



From the Canadian Teachers' Federation Board of Directors

## The CTF/FCE Board of Directors works year-round to champion the interests of teachers and education workers across Canada.

Board members help shape the Federation's national priorities, unite and strengthen our collective voice, and advance high-quality public education. Meeting in person three times a year, the Board tackles pressing policy issues, charts the Federation's strategic direction, and monitors progress on the work that matters most to educators – ensuring your concerns and realities drive the national agenda.



## VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS:

### Panel Discussion Weaves a National Throughline

In Ottawa, the Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF/FCE) convened leading voices from academia, education unions, and the frontlines of public education on April 14 to address violence in schools.

The national panel **"Violence in Schools: Beyond Quick Fixes"** brought renewed urgency to the growing crisis of violence in schools, emphasizing that quick fixes are no longer sufficient. Framed by the research of **Dr. Darcy Santor**, the discussion highlighted alarming rates of violence and harassment affecting educators and students alike, with more than 80% of education workers experiencing incidents annually.

The panel presented a broad set of lived experiences, featuring **Éric Pronovost**, President, Federation of School Support Staff (FPSS-CSQ); **Norberta Heinrichs**, President, British Columbia School Counsellors' Association (BCSCA); and, **Sherry-Ann Bowen-Gordon**, Provincial Executive Officer, Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF/FEESO). Moderated by CTF/FCE President Clint Johnston, the panel underscored that schools are increasingly absorbing broader societal pressures – ranging from underfunded social services to rising mental health needs – while lacking the resources to respond effectively. Speakers called for a shift from reactive approaches to early intervention, stronger community partnerships, and sustained, targeted investment.

*"Safety plans are only [effective] if you have resources and opportunities to address them."*

**Norberta Heinrichs, BCSCA President**

A consistent message emerged: the issue extends beyond classrooms and requires coordinated action across governments, communities, and sectors.

Without meaningful policy change and adequate resourcing, panelists warned that both student well-being and the future of public education remain at risk.

*"A plan or policy without resources is an idea."*

**Clint Johnston, CTF/FCE President**

The **on-demand recording** is available on our [YouTube channel](#) and on our podcast channel, [Source](#).



## CLINT'S CORNER

As we approach the end of the school year and our Annual General Meeting (AGM), it feels like a good time to talk a bit about our governance structures and how we ensure members guide the work of the organization.

The key link guiding our work is the Board of Directors, which is comprised of two representatives (normally the President and the Executive Director or equivalent) from each of our 18 Member and Associate Organizations (MOs/AOs). These representatives bring the direct connection they have with their respective members to the table. This, in turn, informs the work of the CTF/FCE through recommendations.

Every April, the Board prepares recommendations, some of which go forward to the AGM – our largest governance body – for consideration by this expanded group drawn from schools and worksites on the front lines.

In addition to recommendations from the Board, resolutions come directly from the Member and Associate Organizations to the AGM. The path

differs from region to region, but they all originate from issues that members from across the country feel are the most impactful and important to deal with as a Federation.

All year the CTF/FCE President, Executive, and staff work to implement the resolutions and recommendations that passed at the previous AGM. This work involves overseeing the research, campaigns, initiatives developed by staff, as well as meeting with parliamentarians, other national education organizations, Education International, and notably, the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC).

CMEC is comprised of all 13 provincial and territorial Ministers of Education. As a collective body, it represents Canada's education systems nationally and internationally; as such, should be a key forum for ongoing dialogue with the Federation.

In practice, however, consistent engagement with CMEC as a unified body has remained limited. While we continue to build and maintain strong relationships with Ministers at the provincial and territorial level through our Member Organizations, access at the pan-Canadian table is less predictable. This makes that regional relationship-building all the more critical as we work to advance shared priorities and hold decision-makers to account.

It is important to make sure we never just assume everyone knows how we work. The most important thing to us at the CTF/FCE is that we remain a representative, transparent, and accessible member-driven organization.

Hope to see you at the CTF/FCE's AGM – or one down the road!

