money, it's about the kids"**

**FACT-CHECK**

While this is true for many frontline teachers who care deeply about their students, the vast majority (nearly 80%) of education funding goes into salaries. Teachers' union bosses have stated that the wage caps must be removed in order to move negotiations forward<sup>1</sup> and even if all the other concerns were addressed they wouldn't agree to a deal with wage caps.<sup>2</sup>

**"Teachers need a 2% raise"**

**FALSE**

While it's true that inflation will likely be 2% next year, Ontario teachers are already some of the best paid teachers in the country and in the world. Top earning Ontario teachers earn a total compensation (\$100,000 salary + the value of benefits & pension) over \$120,000/year, and there are currently more than 10,000 Ontario teachers earning this amount. A 2% increase would give these teachers a more than \$6,000 raise over the three-year contract period.

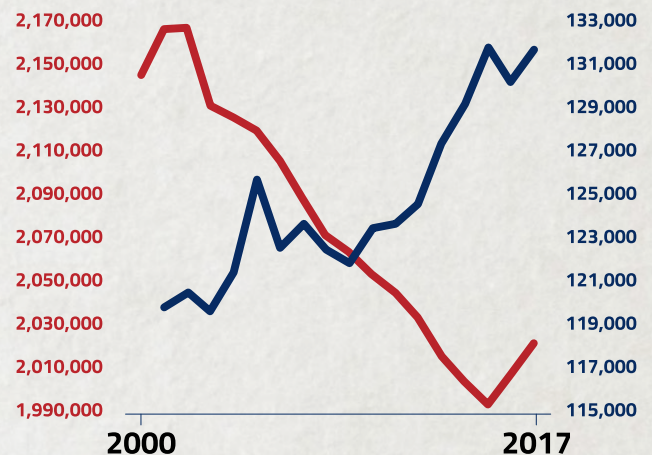
**"The Ontario government is firing teachers"**

**FALSE**

The Financial Accountability Office of Ontario has confirmed that no teacher will be laid off due to changing class sizes and e-learning, but that nearly 10,000 teaching positions will be lost through attrition in the next five years.<sup>3</sup> Over the past 20 years, Ontario hired more than 10,000 teachers and administrators while student enrollment declined by over 100,000 students. Ontario could hire more teachers and reduce class sizes if top teacher compensation weren't so high.

## Teachers and Administrators in Schools

Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) / Student Enrollment (Ontario)



**RIGHT SCALE** Teachers and Administrators in Schools

**LEFT SCALE** Primary and Secondary Student Enrollment

1. OSSTF/FEESO's 'Proposal to move negotiations forward' December 6, 2019
2. Interview with Harvey Bischof, Scott Thompson Show, Global News, December 4, 2019
3. <https://www.fao-on.org/en/Blog/Publications/expenditure-estimates-education-2019>

## HERE'S THE REALITY:

While Ontario is the largest subnational debtor on the planet, Ontario teachers are some of the best paid on the planet. Ontarians respect teachers and value public education, but can't afford higher taxes or more debt to give already well compensated teachers an even bigger raise.