



No. 31B

N° 31B

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ISSN 1180-2987

**Legislative Assembly  
of Ontario**  
Second Session, 37<sup>th</sup> Parliament

**Assemblée législative  
de l'Ontario**  
Deuxième session, 37<sup>e</sup> législature

**Official Report  
of Debates  
(Hansard)**

**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

**Monday 18 June 2001**

**Lundi 18 juin 2001**

Speaker  
Honourable Gary Carr

Président  
L'honorable Gary Carr

Clerk  
Claude L. DesRosiers

Greffier  
Claude L. DesRosiers

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
OF ONTARIO

Monday 18 June 2001

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE  
DE L'ONTARIO

Lundi 18 juin 2001

*The House met at 1845.*

ORDERS OF THE DAY

STABILITY AND EXCELLENCE  
IN EDUCATION ACT, 2001

LOI DE 2001 SUR LA STABILITÉ  
ET L'EXCELLENCE EN ÉDUCATION

Mrs Ecker moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 80, An Act to promote a stable learning environment and support teacher excellence / Loi favorisant la stabilité du milieu de l'enseignement et soutenant l'excellence des enseignants.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr Bert Johnson):** The Chair recognizes the Minister of Education.

*Applause.*

**Hon Janet Ecker (Minister of Education, Government House Leader):** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, and thank you to the thunderous applause from our benches. I'll be sharing my time with the member for Simcoe North.

I'm very pleased this evening to rise in the House to speak in support of Bill 80, the proposed Stability and Excellence in Education Act. We on this side of the House recognize that parents with children in school want to see them thrive in a safe, stable and enriching learning environment, guided by excellent teachers. This legislation is another step in our plan to achieve these goals, to build an education system that provides the education parents want for their children, an education that focuses on quality, accountability and improved student achievement.

We began our comprehensive plan to do this in 1995 when we were first elected. During the 1999 election, we laid out our platform for continued education reform in our second term. We've been meeting those commitments, both the ones we made in 1995 and the ones we made in 1999, and doing what we said we would do. Our plan to deliver quality education to every student includes: a more rigorous curriculum from kindergarten through to grade 12; significant resources for education—this school year alone we've increased our investment by more than \$360 million; a new province-wide code of conduct to make our classrooms safer, more respectful learning environments; new school council regulations to ensure that parents have a stronger voice in

their children's education; a standardized testing program so parents know how well their students are doing; a new report card that parents can understand; a comprehensive teacher-testing program to help ensure all of our teachers are as up to date as they need to be; and Ontario's new early reading strategy to help schools improve children's literacy skills.

All of these initiatives and our other quality education steps are aimed at providing students with the highest-quality education. These steps demonstrate our ongoing commitment to higher standards for our schools with an emphasis on performance-based accountability.

As we continue to implement the key elements of our reform agenda, we also continue to listen to what parents and taxpayers tell us needs to be done and how we should proceed. We believe on this side of the House that the involvement of parents in education is very critical to achieving higher standards and raising student performance. For parents to be able to make the necessary decisions and choices about their children's education, they need information and they need effective and meaningful ways to participate and influence decisions affecting the education of their children.

Parents also want to see evidence that their student's achievement is indeed improving. To strengthen and support parental involvement, we've created, as I mentioned, understandable report cards, and we've been working to strengthen the role of parents in their children's education through school councils.

I recently released new regulations that increase the accountability of the education system to parents and ensure that parents have a stronger voice. Beginning this fall, school councils will have the right to make recommendations to the principal of their school or to a school board on any matter. Principals and boards will be required to seek the views of school councils in a number of important program and policy areas and also to report back on the actions that have been taken in response to those school council recommendations to what the parents told them needed to be done. It's a very important initiative in response to what parents told us needed to be done.

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In addition, to provide parents with a stronger voice at the policy-setting level at the provincial government, we recently expanded the Ontario Parent Council to include six regional representatives who are chosen by our school councils across this province. The representatives were chosen at regional sessions we had earlier this year to

brief and train parents on the new regulation, on the responsibilities they have and on the ways they can influence not only how their school is being run, but how the board is making decisions.

Parents also want to see steady improvement in their schools. This past January, we announced the creation of the Task Force on Effective Schools. This group of individuals is making recommendations to us on ways we can improve board management practices, planning systems, school improvement plans and teacher excellence. I know that members on this side of the House, our caucus and our education partners are very much looking forward to the completion of their report to the recommendations, which I expect very shortly. We will want to move forward with additional steps that will allow us to set improved student achievement as a goal, as a target, and to have ways that we can continue to take steps to do that.

One of the other areas that I've mentioned a lot here in this House and in other places, because I think it is also a very important priority in our education reforms, has to do with special education, the services, the supports we provide for those students who, with a little bit of extra help, with some special accommodations, are able to achieve their educational goals as well. Last year we announced and this year we actually did increase spending in special education by 12% over the previous school year. I think it's important to note that this is the third year in a row that resources in this area have been increased.

In addition, because increased resources are important but they're not the only step we need to take, besides the continual increase in resources for special education, as part of our ongoing plan to improve quality and accountability in our special-education programs, we created new standards for individual education plans, those plans that schools put in place to work with the teacher or the parent to put in place an individual education plan for each exceptional student. We've started by creating standards for this school year.

To ensure that boards are accountable for delivering high-quality programs and services throughout the province, we've also provided standards for school boards' special-education plans. So for all of the services that a school board is expected to have available, the range of services they're expected to have available for special-needs students, we've set standards so that boards will be very clear about what the expectations are that they must meet. We're now moving into the next stage of this where we're working on the development of program standards for each exceptionality, for example, the kinds of supports and services that a school board must provide for children, say, with autism or another exceptionality. This is another very important improvement.

We've also continued to increase funding not just for special education but for our public education system overall. For the 2001-02 school year alone, we have increased funding by more than \$360 million. That's \$360 million in net new dollars to go into our education

system, a very important investment. This new money is being provided in a way that will allow school boards greater flexibility in determining their own spending needs and priorities. Boards will be able to take those new resources and apply them to what are the top priorities, their communities' highest needs.

As a result, education funding for the coming school year is projected to be almost 3% higher than funding this current school year. So funding will be going up by 2.8%, and I think it's important also to note that this is an increase beyond enrolment growth. Enrolment growth is only about 0.9%. The government believes that kind of increased investment is extremely important for our public education system. This means that education funding will have increased from \$12.9 billion to \$13.8 billion since this government took office in 1995, a significant increase in money for school boards to provide quality education for our students.

Furthermore, as part of the 21 steps into the 21st century that were outlined in April's throne speech, we are taking several additional measures to support increased accountability and choice in education. I'd like to highlight, briefly, some of those measures.

For example, they include the expansion of standardized student testing in core subjects in key grades, a very, very important commitment. As you know, we currently test reading, writing, mathematical skills in grade 3, grade 6 and grade 9, and we have a literacy test for grade 10 students. But we recognize, and certainly when we look at other jurisdictions we see the value of having tests for other key subjects and other important grades so that we can benchmark so we can measure how well our students and our schools are doing.

One of the other measures that was included in the throne speech was the elimination of the institutional bias against home-schooling by helping parents to access standard tests and other learning tools. Other initiatives included requiring schools to provide extra support for students who are falling behind; requiring boards to set targets for improving student achievement; and establishing plans to help low-performing schools and school boards.

I'm pleased to see that the honourable critic from the NDP party is proving his grasp of mathematical curriculum by counting the number of members here in the Legislature tonight.

It will require boards, as I said, to set targets for improving student achievement and to make sure they're putting in place plans so that we can help low-performing schools and school boards to improve. I think that's a very important step.

This fall we'll be announcing a survey that will be asking parents for their views, to measure their satisfaction with their children's education system. That will begin, as I said, this fall.

Another proposal we'll be bringing forward will allow parents the choice to enrol their children in any available school within their system.

While we believe that we have accomplished much in the reform of Ontario's public education system, we also recognize very, very clearly that much more needs to be done. We remain committed to finish what we've started and to complete our plans for better quality, for more accountability and for improved student achievement; in short, to do what we said we would do.

Tonight's legislation, the Stability and Excellence in Education Act, is allowing us to move forward with the next steps in our plan. There are three key areas in this bill as it sits before the Legislature.

First of all, the legislation proposes to implement a mandatory recertification program for our teachers. That's a key component of our comprehensive teacher-testing program. The second component deals with the concerns that parents and students—and teachers—have had about labour disruptions involving our school boards and teachers' and school staff unions. The third key component of this legislation proposes to implement the government's decision to accept the key recommendations from the advisory group on co-instructional activities. Their recommendations and the recommendations of other education partners were put forward to ensure that co-instructional activities for our students will be available this fall.

I'd like to touch on each of these components in turn. I'll start with the first one, the recertification program for teachers.

First of all, I think it's important to recognize—and we certainly do—and when you look at other jurisdictions, it's very important to see that one of the major foundations for improved student achievement is quality teaching. Research clearly demonstrates the difference that a good teacher can make. Excellent teachers foster a passion for learning that students will carry with them throughout their lives. Excellent teachers can inspire their students to achieve things that they never thought possible.

One of the great pleasures of being the Minister of Education is the many opportunities I have to meet the many excellent teachers we have in this province. I had the privilege not very long ago of attending an awards ceremony with the Lieutenant Governor in her chambers here in the Legislative Building where she was recognizing and telling the stories of excellent teachers across this province who had been nominated by literally hundreds of their students and their colleagues. Not only do teachers such as this go above and beyond for their students as part of their daily job, they also recognize that in today's rapidly changing world a commitment to professional development and lifelong learning is absolutely imperative. That's why we've taken the steps we have in our comprehensive teacher-testing program, so we can ensure that both new and experienced teachers have the most up-to-date training, the knowledge and the skills they need to help students succeed and to help students achieve higher standards.

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This program has been modelled on best practices in other jurisdictions, and also we've taken a look at not only what the teaching profession is doing in other jurisdictions but also what other professions have been doing here in Canada as well.

There's a series of initiatives that are part of this program, and I'd just like to go through them before I speak specifically about what is in this legislation tonight.

We came out with the framework for this back in the spring of 2000 so that everyone would be very clear where we were going and so we could work in consultation with our partners to implement the steps that were in that framework. Already in place is a language proficiency test which took effect last fall, and that's for new applicants to the teaching profession who took their training outside of Ontario in a language other than English or French.

Coming into effect this next spring is a requirement that all new applicants for teaching certificates will take a qualifying test at the end of their education in the faculty of education that would be very similar to a lawyer's bar exam.

To be introduced over the coming months are other steps, for example, an internship program for new teachers to help them acquire strong teaching and classroom management skills at the beginning of their careers. This fall, we'll be bringing in legislation for the framework for new province-wide performance appraisal standards so that all teachers will be evaluated regularly, consistently, in their classrooms—again, I think a very, very important step. That appraisal, that evaluation process, will also give a voice to parents and to senior students in the evaluation of teachers. Also included in these initiatives will be a system to recognize teaching excellence and a role for parents, educators and experts in a quality assurance process for schools.

