

PSAC 901

PSAC 901, the union representing graduate Teaching Assistants, Research Assistants, Teaching Fellows, and Postdoctoral Scholars at Queen's University, stands in solidarity with the 55,000 OBSCU education workers across the province in their fight for decent wages and working conditions.

Like so many across the province, we were horrified to learn of the Ontario Government's cowardly attack on workers' right to collectively bargain by passing so-called "back to work" legislation. This legislation is an affront to all workers' Charter rights to free association and we are inspired by the stance OBSCU and CUPE have vowed to take in the face of unprecedented and dangerous overreach. The right to strike in this country was won through a history of similarly courageous acts, wherein workers were given no choice but to illegally take strike actions. This week, education workers carry the torch of our historic labour movement, acting in brave defiance of this draconian legislation in order to defend all of our rights.

We would also like to explicitly express our support for the bargaining demands of education workers. It is past time to make up for the 11% cut in real wages education workers have faced under the Ford and Liberal governments, because #39kIsNotEnough. We support the demands for increased sick days, paid time for preparation, and additional workers in kindergarten classes. We see in our own workplace and spaces how underfunding leads to less safe and less effective teaching environments. We know that the OBSCU demands are not only well deserved but critical in order to make Ontario schools safer and better. As precarious education workers who have also had our wages kept down by Bill 124 and years of austerity we see the current education workers' fight as our fight, too. We commit to support in words and in action.

To put an end to this attack on workers and our education system and ensure this does not happen again we all have a role to play:

- We call on **Doug Ford** and Education Minister **Stephen Lecce** to immediately revoke all "back-to-work" legislation, collect no fines, and finally negotiate in good faith.
- We call on Prime Minister **Justin Trudeau** and our MP **Mark Gerretsen** to commit to using Federal power to support education workers, to commit to closing the notwithstanding clause loophole so it can never be used to restrict the rights of workers to freely associate and collectively bargain, and commit to never using "back-to-work" legislation against federal workers.
- We call on Queen's Principal **Patrick Deane** to denounce the use of "back-to-work" legislation and commit to opposing any potential use of similar legislation against Queen's employees. We additionally call on Patrick Deane to recognize that our members and other workers across campus have also been forced to take on real wage

cuts by Bill 124. We call on Principal Deane to commit today to making up those lost wages, starting by bridging the gap in upcoming negotiations with Postdoctoral scholars.

- We call on each of our over 2000 **PSAC 901 members** to stay informed and find ways to individually and collectively support local education workers. We encourage our members to take this moment to become even more actively involved in the larger labour movement that is growing everyday in this province, across the country, and around the world. We encourage our members to find comradery and inspiration in the collective actions to come, and to follow for updates from our fellow education workers' on [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), or [Facebook](#). We encourage everyone who is able to join a local picket line or rally, talk to your students and coworkers, show your support, and to always demand better working conditions, for yourselves and for all.
- We call on **all other unions, academic locals, unionized and non-unionized workers** to join together and support striking education workers, this Friday and everyday. We must recognize that an attack on one is an attack on all, and we must recognize that the coming victory for education workers will be a victory for all.

In solidarity,
PSAC 901 Executive