

OSTA-AECO

Ontario Student Trustee Association/
Association des élèves conseillers et conseillères
de l'Ontario



A student vision, a united voice

Press Release

For Immediate Release

STUDENTS APPLAUD MCGUINTY GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES

June 29, 2005

TORONTO, June 29 /CNW/ - The McGuinty government has demonstrated a clear commitment to the 1.9 million students in the publicly funded education system. The Ministry of Education initiatives throughout the past school year have had a significant impact in the classroom this year which will continue in 2005-2006. "This government is shaping an education system which focuses on students," said James Arsenault, President of The Ontario Student Trustees' Association-Association des élèves conseillers et conseillères de l'Ontario (OSTA-AÉCO), a stakeholder group representing all the students in Ontario's publicly funded education system.

At risk students are finally getting the support they need to succeed as a result of an extra 1,300 teaching positions created in the province's schools. In our secondary schools, struggling and at-risk students will benefit from these extra teachers. With more specialized teachers in our elementary schools, students will receive instruction in a broader range of subjects.

The government has recognized a number of areas traditionally lacking in funding and Francophone boards have benefited from the increased funding. Unique issues faced by Francophone boards, such as continuing assimilation, provide an extra challenge to administrators trying to deliver quality education to students. This funding will offset the exaggerated cost of services that French boards face. For francophone students, this funding is vital to ensure they are receiving an equal quality of education as compared to their Anglophone peers. Francophone education is a necessary element for a thriving French community.

Moving towards fulfilling their election promise of class size caps, the Liberal government has announced that 70% of primary students will be in classes of no more than 23. This will increase one-on-one time between teachers and students and ensure that Ontario's students will have a strong start to their education. This provides students with good support during the critical early learning years.

New funding for the safety and maintenance of schools has led to the renovation and repair of many older school buildings, increasing their longevity and functionality. Funding has also made the construction of new schools financially feasible for boards with growing student populations.

The long term contracts in place with employee unions ensure uninterrupted access to quality education and four years of peace and stability for Ontario's students.

Students with anaphylaxis are now safer in our schools as a result of Sabrina's Law. This legislation affords protection to students with severe allergies.

Ontario schools have opened their doors to immigrants so that all Ontarians have equal access to education.

The McGuinty government is to be congratulated on its \$820 million increase to education funding and treating students as a high priority.

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Currently celebrating its fifth anniversary, OSTA-AÉCO is composed of the Student Trustees serving on Ontario boards of education. It is the officially recognized stakeholder responsible for representing Ontario's 1.9 million students. The association is the primary contact available to the Ministry of Education for consultation and student advocacy.

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