In this legislation we propose another step in our program, and that is mandatory recertification. I think it's important to note that the Royal Commission on Learning, an all-party committee that spent considerable time looking at how to improve the education system, made a series of recommendations in 1995, recommendations that all three parties in this Legislature supported, and I think that's important to recognize. One of their key recommendations was that there needs to be a mandatory recertification program every five years for teachers. This was part of a key election commitment that we made in 1999. We said that if we were elected we would proceed with this, and so we are indeed doing that, and this legislation proposes to put that in place.

I think it's also important to recognize that teachers in many other jurisdictions and individuals in many other professions are required to update their skills and knowledge on a regular basis. In Nova Scotia, for example, teachers must complete at least 100 hours of professional development within a particular time period. In the United Kingdom, Germany, Ireland, Sweden,

Switzerland and Japan, ongoing professional learning has become an important part of reforms to make their education systems more effective. In the United Kingdom the Teacher Training Agency, which was established in 1995, is responsible for reviewing the improvement and provision of continuing professional development for teachers. Here in Ontario many other professional associations and regulatory bodies, such as the Royal College of Dental Surgeons and the Ontario Association of Architects, require their members to complete a mandatory program of professional development over a specified time period.

So what this legislation is proposing is something that is not unique to the teaching profession. It is something that many other professions are meeting, are doing, are moving forward with, because they recognize the challenge for staying as up to date as possible and are moving to make sure that their members can do that.

This program, as proposed in the framework of this legislation, would require teachers to take part in a series of professional development courses and activities over five-year cycles throughout their careers. During each five-year cycle, teachers would be required to successfully complete seven core courses and seven elective courses from an approved course list. Approved courses would include professional development activities and programs many teachers already participate in regularly to improve their skills or to teach a new subject, courses that are currently being provided, for example, by faculties of education, school boards, federations and the ministry.

These courses will focus on key streams, if you will, knowledge that teachers need to have—for example, curriculum, student assessment, special education, teaching strategies, classroom management and leadership, use of technology and communicating with parents and students. All courses would include tests or some other kind of assessment, quite simply to ensure that those programs, those courses, those activities had been successfully completed by teachers.

The course lengths, too, will vary according to the learning requirements of each topic and will range, for example, from one-day workshops that boards put on now, to longer courses designed to upgrade qualifications. It should be noted, because I know we're going to hear criticism from the members opposite about this, that even the Liberal Party has said very clearly that they would require teachers to take mandatory activities to upgrade their professional development. So it's not a unique requirement for professions, for jurisdictions, and obviously not among political parties.

This program will be phased in starting this fall with 40,000 randomly selected practising classroom teachers, and in the new year the approximately 6,500 new teachers who will be going out into classrooms will also begin the program. In the fall of next year, all certified teachers, members of the Ontario College of Teachers, including principals, vice-principals and supervisory officers, will begin participating as well.

Like parents, we know and recognize that an education system that is committed to quality is a system where we all must work together, all of the partners must work together, for the benefit of students.

That brings me to the second initiative in this legislation, and that has to do with the concern that parents and students have expressed about how labour disputes between school boards and teacher unions, school boards and staff unions, have disrupted their students', their children's educational year. We've heard these concerns, we've listened, and with this legislation we are proposing two steps which we believe will provide greater labour stability.

First of all, I think it's important to recognize that we continue to believe that local agreements are the best solution. But we also believe that the collective bargaining process needs adjustments to better reflect the interests of parents and students and the need for greater stability. Our legislation therefore requires that upcoming collective agreements between school boards and teachers' unions will run for a term of three years, so no more of this annual collective bargaining, this annual labour disruption that has occurred in some boards, some unions. We will have agreements run for a term of three years. This requirement would be phased in. As current contracts expire, school boards and teachers' unions would be required to negotiate contracts that will run to August 31, 2004. Thereafter, all subsequent collective agreements would have a term of three years.

Longer-term agreements are not an unusual thing. School boards have had two- and three-year agreements before. Other sectors have had two- and three-year agreements in labour. Even though, as our critics are going to point out, Ontario provides grants to all of our partners, education or otherwise, as part of an annual budgeting cycle, certainly many other sectors and boards have periodically been able to do longer-term agreements, and we think that this is a very important step.

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We've also seen, in Toronto and Windsor-Essex, that labour disputes involving support staff can also have a direct impact on the delivery of education to our students. The Education Relations Commission, an arm's-length independent body, currently advises the government when the continuation of a strike or lockout involving teachers is putting students' education at risk. They currently have that authority, but unfortunately the gap in the legislation means that they've had no jurisdiction in labour disputes involving other board staff. The commission's advice to governments of all political stripes over the years has been an important factor in a government's decision to legislate teachers back to work.

What the legislation tonight is proposing is to allow the Education Relations Commission to advise the government when students' education is in jeopardy because of labour disputes involving other school board staff. That'll be an important expansion of their authority so they can give us that crucial advice when a strike with

teachers or school board staff is jeopardizing a student's school year.

These measures, if approved by the Legislature, will mean that students, parents, teachers and school board employees will spend less time distracted by contract negotiations and the possibility of labour disputes, while at the same time giving unions and school boards the ability to continue to have the flexibility they need to work out their own specific local agreements.

Moving on to the third important part of this legislation, first of all I'd like to start by saying that this government and the members of this caucus continue to recognize that co-instructional activities are an important part of any student's education. That's why we established the advisory group on co-instructional activities: to provide advice on how to restore those activities where they had been withdrawn from students as part of a work-to-rule by some teachers in some schools, a very unfortunate occurrence that has taken away opportunities for students, taken away opportunities to learn better, to develop relationships with teachers, to have job opportunities, opportunities to get scholarships for post-secondary education. So these work-to-rule activities by some teachers have taken away that opportunity for students.

The advisory group has provided advice to the government on how to restore these activities where they had been withdrawn. I must say, the group did, despite the criticism when we appointed them—there was a great deal of criticism that somehow or other they weren't up to the job. But when they did their work, when they went out and did the consultation, the meetings, the listening that they were asked to do, they came back with recommendations that were greeted with great acceptance by all our education partners. Even our critics said that those recommendations were good, they were helpful, they would help restore extracurricular activities, co-instructional activities, in our schools.

The group said to all of the education partners that we had to set aside our original positions and we had to work for the benefit of students. We were very pleased, and students were certainly very pleased, to see that everyone said they would. So on May 7 we announced a significant package of initiatives that act on those key recommendations from the advisory group and other education partners to ensure that co-instructional activities will be available to all of our students this fall.

The third and final component of this bill provides the legislative framework for us to implement this significant package. The proposed legislation will give school boards and high school principals and schools greater flexibility to recognize co-instructional activities when they're assigning teachers' workloads, because everyone recognizes that for a teacher to do extracurricular activities is an additional duty, that it is an additional task that many teachers see simply as part of their job. So what this legislation does is give flexibility so that when time-tabling teachers they can recognize that co-instructional activities do have an additional workload.

The current requirement that high school teachers teach an average of 6.67 courses a year—or, to use something that's a little more easy to understand, the equivalent of an average of four hours and 10 minutes of instructional time a day—that standard stays because it's a fair and reasonable standard. It's based on what teachers do across the country. But what we clearly recognized is that it did have to be changed in how it was applied and what it included. So there will be greater flexibility in the regulations that define the instructional time standard, so that we can clearly say to our teachers that we can include time spent giving remedial help to students and time spent on duties such as supervising students or for on-call, as it's called, filling in for teachers who may well be involved in co-instructional activities.

The legislation will also allow a school board to pass a resolution to vary the maximum average class size in its high schools by up to one student if they choose to do so. We brought in the previous average cap on class size in Bill 160, legislation that for the first time in this province set an average cap on class size, legislation which some of the people across the way who are criticizing me now actually voted against. Hard as that is to believe, the Liberal Party, which started to say to school boards, "We've got to work to bring class size down," would actually vote against this legislation. The cap that was established in Bill 160 does remain, but school boards have additional flexibility to vary that size, to use those resources to meet students' needs, to meet local priorities. Again, it was a key recommendation the task force put forward and that all partners said they supported.

The other thing this legislation will do is repeal the unproclaimed section of the Educational Accountability Act, which was passed last year. This section would have required teachers to participate in co-instructional activities, would have made it a mandatory task, if you will. Based on the recommendations the task force put forward, and based on everyone's willingness, all the partners saying they were prepared to move forward, prepared to do this, this legislation proposes to repeal that section of the legislation.

*Applause.*

**Hon Mrs Ecker:** I'm very pleased to see the Liberals are actually supporting something. This is good to hear. Perhaps they will vote for this bill.

This legislation will also proclaim the sections of the act that require school boards to develop and implement plans for the provision of co-instructional activities for our high schools, a very important step as they put in place the supports through teachers, through volunteers and through other activities to make sure our students get what they need. With the passage of this legislation, students should be able to expect that extracurricular activities will be restored this fall, a very, very important step.

This legislation, as it stands before this House, will enable us to move forward with our partners in a number of areas to make necessary changes. I'd like to also say

that every step in this legislation has involved consultations and meetings between the ministry, myself, our educational partners, all of them—students' groups, parents, teachers' federations and school boards—to make sure we were obtaining their best advice on how to move forward with this.

We, on this side of this House, are committed to setting higher standards for student achievement in Ontario, to providing students with the tools and the environment they need to succeed. The proposed Stability and Excellence in Education Act will be an important step along the path to an education system where the highest priority is improving student achievement.

I certainly expect that we will receive support from the other members of this House from across the way. I know our caucus supports this legislation. I know there are many members of our education partners and organizations who support this legislation. I certainly hope the members on the other side of the House will work with the government to have speedy passage of this bill, for the benefit of students.

**Mr Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North):** I am pleased to take part in the debate on second reading of Bill 80, the Stability and Excellence in Education Act, 2001. I'd like, first of all, to thank Minister Ecker for bringing forth this legislation, and I'd like to thank her for having me as her parliamentary assistant as education minister as well as government House leader. I've certainly enjoyed the job. It's great to work with the magnificent staff they have at the Ministry of Education and in the minister's office, as well as the opportunities I've had as PA to visit schools, to visit parent councils, to meet with people from all different stakeholders in education. I have to tell you, it's a pleasure to be here.

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Since 1995, this government has been implementing a comprehensive plan to reform our publicly funded education system. Our goal is to help students succeed, to build an education system that provides the quality education parents want for their children in a stable learning environment.

Student-focused funding, new curriculum with higher standards, province-wide student tests, a greater voice for parents and safe school environments have all been aimed at creating an education system where the highest priority is improving student achievement. Students deserve to get the best education possible, and parents expect their sons and daughters to have the best education possible.

