

Campaign Research Poll Spreads Misinformation

During bargaining, it is common to see public opinion polls that test support for a conservative agenda that would attack educators and their working conditions. Through the framing of questions, we often see criticism of educators' vacation time, salary, and benefits. This can lead to anti-teacher rhetoric, which leaves educators feeling upset and demoralized.

In a recent poll conducted by Campaign Research, a research firm with strong ties to the Ford government and Conservative Party, questions are asked about teacher compensation, in-class learning, and back-to-work legislation (see below). We believe the Conservatives may be using the poll to understand what they can get away with in bargaining, and how the public may react if they take a more aggressive approach to negotiations.

Researchers who reviewed the questions believe them to be vague, biased, and "leading," as they push respondents to answer in a specific manner that supports the government's position. This undermines the validity of the poll and its results.

Regardless of the unreliability of the data collected, the government may choose to use it to irresponsibly vilify teachers and negatively influence central bargaining. Know that ETFO will address the government's spin to ensure members and the public are informed.

As always, ETFO is prepared to defend and protect its members by engaging in a fair bargaining process that is undertaken in good faith. The Federation is also committed to reminding the government that, similar to health care, salaries and benefits alone do not attract and retain educators and other education workers.

Your working conditions—students' learning conditions—remain a priority for ETFO. Consider contacting your member of provincial parliament to remind them of this, and that all of ETFO's 83,000 members are prepared to fight for what educators and students deserve—an adequately funded, publicly funded education system.

Questions Pulled from Recent Campaign Research Poll

1. How important is it to you that students remain in school this year (2023) without any disruption to in-class learning?
2. During the recent labour negotiations between the government of Ontario and the CUPE Union representing education support workers, the government of Ontario passed a law to make a strike illegal so that schools would remain open for in-person classes. After about 2 weeks, the government repealed this legislation and CUPE agreed not to strike while they continued to negotiate a settlement and contract. Did you support or oppose the government of Ontario making this law that required the CUPE education workers to go back to work and not be able to strike and shut down the schools?
3. Do you believe teachers, making on average \$94,476 per year, are fairly compensated for the work they do?
4. If discussions/negotiations between other teachers' unions and the government of Ontario also break down, would you support or oppose the government introducing a similar law and contract that would require teachers to go back to work and not be legally allowed to strike so that schools could remain open for in-person classes?