

November 21, 2006

The Honourable Kathleen Wynne,
Minister of Education
Mowat Block, Queen's Park
Toronto, ON
M7A 1L2

Re: Education Funding Formula

Dear Minister Wynne,

On behalf of the Ontario Council of the Canadian Federation of University Women, I would like to comment on the priorities that its Standing Committee on Education would like to address concerning the funding formula.

The present funding formula does not address the diversity that exists throughout the province of Ontario. The formula is too linear and does not allow for any deviations between the different costs that impact upon each Board of Education through the province. Ontario is not a "one size fits all" province.

Northern schools, faced with declining enrolment, are feeling the impact on the quality of courses they are able to provide due to financial restrictions that inhibit the hiring of full-time principals, librarians, educational assistants and music teachers.

Working with a funding formula that is ten years old does not take into account the changes that have occurred over this time period. Individual Boards of Education are more sensitive to the needs of ESL students and the teachers who are required to educate them. Boards of Education in the Golden Horseshoe region of Ontario require more funding for teacher education programs, including instructional strategies to enhance the acquisition of oral and written English.

Our recommendation to the Ministry of Education on the funding formula would be to develop a new plan for funding the schools allowing each Board of Education to take control of the funding. Although this would move away from the "equitable" system the funding formula was intended to create, Ontario Council believes that Boards of Education should have the responsibility to allocate the resources to their schools according to their individual needs.

We understand that the Ministry of Education should be involved in the planning decisions throughout the province with regard to programs to ensure the quality of education received by our students. However, we consider it to be the primary responsibility of the Boards of Education to make decisions about how individual schools receive funding.

Sincerely,

Linda MacGregor
President
CFUW Ontario Council

Wendy Taylor
Education Chair
CFUW Ontario Council

Please send reply to:
Wendy Taylor,
CFUW OC Education Chair,
1739 Loretta Avenue,
Orillia, ON.
L3V 7W2