Our government has made the difficult decisions required to create an education system where excellence, achievement and accountability are the highest priorities. We are setting high standards and getting results. However, there is much more to do. This legislation would be another step to see our plan for quality education through to success.

Accountability to parents is an essential part of our plan, and with this legislation we are responding to the concerns of our parents, who want to be assured their

children have a stable learning environment and who want to be assured their children have teachers who are up to date in their skills and knowledge, teachers who will prepare our students for the challenges of the 21st century.

There are three major components to Bill 80. First of all, Bill 80 is our commitment to accept key recommendations from the advisory group on co-instructional activities and other education partners to ensure that co-instructional activities are available to all students. Mr Speaker, you may recall that Chairman Doug Brown and members of his committee visited the Legislature here last week.

Secondly, Bill 80 responds to concerns from parents and students across the province about the frequent labour disruptions involving school boards and teachers and school staff unions in Ontario. Thirdly, the Stability and Excellence in Education Act implements a mandatory recertification program for teachers, a key component of Ontario's teacher testing program and a commitment made by our caucus during the 1999 provincial election.

I'd like to speak a little bit about co-instruction. The regular school day, also called the instructional day, is only part of a quality school program. Outside the regular classes, students participate in a wide range of co-instructional activities, including sports, arts and cultural activities for students. There are also other important activities that contribute to a quality education, such as parent-teacher interviews, staff meetings and school functions such as commencement and graduation ceremonies. Teachers have often stated that making co-instructional activities available to students is a very important part of their professional responsibilities.

In addition to dedicated teachers, there have always been many other people involved in providing these activities for students, including parents and other members of our school communities. While many teachers across the province have continued providing co-instructional activities, parents and students have been concerned about schools where a full range of co-instructional activities have not been available. In January this year, the Minister of Education appointed an advisory group on co-instructional activities to recommend measures to ensure Ontario's students have improved access to these very important activities.

The advisory group heard input from a wide variety of sources, including students, parents, teachers and many others involved in education. In April the group brought forward a number of thoughtful recommendations. We clearly heard, and all our education partners clearly heard, that parents and students want to see an improved environment in our schools. In May the government announced a package of initiatives based on key recommendations of the advisory group that demonstrated our commitment to an improved environment. We are proposing to give school boards the flexibility that they have told us will help them meet their students' needs, not only for co-instructional activities but for

remedial help to meet the challenges of Ontario's rigorous curriculum and for a safe and positive school environment.

Bill 80 would enact key parts of our package of initiatives. It would give school boards and high school principals greater flexibility to recognize co-instructional activities when assigning teachers' workloads, so that all high schools can provide a quality program of co-instructional activities to students. Specifically, Bill 80 would amend the Education Act to allow boards to vary the maximum average class size in secondary schools by up to one student. It would also broaden the types of eligible courses and programs to be included in teaching assignments for secondary classroom teachers and, as well, would repeal sections of the Education Act which have made co-instructional activities a duty of teachers. As well, the power of a principal to assign co-instructional duties to teachers would be repealed.

I'd like to speak a little bit about class sizes. Because co-instructional activities have been an issue at the secondary level, we propose to permit class size in secondary schools to rise, so that teachers can be freed up to participate in co-instructional activities. The average class size for secondary school classes, in the aggregate, would remain at 21. However, boards could pass a resolution to exceed that average by up to one student. This would provide boards with flexibility to access resources that could be used for local priorities to meet the needs of students for quality education.

To ensure that parents and students are informed as to why the board wants to increase class size, the board would be required to pass the resolution at a public meeting. In addition, the proposed legislation would permit the minister to make regulations governing the board resolution. As well, school boards will continue to report annually to the public on their average class sizes, both by school and on a board-wide basis, using a consistent province-wide calculation method.

A little bit on instructional time: the current province-wide standard for instructional time at the secondary level requires school boards to ensure that, on average, full-time secondary schoolteachers are assigned to teach 6.67 eligible courses a year. This is a course load equivalent of four hours and 10 minutes a day or 1,250 minutes a week. Ontario's instructional time standard is consistent with other provinces. With this legislation, we are introducing additional flexibility into the system.

Bill 80 would provide flexibility by allowing changes to the regulations that would refine the definition of what counts toward the 6.67 to include, first of all, time spent giving remedial help to students so they can meet the challenges of Ontario's rigorous curriculum and also time spent on duties such as supervising students and filling in for teachers involved in co-instructional activities, helping to ensure a safe school environment. Boards would have the flexibility to vary assignments to teachers. For instance, in addition to teaching credit courses, some teachers could be assigned remedial instruction, others could be assigned supervision duties

and a third group could include all three components of the workload.

Nothing in legislation requires that all teachers have the same workload. There is no legal need to schedule all teachers to teach a quarter-credit course. We have provided flexibility to boards. We expect teachers to be flexible in working with the boards to meet the needs of the students.

Some have suggested going back to six out of eight credit courses per teacher. This would require an additional 3,000 teachers and would cost about \$200 million for teachers' salaries and benefits per year.

There are other initiatives as well. It should be emphasized that in addition to the provisions of Bill 80, the government's package includes other measures to ensure co-instructional activities are available to students. These would include the following: on May 7, the government announced a further \$50 million in funding that school boards may use to address their local priorities. This brings the total increase for this next school year to over \$360 million. Secondly, school boards will be required to develop and implement plans, in consultation with the local school community, for the provision of co-instructional activities in secondary schools. As well, high school principals will be required to develop and implement school plans and to consult with their local councils on their development and implementation. This government is proceeding with plans to proclaim the section of the Education Accountability Act, 2000, now part of the Education Act, that legislated this requirement.

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The Ministry of Education will provide a guideline for co-instructional activities to help school boards meet province-wide standards for planning co-instructional activities. We are developing province-wide standards for the training and orientation of community volunteers who help with co-instructional activities as well. We will work with the Ontario College of Teachers and with faculties of education to provide courses to prepare teachers for leadership roles in co-instructional activities.

We are doing our part and we fully expect that our education partners will match the commitment we have demonstrated and work to ensure that all our students receive a better education.

On stability, we want our students in the classroom, learning and growing, guided by their teachers and meeting the challenges of Ontario's rigorous curriculum. Like parents, we want greater stability in labour relations to ensure that students receive the benefits of Ontario's quality education reforms. A lot of energy is expended by boards and teachers in bargaining one-year agreements. We believe that both parties need predictable extended periods free from collective bargaining so that energies can be focused on the delivery of quality education to our students.

To protect the interests of students and promote stability, Bill 80 would require all collective agreements negotiated by boards and teacher unions to run for three

years, beginning September 1, 2004. Students, parents, teachers and school board employees would spend less time distracted by contract negotiations and the possibility of labour disputes, while unions and school boards would continue to have the flexibility they need to work out their own specific local agreements. Bill 80 would provide the first collective agreement between a board and a teacher bargaining agent entered into following July 1, 2001, to expire August 31, 2004. Subsequent agreements would have a term of three years.

School boards have already shown this year that with one-year funding they are able to negotiate collective agreements for two and three years. In the most recent round of negotiations, there are 44 two-year agreements with teachers and four that extend for up to three years. The hospital sector also has multiple-year agreements on single-year funding.

This change does not require all boards to start negotiating. Boards with collective agreements that end August 2001 and teachers' unions can continue with the collective bargaining process already in progress. By setting the 2004 date, there is no interference with agreements already in place, so there is no requirement for collective agreements that end in 2002 or 2003 to be reopened. In the vast majority of cases, the collective bargaining process works well and the parties reach agreements without any interruption in service. As well, there are tools available to the parties to resolve disputes without resorting to job action affecting students. The government will continue to encourage the resolution of disputes through mediation and arbitration.

The proposed legislation would also allow the Education Relations Commission to advise the government when students' education is in jeopardy because of labour disputes involving any board employees. The Education Relations Commission currently advises the government when the continuation of a strike or lockout involving teachers is putting students' education at risk. The commission's advice is an important factor in a government's decision to legislate teachers back to work.

However, as we have seen in Toronto and Windsor-Essex, labour disputes involving support staff can also have a direct impact on the delivery of education to our students. Bill 80 therefore proposes allowing the Education Relations Commission to advise the government when students' education is in jeopardy because of labour disputes involving other school board staff. Parents have told us we need to react to these situations quickly for the benefit of our students. The Education Relations Commission already serves that function with respect to teachers, and it is the appropriate body to make that determination with respect to support staff.

I'd like to now speak a little bit about mandatory recertification. We introduced our comprehensive Ontario teacher testing program to ensure that both new and experienced teachers have the up-to-date training, knowledge and skills to help students succeed and

achieve higher standards. Modelled on best practices in other jurisdictions, our program includes a series of initiatives which are being phased in over two years.

Also in place is a language-proficiency test, in effect since last fall for new applicants to the teaching profession who took their training outside Ontario in a language other than English or French. To be introduced over the coming months, pending approval of legislation, where necessary, are a requirement that all new applicants for Ontario teaching certificates take a qualifying test similar to a lawyer's bar exam, starting next spring, and new province-wide performance appraisal standards to ensure all teachers are evaluated regularly and consistently in their classrooms.

We are also developing an internship program for new teachers to help them acquire strong teaching and classroom management skills. We will introduce a system to recognize teaching excellence. We will establish clear roles for parents, educators and experts, and a quality-assurance process for schools.

In developing this comprehensive plan, the government is consulting with parents, students, teachers, principals and vice-principals, trustees, deans of education and the Ontario College of Teachers, as well as other education partners. Experiences in other professions and jurisdictions have been a key part of the design and development process.

Bill 80 would require all members of the Ontario College of Teachers to complete five-year cycles of professional development to stay up to date and maintain their certification. Mandatory recertification was recommended by the Royal Commission on Learning in its 1995 report. Bill 80 would amend the Ontario College of Teachers Act to give the college clear statutory authority to implement and enforce mandatory professional learning requirements.

In addition, the bill would confirm mandatory professional learning as one of the objects of the college, first of all, to determine the overall requirements for mandatory recertification; to establish a statutory committee to approve courses and providers; to outline notice, appeal, suspension and cancellation provisions for teachers who do not complete the professional learning requirements; and to determine transitional requirements for mandatory recertification.

Approximately 40,000 practising classroom teachers and 6,500 new teachers will be the first to participate in the mandatory recertification program starting in the fall of 2001. All other members of the Ontario College of Teachers, including principals, vice-principals and other certified teachers would begin in the fall of 2002. All teachers would be required to successfully complete seven core courses and seven elective courses during this five-year cycle.

Core courses would focus on curriculum knowledge, student assessment, special education, teaching strategies, classroom management and leadership, use of technology, and communicating with parents and students. Course lengths will vary according to learning

requirements of the topic. The course and the providers will be approved by a professional learning committee of the Ontario College of Teachers, a key partner in this initiative.

The professional learning committee would be established as a statutory committee so that it has clear statutory authority to approve courses and providers. The committee would be made up of up to five minister's appointees and six council appointees. The six council appointees would be two elected council members, two council members appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council and two college members at large. The committee would approve providers and courses to meet the professional development needs of both new and experienced teachers.