In solidarity,

**Clint Johnston, CTF/FCE President**

## MEMBER HIGHLIGHTS

### Rising Above Challenges – Together

As many CTF/FCE Member and Associate Organizations prepare for upcoming bargaining cycles, a clear message emerged: collective action strengthens outcomes. One example highlighted during the meeting was the 2023 Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation strike, when unions from across the country came together to show their support, demonstrating the power of unified efforts.

*"Public education in Canada is a great success story and people need to be reminded of that. People have forgotten the value proposition of public education."*

**René Jansen in de Wal,**  
*Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association*



## Tribute to Kerry Leopkey (NBTF)

Kerry Leopkey is retiring from his role as Executive Director of the New Brunswick Teachers' Federation (NBTF). After 11 years at the helm of the NBTF, he became known as a "brilliant and tenacious negotiator", as praised by CTF/FCE Executive Director Cassandra Hallett. In addition to securing significant improvements to teachers' working conditions in New Brunswick, Kerry has also played a key role in driving numerous improvements within the CTF/FCE over the years. "You've left an undeniable mark", Cassie concluded.



CTF/FCE Executive Director Cassandra Hallett (right) gives gratitude to outgoing NBTF Executive Director Kerry Leopkey (left) for his contributions to public education in New Brunswick and Canada.

## Tribute to Ted Hupé (YAEP)

After 40 years in education, Ted Hupé is retiring at the end of his term as President of the Yukon Association of Education Professionals (YAEP). Known for "saying what needs to be said", Ted will be remembered for his sage and insightful remarks, constructed from a lifetime of experience. Throughout his career in education, he inspired his students – often leaving a lifelong impact.

In his farewell remarks, Ted reflected on how teaching gives you the opportunity to inspire and credited his fruitful years in education to the mentors and supporters who helped him along the way, including YAEP Executive Director Ethan Emery.



CTF/FCE President Clint Johnston (right) recognizes outgoing YAEP President Ted Hupé (left) for making a positive difference for his students.

*"If we do not give early career teachers the mentoring or support to get through those first five years, we have missed a lifetime of opportunity...it's not only a loss to us, but to our communities and to public education."*

**Ted Hupé**  
Yukon Association of Education Professionals

## GOVERNING DECISIONS IN ACTION

An overview of motions carried by the CTF/FCE Board at its April meeting.

### Work Group on Climate Change

The Work Group on Climate Change's mandate is extended for an additional two-year term to support

ongoing work and campaigns, gather data on the implementation of the Green Bargaining Guide, and plan future initiatives aligned with CTF/FCE priorities.

### Parachute Survey Series

The Parachute Educator Survey series will continue as an annual survey.

### Petition to End Notwithstanding Clause Use

At the November 2025 meeting of the CTF/FCE Board of Directors, the Board passed a motion that the CTF/FCE lead the coordination of a petition in the House of Commons. This petition calls upon the Federal Government to condemn and take action to restrict the use of Section 33 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. The aim is to prevent this section from being used to deny workers their collective bargaining rights and to circumscribe human rights.

In collaboration with NDP MP Leah Gazan, the CTF/FCE is pleased to have launched our [petition E-7269](#). We encourage you to add your name to the petition and to share within your networks.

**The petition closes on July 24, 2026.** Visit our [webpage to learn more](#).



## FROM YOUR NATIONAL FEDERATION

### Green Bargaining Guide

The CTF/FCE Work Group on Climate Change – established by a 2024 Annual General Meeting resolution – has developed the *Green Bargaining Guide*. This Guide is designed to give bargainers the language, frameworks, and strategies they need to help future-proof public education in the context of a changing climate. More than a school-wide recycling effort, this guide serves as a practical, continually evolving tool for driving meaningful change. It comes at a critical time, as wildfires displace students and educators, and rising temperatures create increasingly unsafe working and learning conditions. The Guide will be released at the end of this school year.



The CTF/FCE's Mischa Terzyk and Cheryl Sheffield, staff liaisons to the Work Group on Climate Change, presenting the Green Bargaining Guide.