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Regulations under the bill would set out the minimum criteria for the courses: that they must be related to student achievement, be linked to the core competency statements developed by the ministry in consultation with its education partners, and include tests or other assessments to ensure they have been completed successfully.

Approved courses would include professional development activities and programs in which many teachers already participate to improve their skills or to teach a new subject. For example, many courses and programs currently offered by school boards as part of their required professional activity programs for teachers would be eligible for the new recertification program if they meet the new criteria.

The bill also includes transitional provisions to ensure that an adequate supply of professional learning courses and providers is ready for September 2001. During this time, the minister would have transitional authority to approve courses and providers to meet a September 2001 implementation date.

The minister would also be able to delegate the transitional authority to the chair of the college's governing council to allow the college to do the initial approvals process itself. This would give the professional learning committee time to appoint its members and to publish its approval procedures.

This legislation is part of our comprehensive plan to ensure that Ontario's public education system can achieve excellence. For the 2001-02 school year, we've increased our investment in public education by more than \$360 million. This year we will spend over \$13.8 billion. Since our government came to office in 1995, education spending in Ontario has increased from \$12.9 billion to \$13.8 billion for this next school year.

We've increased funding and other support for students with special needs in Ontario. In fact, last year we increased spending on special education by 12%. That was the third year in a row that we've increased resources in this vital area. I can say to you that in my riding of Simcoe North, representing the two school boards, the Simcoe County District School Board and the Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board, we

were fortunate enough to have our special-needs funding increased by up to 25%.

We're entirely committed, not just to introducing higher standards but to making sure the standards are met. To improve quality and accountability, we have established a more rigorous curriculum with higher standards. We have brought in new standardized testing to measure students' progress. We have created understandable report cards so that parents can see and evaluate exactly how their children are doing in school. We have also worked hard to strengthen parental involvement in education through school councils.

Now we're acting to assure parents and students across Ontario that teachers have the up-to-date knowledge and skills needed to help students reach their full potential. That is why we're implementing a comprehensive teacher-testing program and we are taking steps to provide the stability parents want and students need in a positive school environment.

Bill 80 is another step toward increased quality, more accountability and improved student achievement.

I'd like to take just a few moments to speak a little bit on the high school that I attended in Orillia. Park Street Collegiate Institute in Orillia is celebrating its 40th anniversary this year. I was very thankful that I was able to attend such a high school. All my brothers and sisters and my wife's family also attended this school, as well as my daughter and my son.

I have to talk a little bit about the co-instructional activities that we had at this school. I was able to participate in the football program and the track and field program. My daughter was able to play with the Park Street Collegiate Institute band. They travelled to Europe and played in Scotland and England. It's a great school. They taught me a lot, and I appreciate my years there.

Since I've been involved, particularly in education, but since I've been elected as an MPP, I've gotten to meet a lot of my former teachers over the last two years. I didn't realize they were all still around the Orillia area, but I've had the opportunity to visit them on a number of occasions and to say hello to them and talk to them about what they're doing today.

In particular, I'd like to thank one of my teachers, my former grades 12 and 13 math teacher, Mr K.G. Brown. I met him not too long ago, and Mr Brown is doing well and living in Orillia. I remember just at the end of our grade 13 calculus course, there was about a week and a half left in the year, he had finished the course, and he took the whole class aside and he taught us all about interest rates and amortization and all those sorts of things that have helped many of us throughout our careers.

**The Acting Speaker:** Comments and questions?

**Ms Caroline Di Cocco (Sarnia-Lambton):** The member from Simcoe North certainly did a lot of reading. I have to say I was waiting for some enthusiasm in his discourse. As I said, I listened intently.

One of the issues regarding this Bill 80, Stability and Excellence in Education Act, is that when it comes to

negotiating of teachers' contracts, although long term is a good idea, unfortunately school boards are funded only one year at a time. How can you negotiate when you don't have the tools to negotiate more than one year at a time? Because that's all the funding there is.

The other point has to do with the implementation of mandatory recertification for teachers. Every other profession self-directs this mandatory training or upgrading, but here we have it imposed by the government.

Restoring of extracurricular activities in high schools: I'd certainly like to see the definition of how they're going to put this flexibility in what they call their teaching time.

I certainly am going to vote against this bill, because this is not about accountability; it's about control. This government has this style of governing, and accountability is something that requires good management. Unfortunately, the one hammer that this government has is that of control, so they somehow feel that if they legislate something, it's going to happen arbitrarily in the front lines.

Again, I'm going to say that this bill about stability and excellence is somewhat of an oxymoron.

**Ms Marilyn Churley (Toronto-Danforth):** This bill really should be called an act to divert attention from the private school tax credit mess, because that's what it really is all about. You misnamed this one; you got it wrong. This government does this every time, Mr Speaker, they're in trouble. What do they do but lash out and bash? Who are they bashing, once again, in this bill? It's our education workers, and it is done purely to distract attention, to get people's attention away from this very unpopular tax credit crisis that they find themselves in.

Polls have been done and they show that Ontarians massively reject this tax credit scheme. A Strategic Communications poll for People for Education found that 67% of the people oppose the tax credit. Then a similar survey completed by the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education found that only 26% of Ontarians are in favour of the private school tax credit. That's 84% across.

That's what's going on here: "Let's get the teachers and educators all upset again. Let's start yet another crisis in the education system by bashing the educators." That's what they do here. One of the things which I find absolutely astounding, for instance, is that they want multi-year agreements. Well, Minister, where is the multi-year funding that the boards have said they desperately need to plan for the future?

#### 1950

With this bill, what you're doing is demanding of the school boards what you yourself are refusing to do: you are demanding accountability here, but you are refusing to be accountable yourself. You say that you want to promote stability in this, but your Bill 160—remember that?—gutted the Education Relations Commission. This bill is here to divert attention, and we're not going to allow that to happen.

**Mr Wayne Wettlaufer (Kitchener Centre):** This two minutes gives me a little bit of an opportunity to support my colleague the member for Simcoe North for very well articulating the position of the government on this bill.

I do want to comment, if I may, on the comments by the member for Toronto-Danforth, who says that 64% or 67% of Ontarians oppose the tax credit scheme. It's really odd that she's reading the results of a poll that was commissioned by the teachers' unions. Obviously it was a push poll, one that was conducted and reported on by the National Post. A few days in advance, it was reported that 57% of Ontarians were indeed in favour of the tax credit scheme, and that was a much more objective poll.

In addition, I'd like to comment on the member for Sarnia-Lambton. It was really interesting. She commented on the fact that the government is imposing teacher testing upon the teachers' unions. Isn't that interesting? You said—through you, Speaker—that all other professions, if I have your quote correctly, do it on their own. Of course all other professions do it on their own, and they're happy to do it. But the teachers' unions were the ones who opposed any kind of teacher testing because they wanted to handle things their own way. So you can't have it both ways, I say to the Liberals. They seem to want to stand on both sides of the fence. I can tell you, it doesn't work.

**Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines):** The last comment of the last member is right: he cannot do that. It's been tried, but he cannot.

Let me look at the initial comments that have been made by the government side in this case. It's all in the context of changes taking place in education.

I was at a funeral this morning for Bob O'Neill, who was a former director of education for what was then called the Lincoln County Roman Catholic Separate School Board. One of the people who eulogized him at the beginning of the service said something that caught my attention. He talked about the days of the late 1960s and early 1970s. He said massive changes were taking place in education at that time, and he said it reminded him of what was happening now. But he added to it, and this was not a political occasion at all; it was something that came forth from this gentlemen. He said that it was done in such a positive way then that people seemed to be part of a team, and it was so positive that people were buying into, if you will, the changes in education. I think that's because they were seen to be for the betterment of education, not simply to punish one side or to punish another side in a particular issue.

Where this started out, I must say, where I saw it, was in Bill 160. Bill 160 was essentially designed to take more people out of the classroom to save money from expenditure in education. If the government had been honest about that, people may not have liked it, but that was the real purpose of Bill 160. That's why we're always sceptical of many of these bills and what the real purpose is. In fact, if you read *Alien Invasion: How the Harris Tories Mismanaged Ontario*, by Ruth Cohen,

you'll find many things written about education there that talk about the real agenda of this government. It's unfortunate, because people require change from time to time in education. It's the motivation, the way it's done, that seems to be turning people off.

**The Acting Speaker:** The member for Simcoe North has two minutes to respond.

**Mr Dunlop:** I want to thank the member for Kitchener Centre for his comments, the member for St Catharines, the member for Toronto-Danforth. I'd like to thank my colleague from Sarnia-Lambton for her comments as well. I felt I was enthusiastic about it, maybe not as enthusiastic as I was watching golf over the weekend when our friend Mike Weir—we were hoping Mike would do a little bit better, but—

*Interjection.*

**Mr Dunlop:** He's an excellent representative, a young Ontarian doing very well in world competition.

I'd like to say I listened to all the comments here this evening. When we talk about co-instructional and about the activities that actually take place in schools, I'd like to just mention a few of the schools that I've attended as parliamentary assistant. I've visited a number of schools in my own riding as well as across the province and had an opportunity to open some new schools. I think most of the new schools I've opened have been by the Catholic boards, one in Stoney Creek, three in Vaughan-King, one in Maple and one in Penetanguishene—the new Canadian Martyrs Catholic School there. They're fantastic new schools; they're state of the art the way they're designed and built. They have the most modern architecture and highest-quality heating and ventilating systems which are up to the most modern standards of our Ontario building codes.

**Mr Bradley:** Better than the Legislature?

**Mr Dunlop:** I'm afraid they are better than the Legislature. They're very good.

But I've noticed in all the schools a great school spirit among the students and the staff, and I've enjoyed working with the parent councils as well. They've had great knowledge—

*Interjection.*

**Mr Dunlop:** Yes, they may be school councils but, Mr Levac, most of them are made up of parents.

I appreciate the opportunity to make comments and speak here this evening.

**The Acting Speaker:** The member's time is expired. Thank you. Further debate.

*Applause.*

**Mr Gerard Kennedy (Parkdale-High Park):** It is my privilege to join in this debate. I'll just let the raucous applause die down.

I see the members opposite in sort of low reprise about this, and so they should, so they should. This particular bill has on its cover the promise of rectifying so much of the damage this government has done. It actually has the audacity to say it's An Act to promote a stable learning environment—from the government that invented the opposite; from the government that brought chaos and

turmoil to every single thing it touched this year, the year before and the year before that.

Frankly, it is what even the most objective of observers say is the hallmark of the failed policy. What we have here—a little cornered, a little backed up, a little without its mandate—is an initiative from the Ministry of Education, while somewhere else in the province, not quite as we speak but not many hours ago, the Ministry of Finance carried on the real agenda, the real forward direction of this particular government with respect to the students and the direction of education in this province.

Of course we have a fairly subdued presentation today by the minister, by the assistant, because this is not about excellence in education. This is not about stability in our schools. This is about, instead, a government backpedalling ever so slightly, unable and unsure. This bill is just shot through with the kind of hesitant regret that this government has set as its low ambition to be able to provide some measure of where it's not actually attacking. Yet, even in that, we don't see that success. We don't see this government as fully sincere, even in that very small outlook, that very minimum of ambition for this government to bring about for the students of this province.

Before I continue I want to make sure I'm sharing my time with the member for Brant, the member for Kingston and the Islands, and the member for St Catharines.

This should have been, and this could have been, a turning of sorts for this government. They have tried a number of damaging policies. They have inflicted centralized status, Soviet-style thinking. They said last spring, "We have Bill 74. We're going to reach into your schools and we're going to tell you exactly how your teachers in every one of those 5,000 schools—or at least the 2,000 high schools—should deploy themselves. We, the government of the day here at Queen's Park, sitting in our plush chairs, will push buttons and we'll control the schools and the conditions for 700,000 high-school students." They swore up and down they would do that; they would bring some sort of order to the land. Instead, what did we get? We got thousands upon thousands of students deprived of their extracurricular activities, robbed of their chance to have a full learning experience, not by some accident of history or some inevitable force running one against another, but rather the conceit of a government that said it could control so much, that said it could actually run schools from Queen's Park.

The government said in Bill 74 it would actually send in inspectors if someone had the audacity to not provide exactly what somebody else thought they should. The minister herself would send in a personal emissary and visit the school and come back with a report. Then if the minister wanted to have something changed at that school, the minister would have to take over the school board. A practical matter? Perhaps not. But the minister nonetheless persevered.

**2000**

Hearings were held last spring, and time after time people stepped forward and said to the minister—at that

time it was the Minister of Education conducting hearings on education. It was a full committee and it at least sat for a few more days than the one we have currently. Well-intentioned parent after student after teacher after interested member of the public, especially at the end of the hearings, when they started to apprehend what was going on, expressed themselves, and this government continued as if there wasn't a single pebble thrown in the water. Not a ripple of counterthought emanated from the government benches.

So this school year began and we lost immeasurably. We lost the confidence of so many students because adults could not get their act together. If you look back in Hansard, you'll find a minister, you'll find a Premier, you'll find sundry other members of the government denying any responsibility, saying that they had no fault, no blame, no exercise of power when it came to the sudden disappearance, in 70 out of 72 boards, of the majority of extracurricular activities. Person after person wrote in, hit alarm bells, said, "Something can be done here. It's not too late; you could act. You could save this year. You could do something."

People started to make themselves heard, and students in particular started to demonstrate and show up outside here. Question period after question period you could hear certain students talking, or more likely after school. Many of the students decided they would come and hold their extracurricular activities right on the lawn. In fact, there were more extracurricular activities on the lawn of Queen's Park this year at some 12 different times that they came down and played soccer and music and band and so forth, because they weren't able to achieve that in their schools. All the time, the government of the day sat firmly with its head in the sand, not a reference to admission of responsibility, let alone culpability.

This government put 700,000 students not first, not second, not third, but way down the list. This is it. Here we are with literally days, almost minutes, left in the school year, and the government has finally come forward with some form of response to what everybody in almost every high school across the province has been talking about since the beginning of the school year last September. This is it, this Bill 80, this modest ambition, this barely-out-of-the-wrapper kind of thought of the government that they might actually come around to acknowledging a small amount of responsibility. It is in fact in the extracurricular portion of this bill, this tidy-up, this backing away, this sort of "Maybe we will, maybe we won't" kind of bill on the part of the government that they hope will do more for them in propaganda than it does in content, that we might actually find some common ground.

We, Mr Speaker, as you may recollect, brought in a bill last December, and part of it is mirrored in this bill today. We have to appreciate that the government has taken out an offensive part of the Education Act where they, in some almost inane thought of control, determined in advance of principals, ahead of teachers, not with any thought toward superintendents or people

who might actually live in the communities, parents and students, without having any regard for how things would actually work, wrote in the numbers that would control how many teachers would spend how many hours in front of the class, an absolutely Orwellian concept of how a government could operate in the lives of students.

Our plan was very simply titled Students First, a peace plan for education. That plan that Dalton McGuinty put forward was itself not a proposal to fix everything, but it was meant to be a start and it was meant to be what this bill, sadly, is not: it was timely. It was December when we brought this forward. Just as a few months earlier we'd said to each of the members of this House that there needed to be some action, there needed to be some initiation, something constructive done on the part of this House, because there's been way too much politics out there in the schools inflicted by this House, by members who may not have, to put it in its mildest form, a working knowledge of what exactly they're doing in the last number of years with all the changes that they are bringing upon the heads of students in this province who are just trying to get an education.

Some of the members opposite, I'm happy to acknowledge, actually took up that invitation and visited some of the schools. If they drew some of the same conclusions, however, many of them kept it to themselves. It was only on this side of the House we heard from people who said, "What we've seen in those schools is not acceptable. Something needs to be done. We need to put ourselves forward. We need to make an effort. We need to provide something better for the students who are there." That's where the peace plan came forward. Around December 14 this government was given a chance to vote, and they voted against it. They decided not to support the idea of peace in the schools at that time. With the minister—and I believe it was the last question on the last day of the House—the Premier of this province was still denying any level of responsibility.

So we see in the mention of things around extracurricular some level of hopefulness, but even there the modest ambition of this government overtakes it. Its inability to do something constructive for the education of this province's students impedes it. On the one hand the government is saying, "We might have been wrong. We could have been misguided. We may have done a lot of damage and we're going to back away from some of the most contentious things we did a year ago and said would be in the interest of students. We will take away this silly plan to force teachers to do something voluntarily"—or some other contorted version of government power—"and we will also adjust this centrepiece of our control," which is some number that for most people means nothing but that actually wreaked havoc in the day-to-day lives of the schools and the children who are trying to get an education in our high schools.

But even there the government could not see fit to follow the recommendation we put forward in our peace plan. Just reinvest less than 10% of the money you've

taken out of all the schools and allow for a different, more flexible arrangement. You could still have the thing you used to claim you wanted in your television commercials, the 1,250 minutes. But somehow this government wasn't prepared to do that, and instead this bill, sadly and unfortunately, increases the class sizes in the high schools in this province. It reverses the trend that the people of this province need to know the signal identification of what is commitment to some level of excellence, which is a chance for children and students in this province to be treated by their individual needs.

This government has said, no, they've got other priorities. So in this bill, which we oppose vehemently, is the idea, the compromise that the government will not pay for the fixing of its own mistakes. Instead, who will pay that price? The students of this province will still find it difficult to access their teachers, to get that in-between time, to get that individual attention, because this bill raises the average class size in high school from 21 up to 22, and we know that average class size has an infinite elasticity. We know about the English classes with 38 and 40 people in them. We know about the kind of time it's taking to mark assignments, the kind of effort that's being made to maintain quality in the face of what is at the heart of this bill. The heart of this bill is a lack of commitment, a lack of fundamental commitment by this government to public education doing well, to excellence for all in education.

If you read it, page after page, what are we really talking about in this bill today? This is an initiative, perhaps the major initiative, from the Ministry of Education. There is a more significant initiative that would send public money into private schools, but that's being handled by the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Education is shut out. So contra to that, what is the Ministry of Education doing for the students of this province after one of the most troubled years that has ever occurred in this province vis-à-vis their ability to get an education, more confluences of problems, of difficulties, of initiatives that have gone awry from this government? What do they bring us? They bring us some preparations for the next strike. That's what part of this bill is about: the terms for future strikes, as if somehow that's the best we can do.

Then they say to us, "We also need to talk"—for about the 10th or 11th time—"about a notion that somebody in our back room dreamed up about testing teachers"—you know, the notion that everybody out there loves to pieces. Everybody has been tested by teachers and so, reasoned the brain trust opposite, people would be in favour of testing the teachers—right back at them. So when the minister presented this initiative earlier this month, she stood against a backdrop that said, "Testing teachers," over and over and over. And what instead we have today is a government, as its leaked government document said last year, that has no teacher test. Bill 80 has many sins but it doesn't have in it the teacher test this government promised over and over again.

**Hon Mrs Ecker:** It has exactly what we promised.

**Mr Kennedy:** It said it would have a pen-and-paper test. We see this limited ambition turn into not even the conviction of its bad ideas. Even those are sliding by the wayside. Unfortunately, there isn't the energy, there isn't the commitment, there isn't the determination to fix those things, to do something about it.

**2010**

So what do we read into this initiative? A government talks about timelines that may or may not affect 40,000 teachers next year. They will have five years to do seven or 14 courses eventually. They have no capacity, no ability in this outlook of theirs to actually find a way to talk to the teachers of this province. That isn't in the vocabulary of the people opposite.

Instead, they are imposing upon the teachers and upon their professional body, the Ontario College of Teachers, their version of what it is to make teachers accountable. What they have told the rest of the province is a teachers' test—what is it? It's something they rented from an American company, which, to give them credit, is pretty much where most of the other ideas of this government have come from. When in doubt, go right to the Republican closet. What the government of the day doesn't understand is that they're getting the marked-down items. They're getting all the policies that never worked anywhere else. They're getting all the things that governments of other places have tried and failed with. Why? Because governments elsewhere have found out it's not enough to stand here in the Legislature, as bold and courageous as this group used to be, and stamp your feet and demand things. That just doesn't work. That's what we have here today: we have the government backing away from some of the things they did. They're saying on the extracurricular thing, "Well, I guess we can't boss teachers around and just demand that they do extracurricular activities."

They knew that from the beginning. That was simply part of the posture, part of the outlook they thought would substitute for any fresh ideas, any outlook that would actually address the problems and the challenges that exist. They thought they could get away with simply requiring things, without having to do the hard work, the heavy lifting of actually finding out what it would take to put some encouragement out there, to make things happen, to actually have influence on the flow of events in the schools rather than just throwing things in.

Instead, what we have in this government's approach to what they call teacher testing, what they refer to in the legislation as recertification, is simply antagonism. It is a dangerous antagonism, because what it represents is this government's inability to do even the basics well. The fundamentals of running government are getting the most from the people who work for the government. This government has not the insight, has not the temperament. Ultimately, six years later, it stands fairly well identified as not having the fundamental ability to get the province's teachers to be able to appreciate some fundamental respect and a working environment that allows them to impart—because I think if the members

opposite were being honest, they would acknowledge here in this House that the vast majority of those teachers are working for the purpose not of the holidays that some of the members opposite refer to or some of the other things they talk about in terms of the federations or the unions that they're so afraid of—in fact, we invited some of the members opposite to go and visit schools, and they said they wouldn't; they'd bus the kids to come to them.