### Final Report: Indigenous Self-Identification and Verification

As part of our ongoing commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, the CTF/FCE Research team, in collaboration with the Advisory Committee on

Indigenous Education (ACIE), developed the report *Indigenous Self-Identification and Verification: Scan of Policy Guidance and Considerations*. The report outlines current approaches to Indigenous self-identification and verification and serves as a living guidance document. It will inform CTF/FCE practices related to appointments, nominations, and recognitions involving Indigenous representation, and will be reviewed by the ACIE every two years to ensure continued relevance. The report is available on the CTF/FCE Members' site for further reference.



Nichole Grant, CTF/FCE Director of Research, presenting the final report on Indigenous self-identification and verification.

### Cassandra Hallett Transitions to the Global Stage

*In the wake of her tenure, the CTF/FCE is more unified, more influential, and more firmly rooted in the voices of educators across Canada.*

After more than two decades with the CTF/FCE, including over 11 years as Executive Director, Cassandra Hallett is stepping into a global leadership role as Deputy Secretary General of Education International (EI).



Under Cassie's leadership, the CTF/FCE has evolved into a significantly stronger and more coordinated national organization, with expanded national networks and dedicated work in teacher welfare and collective bargaining. This period also saw the return of both OSSTF/FEESO and BCTF, restoring true coast-to-coast representation.

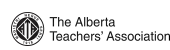
As a classroom teacher for 11 years, Cassie's leadership has always been grounded in a clear belief: that public education is a fundamental right, and that the educators who sustain it must be respected, supported, and heard. That same commitment is reflected in her work advancing equity: "...women educate the world, and women power our unions."

Her move to EI reflects both her impact in Canada and her long-standing commitment to global solidarity in public education.

We thank Cassie for her leadership, vision, and unwavering commitment to educators. Her influence will be felt across the Federation and far beyond it.



**Canadian Teachers' Federation**



## Parachute Set to Become Annual National Survey

After four successful editions, the CTF/FCE's Parachute survey is entering a new phase: one that reflects both its impact and the growing need for a consistent, national snapshot of the profession.

Originally launched as a biannual series, the Parachute Educator Survey Series was designed to gather pan-Canadian data on the issues feeding the educator retention and recruitment crisis. In two short years, it has helped to paint a vivid picture of the pressures facing the profession, and the need to track them over time.

While provinces and territories conduct distinct jurisdictional research, Parachute offers something vital for broader advocacy: a national lens. By asking the same questions of educators across the country, it reveals how challenges evolve, where they intensify, and how they differ regionally. Its findings have also helped inform national media coverage, contributing to stories on CBC's The National, Radio-Canada, and [The Walrus](#), bringing educators' lived experiences into broader public conversation.

Through their responses, educators are helping paint a picture of the changes needed to transform the profession: 80% report insufficient access to specialized supports such as educational assistants and resource staff, while one in four say individualized supports rarely meet student needs (Parachute Survey, fall 2025). These gaps are not abstract; they are the day-to-day reality of classrooms across Canada and the focus of the Federation's advocacy efforts.

*"...it feels like every year we are raising children, trying to help society and community be a better place, and take care of our community members but it just feels every year it's getting harder and harder and we're just fighting a battle that we continuously are losing."*

**Parachute respondent [Spring, 2025]**

The Board of Directors' decision to continue Parachute as an annual initiative reflects both its success and the urgency of what it continues to reveal. Challenges in Canadian public education are constantly shifting, and the experiences of teachers and education workers are evolving with them. A yearly survey ensures those changes are still captured responsively and keeps educators' voices central to shaping the path forward.

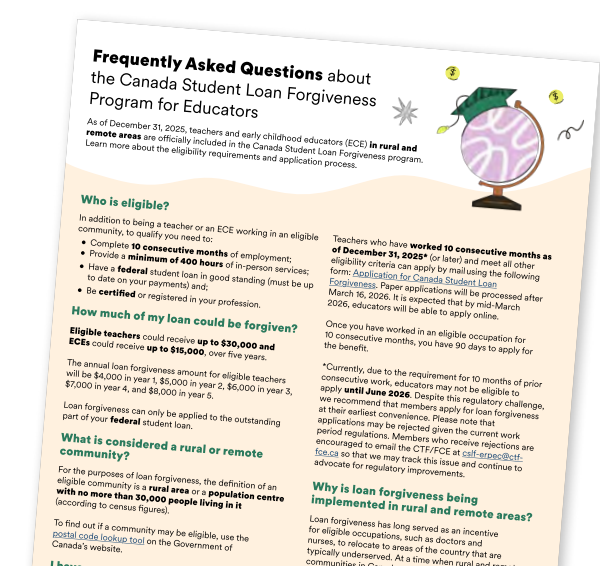
## Canada Student Loan Forgiveness Program – Apply to Receive Up to \$30,000