What are we at, at a certain stage in time, when members opposite are afraid to walk into their neighbourhood schools? It's some strange and contorted thing. Instead, we have from this government something they would not wish to see described as an attack, but it is antagonism. They know full well that the teachers out there are making their determinations. Some 4,400 left the profession of teaching last year for reasons other than retirement. They left, a huge increase from the year before and from two years before that, because of this incessant policy of active discouragement and undermining of a profession, but also of a devotion. The only "public" in public education is the public-interest aspirations of those people who work in it, and because this government doesn't even take it for granted, because this government abuses that idea, it can't understand how to foster it. Therefore we sit today with this bill that says simply to the teachers of this province, "We're going to push and push and push you in any manner, shape, way or form that we find convenient."

Even as this government finds itself cornered, even as this ministry has surrendered control over its own responsibilities to another ministry that is out on the road, changing the face of education, or at least attempting to, but it has been well caught by the public of this province, this government, this ministry stands behind with a bill to antagonize teachers, to increase class sizes without the ability—which I think the people of this province would have applauded. Notwithstanding all that has gone on before, I think the people of this province would have stood up and cheered if the government had said, "We made a mistake with respect to extracurricular activities. We're going to fix it, and we're going to fix it to the satisfaction of everybody involved. We're going to bring the students in, we're going to listen to them accurately for once, we're going to find the means by which we can sustain those extracurricular activities," and this government, perhaps in the form of the minister, perhaps in the form of the Premier, would say, "We, for once, will stop blaming people and will take responsibility, will bring it back in this province, will do that thing because it's the right thing to do and because it will put students first."

Instead, we have this rather tawdry imitation of what could have been the taking of responsibility, what could have been the road back for this government and for this Ministry of Education. I think they would have found out there in the real world that they've so well cocooned themselves from, people, parents, who have been activated, who have been perhaps startled by this initiative to put public funds into private schools, people who have

been activated long before by the cutbacks taking place in their neighbourhoods. They would have found those people if they had made a declaration to have peace and stability in the schools and to meet it and to bring together some meaningful collection of people, some eminent citizens, some students, some parents, representatives of the teachers that they're so afraid of, to bring those people together and find a way that other jurisdictions have found to strike a real partnership, a real means by which we can say, "What will it take for us to find a way that everyone can benefit?"

It is hard to work this into their vocabulary. It doesn't jump off the page for the members opposite. It doesn't even, I think, register as a constant that there could be a means by which the interests of this province could be brought together and be stronger on the whole than the individual interests which they've spent so much of their time decrying. This is somehow not only not present in this bill, but we have yet to see it acted upon in any way. So we're not surprised but we remain disappointed, because this is what we needed. This is the signal that the people of the province have been looking for.

What the people of the province are only just starting to appreciate is that there's a reason we have this so-so bill. There's a reason why we have a bill that retreats on one hand and attacks on the other. There's a reason why we have this bill that clings to election promises that huge documents prepared for the cabinet said have no meaning, like teacher testing and so forth. They cling to that because they have no other place to go. As we'll find out in the estimates committee tomorrow and the next day and next week, and as is already available to people who examine the financing of this particular endeavour of government, of education, which you think would find a place of prominence, instead people across the province are waking up to the fact that the members opposite have allowed funding in this province to be cut by \$958 per student, that they have permitted the deterioration of the financial commitment to the students in this province to the tune of over a 12% reduction for each and every student—some \$958 less. When they stand, it will be their wont to ascribe savings through administration. Less than 8% of that money was saved in administration. In fact, it has come from the direct learning experiences, from the number of teachers, from the support staff, from the provision of services to special-needs children, which we'll hear much more about in the days to come.

But these members of government have, in effect, abdicated. At a time when the revenues of this province have been increasing by \$14 billion, the commitment of this government to fund and to assist the education of students has been reduced by almost \$2 billion. That's the heart of this bill. When you look and try to find it, there is no commitment. When you look and try to find the motivation, it's simply the fact that this government is not committed to public education. That, of course, while it's to be ciphered from this bill, while it's to be sussed out from what is included here in the half-hearted measures we find within it, where it's really discovered,

where the people of the province are really connecting with the agenda of this government is the initiative of the Minister of Finance—the Minister of Finance who, in a few days' time, will put to this House an initiative, the first of any jurisdiction in North America, and he will say to us, "Pass a private school voucher," a tax credit, if you will, but every other jurisdiction that has tried this on—and rejected it, by the way—calls it a voucher.

We on this side of the House call it a voucher because, even though, somewhat like the tenor of this bill, the members of the government lack their convictions in this regard, lack the courage to stand up and say this is some neo-conservative, very contorted version of the rented ideology from the south—instead they bring this forward to us in the guise of a tax credit. In fact, a lot of the members opposite trying to explain this in their home ridings have said, "It's not education policy, it's tax policy," and they don't even have the gumption to stand up to the plate and say, "This is what we want to do."

#### 2020

"We are not going to fight any more for excellence in public education," say the members of the Harris government. "We instead are going to give up and give bonuses to people to leave." That's what's really up, but that's not referred to very directly in Bill 80. In Bill 80 we see what's left over. We see what's left over in terms of the education mandate, we see what's left over in terms of the tidying up. That is the best this government seems to be able to muster, at a time when we had hoped to see many other things. We had hoped to see, certainly for a government that had any ambition to see peace and the end of turmoil, the introduction of stability into the schools, at least some vision, some kind of way forward.

We're happy to remind this government that Dalton McGuinty put forward a vision here on March 1, and it remains the outlook and the blueprint for bringing this province forward in terms of education. But it's not easy to achieve for this government. They may hear it, they may wish to have it, but it takes the commitment that is so badly missing from this. Instead, when we talk about excellence for all, it is built on some fundamental commitment to put education first, to put it ahead of the single-minded tax cuts this government has only the capacity to consider. Instead, we would cap class sizes in the lower grades: from JK to grade 3, we would cap them at 20.

This government has let them rise. In fact, 37%—some 500,000 children—are in classes of 26 or more in this province. Numbers as high as 32 and 35 were presented today to the committee that's listening to this initiative of public funds into private schools that the Ministry of Finance is putting on. That's what is going on in our province. They have allowed the young children of this province to not receive the attention they deserve.

We say that's simply not acceptable, it's not desirable. It is achievable that we can do much, much better. And we say a cap of 20, which would allow for the things that every person in this House—because every person in this House has now been exposed to the insight. Sometimes

they've heard about the hard-wiring of the brain, others about the anticipation of social problems, of physiological problems, of learning difficulties that can be anticipated in those early years. The members of this House, the responsible, honourable members of this House, know there are things we could design and do today that would make a difference in the lives of thousands, if not the majority, of children in primary school today. This House is capable of that, but it's not on the agenda, and it's certainly not in Bill 80.

But that vision, that idea of sharing excellence, of celebrating the excellence in the public school system, in the publicly funded schools that we have, that's the route, the high road this government missed when it gave us the leftovers of Bill 80. That's what the government could have said to us today. They could have had us cheering over here had they said, "We believe in this excellence. We believe in encouraging teachers to do better. We believe in providing incentives, not just pushing people around. We're capable of being able to say, 'Here's what we want. You tell us how to get it.'" And finding nourishing ideas like lighthouse programs that would be funded by the government to encourage things that are going well—that they don't stay in that one school but get shared around. Instead of getting overcrowded schools where things are happening that people like, we would have an ability, a capacity to have those things brought from one school to another, from one board to another, and to allow people to have access to them.

Where there are challenges—and there are significant challenges in schools, sometimes even in boards—there are things that need to be addressed, and this government would rather sit and crunch numbers and dictate formulas and hand out orders and do the things that have been proven, over and over again, to be the hallmark of an ineffective, incapable initiative when it comes to education. It failed in Thatcher's Britain. It failed in untold states in the US that now find themselves begging for teachers and for other professionals to come back into their scorched earth education fields. Because it doesn't make any sense. It's the easy thing to do, but we're six years on in the government, and unless it's going to commit itself to excellence, it's stuck on this low road.

There they are, face down in the tall reeds, as somebody I used to know used to say. This government is stuck—stuck in its old ways and unable to look forward, because the view from down there doesn't look like much. This government has been slogging and they've been fighting and they've been struggling against every constructive force that is out there. They have the audacity to say to the parents and the students of this province, as they did one year ago—they make a tumultuous statement and hope that if they close their eyes and stamp their feet, that's what's going to happen, by gosh, in this province. So last year they said they'd order the teachers of this province to conduct extracurricular activities. That's how it will happen when they put on a central staffing formula that creates chaos all around the province: they'll just make it happen.

Today, they'll say, "We demand there be a three-year contract. We demand that that happen so there are no untoward activities around the time of the next election." Is there a single effort being made by this government to facilitate that, to make that happen, to create the conditions where it's likely, to see where the students would actually be well served by that process? Have they talked about three years with the funding? Have they looked at the conditions under which they could hold out to the teachers and students of this province some confidence that things would get better—things, I would say, that wouldn't cost them any money—to actually build up the confidence and show that they're focused like a laser beam on what is needed to make our schools better and better?

That's what the parents of this province are looking for and that's what the businesses of this province are looking for. But they're starting to come around that this is a government that only knows how to do things on the cheap, that when confronted with two choices is always taking the low road, that isn't able to do much more than this particular hemming and hawing, this cheap version of the public interest for which we've paid such a high price in health care and education and everything else.

At the end of the day, what do we have in Bill 80? We have a couple of words, "stability" and "excellence," totally undermined by a government that doesn't know what they mean.

**Mr Dave Levac (Brant):** Before I get into the bill itself, I want to compliment the member from Parkdale-High Park for obviously presenting to us a passion that is necessary when dealing with education, and I know that the members from Kingston and the Islands and St Catharines will do the same when their time arises.

As I have done in the past, I'd like to read into the record the name of the bill we are debating and then maybe offer some observations of what it really should be named. It is Bill 80, An Act to promote a stable learning environment and support teacher excellence. Maybe it could be renamed Bill 80, An Act to continue an unstable learning environment and stifle teacher excellence, or possibly An Act to divert attention from bad legislation by introducing bad legislation.

The bad legislation I'm referring to is obviously the budget, which includes a section to allow for tax credits to private schools; bad legislation in that maybe I should ask this question: what was the largest, single most extensive expenditure in the budget? Was it education? No. Was it health care? No. Was it the environment? No. Was it senior citizens? No, although the Premier made a point to make sure how he felt about them. It was a \$2.2-billion corporate tax cut. But I think it had a lot to do with education, because the people of Ontario are becoming educated. They're now beginning to see and unravel what Bill 80 does bring to us.

It will not bring stability. We had the Minister of Education almost apologizing, in practically an apologetic tone, in terms of the crisis that had been created in education since 1995. We caught somebody on

tape—and thank God for video—musing about the potential of creating a crisis in education, a devious plan that might be perceived as, "It's a way in which we could get our fingers in the pie and convince people. They're not going to see through this and realize we're going to take more money out of the education system." Who knows? But I'll tell you, there is a crisis. There was one then and there is one now.

Let's talk a little bit about the one now. I have a question, maybe a few questions, for us and the general public at large: how are your music programs? How are your phys ed programs? How are the art programs in your school? How is the special ed? Are the children receiving better special ed than they did five years ago, six years ago? Have we laid off more educational assistants than we ever have before? The answer is yes. Two of my school boards are now faced with layoffs across the board, and shortages in their budgets. They can't provide the special education that was once the envy of, shall I say, Canada and possibly North America, the way we made our students with special needs inclusive.

#### 2030

Fortunately, in my career as an educator, I saw a board that decided to focus its attention on providing special education, a board that said, "No child will be left behind," and had a vision. That vision required partnership from all the parents, even the parents who did not have a student in special needs. They understood and saw the value of the great equalizer called education. The parents came on board. The trustees were on board. The teachers were on board. The support workers and staff were on board. The province at that time was on board. In order to fulfil that vision, we needed all of the inclusive partnerships, and I dare say the community was on board.

What happened? The government decided it needed to shortchange the amount of money it was going to put into special education, bragging, "We've put in more money than ever before, than any other government possible." They haven't accounted for inflation. They haven't accounted for enrolment increase. They haven't accounted for the increase in the students who have special needs.

What did they do? I want to make sure people understand this. The ISA grants, the grants that are created to give that money to the specific child who is being reviewed, when they were first introduced, shocked the government. It shocked the government so much because it had to give up more money to fulfil the needs, according to their own plans, to hire more educational assistants.

I was a principal at that time who had to go through that process. In my school alone, I had three special education assistants. In the next year, what did the government do to be equal in its funding for those students, to make sure that enormous amount of money had to be spent? The government did not increase that funding. What the government did was raise the bar of

how you qualify to get the grant for that special-needs student. So the three students who had special education assistants in that school lost them the following year because they weren't special needs enough. But the year before they were, according to the ministry's own specifications. The specs made it very clear, "My gosh, that student needs a special education assistant in order to equalize them, to give them the same opportunity that anyone else has in that school."

They dropped those grants. Those grants shrank. The amount of money that was available to them was dropped. So we had to remove from those parents the security and comfort they felt knowing they had a special education assistant helping and guiding their child. Speaking personally, those three children today are doing worse than they were when I left in June 1999 because they're not getting the special education assistance they need. The grant money was not there to provide it for them.

I want to provide individual testimony that it was wrong then and it's wrong now. Those students need that help and we need to provide that help. Don't raise the bar in order to stop paying the money for them; pay the money for it. We need to equalize that. You're either going to pay now or you'll pay later.

I want to talk specifically about what was mentioned earlier about extracurricular activities. It was almost insulting to find out that the minister thought she had to put in regulations to show plans for extracurriculars in a school. That's a bunch of bunk. The reality is, I would suspect that 99%—if not 100%—of the principals in the high schools in this province know exactly what's going on in the extracurriculars. And they always organized. As a matter of fact, they organized either in June for that next year, or in August or July. They had meetings with their department heads, they had meetings with all the coaches, and they assigned. They worked together collectively and collegially and included parents in the discussion. That was taking place in most parts of Ontario.

We don't need any regulations. We need respect. We need partnership. We need an appreciation of the fact that these activities—save and except a few of the spots in Ontario that, due to the bullying of the government, refuse to participate—have been going on for years and years and, I will say, will continue to go on for years and years because of the love of it. You can legislate all you want, but you can't remove the love of the profession.

Here I'll editorialize just a little bit, as a little shot of sarcasm: "Some of my best friends are teachers." I've heard that so many times in this Legislature it's almost beginning to get me sick. "My wife is an educator," "My brother is an educator," "My mother was an educator," and yet, "I still proceed to do what I want to do to them."

That's important for us to recognize: "do to them," as opposed to forming the partnerships that are necessary in order to achieve. What we need in this province is a love affair with education, and if we don't accomplish that, we are doomed in this province. We have to offer legislation

that shows we understand that, and I want to tell you clearly, I support, 100% and beyond, the removal of this aggregate, board-wide-average junk that's going on. It doesn't affect schools at all.

Adopt and accept the reality that we're asking for: a definite class size per class across the province, junior kindergarten to grade 3. That is the single most important thing that could be done in legislation in this province to improve and then create the atmosphere for a love affair with education.

Finally, on a personal note again, if you want stability and excellence, I'll refer to a situation that's happening in my board, the Grand Erie public board, because of Bill 160 and funding. BCI, Brantford Collegiate, celebrated 90 years of existence in education and excellence, and they have to consider closure because the funding formula will not allow them to repair a school that is that old. They need an infusion of at least \$20 million to \$25 million for improvement. It can't be found because the board, in its amalgamation and all the funny formulas that were created that counted caretakers' space as classroom space, negates that opportunity.

BCI deserves to stay open; the community wants it open; both boards want it open. Everybody in the province of Ontario knows that they've got these kinds of circumstances across the province. I want the board to stand up and say to the ministry, "You'd better start paying attention to our special circumstances, because this school needs to survive. If you close it, two more schools go in crisis. They can't accommodate the students that you're going to be putting out of work."

I could go on forever, but I'm going to defer to my colleague from Kingston and the Islands.

**Mr John Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands):** I'm pleased to speak on this bill today as well, although I suppose the people of Ontario must be wondering, is education the only thing these people talk about at Queen's Park? It seems to me that just about every bill that's being brought in this House attacks the basic ingredient of education itself over and over again, and that is that they attack the teachers of this province.

You know, it has bothered me for the last three to four years in that I think everyone realizes that if you want to succeed, whether it's in business, whether it's in a hospital, whether it's in education or whether it's in running a municipality, the people who work with you, the people who work for you, the people who are there to implement what you want to do—you must have them on your side. It is an absolute necessity for success. Yet this government, under the guise of making things better, when the people out there darn well know that they're not getting better, is doing exactly the opposite, over and over again. Now, they're very smart about it. They never attack individual teachers themselves. They always attack the teachers' federations, the union bosses. It's their fault. It's not the teachers' fault; it's the union bosses' fault.

You and I know, Speaker, that what gives the excellence to our children on an ongoing basis in schools, from kindergarten right through grade 13 and into the

post-secondary system, are the teachers they meet along the way, the teachers who teach them things along the way. I can tell you without any hesitation whatsoever that most of the teachers I speak to, whether socially, in an official capacity or whatever, feel totally belaboured, feel totally worn out, feel totally attacked, and are tired of it all.

**2040**

They want to do their best, and most of them do their best. I was in a school earlier today, St Paul's school in Kingston, and a couple of weeks ago I was at First Avenue school in Kingston. Before that, I was in some of the high schools, such as Holy Cross, Regiopolis/Notre Dame and Kingston Collegiate. All of these schools have got excellent teachers, teachers who are willing to give the best of themselves to their students on an ongoing basis. But all of these people—or nearly all of them; I won't say all of them because I certainly didn't speak to all of them—feel under constant attack from this government. As we've already heard, many of them are leaving voluntarily before retirement age.

That's wrong. When the rest of the world out there is spending more on education, why is it that we are one of the very few jurisdictions, during these economic boom times that we've had over the last six years, that is actually spending less on education? We all intuitively realize that if we want to get our young people ready for the modern world, a world in which they may have to change jobs three or four times, in which they may have three or four different careers, we darn well know that to get them ready for that, they need more education, they need more encouragement, and we need to spend more money on education. We need to invest more in the education of our young people. Why are we doing the reverse?

As has already been pointed out, the government's own budget documents clearly indicate that if you go back five years, the actual amount of money that's being spent now on education at the primary and secondary school levels, the two levels combined, is on average \$958 less per student than what we were spending four to five years ago. That's a fact. The minister can't deny that. It means that there are fewer resources available, whether for teaching supplies, for capital or for teaching salaries.

So now they've come up with this ingenious scheme this year that they want all of the contracts in this province to end at the same time, three years from now. It's kind of like, how can you negotiate with the federation a three-year contract when, in effect, the boards have only been guaranteed one year's money?

I know what the government members will say. "Well, the boards will get money, obviously, in years 2 and 3." But how much money? You're expecting the boards of education to negotiate contracts with their federations over the next three years, when they really don't know how much you are going to give the boards in year 2 and year 3. How do you expect them to negotiate a contract that's going to have any meaning at all?

The way around it is the fact that the government has now said, "I guess it's OK if we increase the class sizes from an average of 20 to 21." You and I know that in reality that means it's not just one student per class, but when you take all the different configurations into account, it may very well mean two, three or four students in a particular class. It just isn't right. The people of Ontario know it isn't right, and yet this government keeps insisting on doing it.

Why don't they at least have the intellectual honesty to say, "Look, we as a government believe that we should be spending less on education." I guess this is the thing that has surprised me most about this government over the last four to five years, that they never tell you what's really happening. They never say they are cutting money here, taking it out. No, they're always saying they're putting more in, they're making it better by, in effect, cutting.

Yet the people out there, whether we're talking about education or health care, darn well know that the systems that we have, whether it's education or health care, aren't as good as they were, or didn't operate as well as they did or didn't look after the needs of people as well as they did four to five years ago. You talk to the average person out there and they realize that it just isn't working.

The member across is shaking his head to say it isn't so. Maybe he's talking to other people than I am, but I can tell you, I talk to a lot of people, and not just my Liberal friends but people from across my community, and the general perception is that when you're talking about health care and education, things just aren't as good as they were five years ago. The reason is that you're not putting as much money into it by way of an investment.

I could be talking about the mandatory re-certification of teachers. I've got less than a minute left here, but why is it that you want to put everything down to the nth degree as to what this committee should do, what courses should be given and how much control you have on it? You don't do that with respect to any other self-regulating profession. Why is it that you have this apparent hate on for the teachers, that they cannot realize what courses they should be taking themselves? My golly, most teachers for the last 40 or 50 years, and maybe for many years before that, have taken additional and upgrading courses on an ongoing basis. They want to improve their teaching methodologies. They want to improve their knowledge about a particular subject.

I say to the government, I know your spin doctors are trying to convince you that you're doing the right thing, but I'm telling you, you're not. The wording and the contents of this act clearly show that you still haven't discovered the idea that the only way we're going to improve in this province is by reinvesting in education rather than by tearing it down.

**Mr Bradley:** I regret I have nine minutes to speak on this bill, but that's the way the Legislative Assembly is these days under the new rules that are imposed in the

Legislature. There are some days when it should be less than nine minutes—

**Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River):** Jim, you could have spoken this afternoon.

**Mr Bradley:** Howie, I always like to say to you, you like to play the little game. I'm going to address that. You like to play the little game of "I'm going to oppose the pay increase but I'll bloody well put it in my pocket when it's all finished." That's what you are, you're a phony and a hypocrite.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr David Christopherson):** Order. The member knows that's unparliamentary and I would ask him to withdraw.