Back in 2022, the CTF/FCE began advocating for loan forgiveness in rural and remote areas through the pre-budget consultations process. Now this life changing program has come to fruition, helping to alleviate the retention and recruitment crisis in Canada's public education system. The CTF/FCE has successfully secured the expansion of the Canada Student Loan Forgiveness program for **teachers and early childhood educators working in rural and remote communities.**

Once you have worked in an eligible occupation for **10 consecutive months** and meet all other eligibility criteria, you have **90 days to apply** for the benefit. For the 2025-2026 school year, we recommend that you apply between **July to the end of September 2026.**

Visit our webpage for details about eligibility requirements and the application process:

<https://www.ctf-fce.ca/take-action/loan-forgiveness/>



## NEW FINDINGS: National Public Opinion Poll on Violence in Schools

The latest results from a national public opinion poll show that concern about violence and aggression in public schools remains widespread – and is rising. The poll, conducted by Abacus Data on behalf of the CTF/FCE in March 2026, revealed:

- 88% of Canadians are concerned that the level of violence in public schools is increasing (up from 84% in October 2025).
- 83% place a great deal of trust in teachers and the role they play in building a strong education system.
- 68% feel that lack of respect for teachers and the profession is a primary cause of the increase.

Read the full article in the [Public Education Journal](#) to dig into the data.

## International Solidarity

The CTF/FCE is a leading organization within Education International (EI), which represents more than 33-million educators around the globe. As a proud and active affiliate of EI, the CTF/FCE supports teacher unions around the world facing dire challenges, whether from natural disasters or disastrous government actions. As reported in the first issue of *The Federation Tribune*, the CTF/FCE provided support for Urgent Action Appeals from EI in support of the **Jamaica Teachers' Association** and the **Trade Union of Education and Science Workers of Ukraine.**

The CTF/FCE has also received an Urgent Action Appeal from EI in support of the following sister education unions:

### Palestine – General Union of Palestinian Teachers (GUPT) and General Union of Workers in Kindergarten and Private Schools (GUWKPS)

Since January 2024, EI has launched several calls for solidarity with Palestinian students and educators in Gaza and the West Bank, working through GUPT and GUWKPS, to provide vital support and meet the evolving needs on the ground.

The conflict has severely disrupted the education of more than 625,000 children. Teachers who have long stood as educators, caregivers, and symbols of resilience despite not receiving their full salaries for the past two years now face the immense task of rebuilding classrooms, reconnecting with students and families, and restoring hope amid ongoing uncertainty. Since September 1, 2025, the CTF/FCE – including Member and Associate Organizations – contributed \$25,000 in support of the Palestinian educators in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

*"If you are surrounded by uncertainty, solidarity is more important than ever."*

**Beverley Park**  
CTF/FCE Director of International Cooperation Program

### Syria – Union of Teachers of North and East Syria (UTNES)

In response to the rapidly deteriorating situation and the severe threats facing teachers, students, unionists, and the entire education system in North and East Syria, the CTF/FCE and Member and Associate Organizations contributed \$31,000 to EI's Solidarity Fund. CTF/FCE President Clint Johnston also sent letters to the federal government and United Nations leadership about the urgent need to safeguard democratic and minority rights in Syria and protect teachers, students, and educational institutions.

*Through EI's Solidarity Fund, the CTF/FCE has contributed to providing essential support and meet the evolving needs on the ground.*



**Canadian Teachers' Federation**



## POP QUIZ!

Did you enjoy this issue of *The Federation Tribune*? Answer our one-minute questionnaire for a chance to **win a \$50 gift card!** Contest closes on June 26, 2026.