**Mr Bradley:** Of course I will withdraw.

**The Acting Speaker:** And I would remind the member that all comments are through the Chair.

**Mr Bradley:** Absolutely.

**Mr Hampton:** Jim, you could have spoken this afternoon.

**Mr Bradley:** Well, you just wait. I'm just waiting to see whether the leader of the third party, the leader of the New Democratic Party, when all is said and done, puts the money in his pocket, because that's the true test of whether a person is opposed or not. You see, you can construct a reason for being opposed to something—constitutional or something else—but when it comes down to it, you ask the question, "Will you put the money in your pocket at the end of the day?" That's what I ask. That's all I ask of the member. In fact, if he says to members of the assembly today that he will not accept any pay raise—

**Mr Hampton:** I think I hit a nerve.

**The Acting Speaker:** Order. The leader of the third party is not helping matters.

**Mr Bradley:**—then I will be more than delighted to pay a compliment to him. If he says he will not accept a pay raise, I tell you, I'll be the first to applaud him and congratulate him. But I think somehow there will be a lot of protestation and, at the end of the day, the wallet will be full of the new raise, if there happens to be a new raise that has been given to members of the Legislature.

I will go back to Bill 160 now, because I think that is an important prelude to this particular piece of legislation. I remember a very extensive debate on Bill 160. Bill 160 was not the bill that implemented the social contract in Ontario, which abrogated every collective agreement this province ever had. It was not that bill, brought in by the Rae government, of which the present leader of the New Democratic Party was a member, but Bill 160 had implications for this Legislature that perhaps many people didn't notice. One of those implications was that it was going to reduce the number of teaching positions in secondary schools.

I remember being near a scrum in a hallway with Dave Johnson, who was then the Minister of Education, and they asked him, "How many fewer secondary school teachers will there be as a result of this?" Dave was pretty new to the job at the time and I think he estimated somewhere around 7,500 fewer teaching positions within

secondary schools. That's what it was all about, and that's why when we look at pieces of legislation such as this, we always wonder, is there something about this bill, is there a motivation which isn't good about the bill? Because you can find, in any bill, some good things about it and some negative things about it.

**2050**

I think what you have to look at, however, is the total atmosphere in education. I mentioned being at a funeral for Bob O'Neill, who was a former director of education for the then Lincoln County Roman Catholic Separate School Board. I just happened to note that one of the people giving the eulogy—it was certainly not a partisan or political event at all—caught himself in the middle of it saying there was a massive change taking place in the late 1960s and early 1970s. But he said, "You know, it was positive then. People embraced that change. They liked the change, and yet they were being impacted by it." I think it was because they felt that the motivation of the government of the day, which was the Davis administration, was positive for education, as opposed to simply attacking teachers within the system.

One of the other indicators is the number of early retirements. I can't believe the number of people who now retire not the year they can retire, not the end of the term, not the end of the month, but the day they can get out of the system, they leave the system. That's an indication that there's something wrong there. These are some of the people whose whole lives revolved around education and what contribution they could make to education. I really lament that, because we're losing a lot of mentors, we're losing a lot of experience. Yes, some of these people would move on in any event in a few years, but when you see people leaving the system, that is an indication.

Not only that, but Gerard Kennedy mentioned earlier today the number of people leaving for non-retirement reasons. It's disconcerting when you see that happen. Welcome the new people in, by all means, but to lose some of that experience because they're totally turned off by the circumstances they face, that's something you have to address, something that is really wrong in this system. It's going to be very hard to turn around.

I also notice something else happening and it's been happening for some time. The employees of local boards of education unwisely are training their guns on the members of the board of education. Boards of education now have basically no power and all of the responsibility, where they take all of the flack.

The other day, on Tuesday night, there was a confrontation between trustees and the board of education, which had to make \$5 million worth of cuts to education and employees. These were non-teaching employees. They were not regular classroom teachers but educational assistants, people who assisted kids. There was going to be a cutback in what their responsibilities would be, the hours and so on. Who were they aiming it at? The local board of education. They must be smiling from ear to ear in the Premier's office at the fact that we have Catholic

boards fighting public boards, we have one federation fighting another federation, we have secondary against elementary. In other words, there is total disruption and chaos that ensues out there. That's unfortunate, because I think we've had a great education system and I think we can have one again.

Extracurricular activities are an example. I know people who for years and years coached sports or looked after the music program or were involved in the arts or the debating club or something, and they did it voluntarily. When the government said, "You're going to do it because we say you're going to do it," boy, that turned a lot of those people off. It's going to be hard, again, to get them back. You may get them back because they have to or there are new rules, but it won't be with the same enthusiasm that was once there.

I listened to Eric Mitchinson, who was a superintendent with the board of education and is now retiring. Eric started the Young Progressive Conservative Club at the University of Waterloo. He's been a long-time Conservative and a friend of mine. He's been a long-time person working for other people, including the Harris government. He's totally disillusioned. He appeared the other day before the committee that was dealing with the education tax credit, totally disillusioned. This was a party he had given so much time to and a party he had helped start in terms of its club at Waterloo University, and he's just washed his hands of it. There were many other people there of the same ilk, people I've known for years who are Tories. One's uncle was my predecessor. In fact, he defeated me in an election. He was speaking negatively about what is happening to education. So I ask the more moderate members of the administration over there to consider that, to consider the state of affairs within education. Every time you bring in a bill that puts the boots to the teachers, you make it a more difficult place in which to work. The atmosphere is not as much fun as it used to be—and I say "fun" in the best sense.

When we look at legislation like this—and this bill will be broken down into some detail—I hope you will consider amendments to the legislation or withdrawal of the legislation in parts where it is going to impact negatively upon the atmosphere in education and the positive, lively events of education over the years. Just ask some of the strong Conservative supporters over the years who are disillusioned because of this, and perhaps it will give you the message as to why these individuals are turned off. Let's make education a fun thing again, a good thing again, for our province.

**The Acting Speaker:** It is now time for questions and comments.

**Mr Hampton:** I want to comment first on the comments of the member for St Catharines. I really didn't mean to offend him by saying he could have had some speaking time this afternoon, but I gather I must have struck a nerve there. Let me say to the member, though, that I think he has a good sense of what is happening in the education system.

It is highly unusual to see teachers leave the classroom on the very day they are eligible to retire. It has always been the practice in this province that in the year a teacher can retire, they teach until the end of the year. At the very least they teach until the end of the session they're in. When teachers start leaving on the very day—if it's a Monday, a Tuesday, a Thursday, the day before exams—they go, they leave, they can't wait to get out of there.

What is also true is that if you look into the past of the teachers who want to leave the system most earnestly, who can't wait to get out the door, you'll find that in many cases they are the very teachers who have established a reputation for being so dedicated to education. They are the very teachers who volunteer to coach basketball, to take care of the school band, to take care of some other school extracurricular activity. Now they are the very people who can't wait to get out the door as soon as their retirement day comes. I think that's an indication of how badly off the rails this government has gone in its attacks on education, in its desire to extract the money. In its desire to create a crisis, it has undermined the whole of the system. That's what's so bad.

**Hon Brad Clark (Minister of Transportation):** What I lament about what's happening in education in Ontario is how polarized the debate has become and how members in the House can muse that government members are somehow trying to hurt children and trying to hurt teachers, that 57 members on this side of the House somehow conspire nightly to come up with new ways to hurt children, new ways to attack teachers. And those—

**Mr Hampton:** No, you care about something more.

**Hon Mr Clark:** The leader of the third party just proves my point by heckling. Shameful. The leader of the third party there may disagree with us, and does disagree with us, on how we are going about doing things. He disagrees that we should have standardized testing. He disagrees that we needed new curriculum. He disagreed on any number of things. But in no way at any time should he or any other member of this House turn around and state that this is proof the government on this side is trying to hurt kids, is trying to hurt teachers, is attacking. At the end of the day, members of the government on this side believe in the children of Ontario. We believe we are trying to improve the system. You may doubt that. You're free to doubt that. You're not free to attack my motives. You're not free to question my motives. You're not free to say this is some type of conspiracy that we're trying to hurt children, because no one on this side of the House is trying to do that. So the member on that side clearly doesn't understand it.

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**Mr Levac:** You're doing it to the kids in special ed.

**The Acting Speaker:** Order. That includes the member from Brant.

**Hon Mr Clark:** We believe in the policies we're trying to implement, and we'll continue to do our best to implement the policies we believe in.

**Mr Mario Sergio (York West):** My compliments to the previous speakers: Mr Kennedy from Parkdale and the members from Brant, Kingston and the Islands, and St Catharines as well—a wonderful rendition.

*Interjection.*

**Mr Sergio:** Yes, of course I'm coming to that.

When you talk about excellence and stability in our school system, I guess you have to be seen to do that and not just say that. You cannot have stability in the school system, you cannot have stability among the teachers, the parents, the unions and everybody else when you create crisis after crisis. You cannot have excellence in our school system when you jump from chaos to chaos. You cannot do that. You've got to be there and work with them. You just can't say, "We're going to do it our way or no way whatsoever."

We see what is happening. If we're at this particular juncture, it's because of the actions of the government. It's not so much what they did; it's how they've been going around all the time. This particular bill is an indication of what they want to do and how they want to accomplish where they want to go. It is just to prepare the road for private schools with their tax credit, no more, no less. Otherwise, why would they introduce this piece of legislation which deals with some minor changes like the implementation of mandatory recertification of teachers? This is already happening. Why don't they do that when they speak of giving public money to private schools and there is no control whatsoever on the teachers, on recertification? It's an abuse of this government, of where and how they could use public money.

**Mr Sean G. Conway (Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke):** I've listened to the comments of my colleagues tonight, and I guess there are just a couple of things I want to mention. I think Bradley makes a good point, and I guess I would just make the observation as well: the war came, and it keeps on and on and on.

I have a niece who's finishing high school, and, boy, she's had a great five years. I was thinking, as I talked to her the other day, how angry I would be. She in fact was more restrained and more reserved than I might have been at the kind of turmoil she's experienced. As most adults in this room know, it is regrettably a lot easier to start a war than to bring it to some kind of orderly conclusion. On this one, I thought a while ago—in fact, I thought when I heard the current minister talking about some kind of peace treaty on the so-called extracurricular front—that we might actually be turning a page. We appeared to settle that problem, and then we went headlong into this educational tax credit for parents who want to send their kids to private schools.

I say to the Minister of Transportation, who spoke a while ago, that I think he makes a good point, but I guess I ask myself, and I ask at least all members here, on whose program was that? I don't know that this Legislature fully understands the import of that initiative, and it may be that it is something you want to do. But whether it's on your side or somewhere else, I think we are duty-bound to indicate clearly beforehand that that is

our intent. But, as Mr Bradley rightly observed, the war came and it persisted, apparently without end.

**The Acting Speaker:** It is now time for responses.

**Mr Bradley:** I appreciate the comments of each of my colleagues in the House and I note the reference to a polarized debate. Unfortunately, or fortunately—some people think it's fortunate—this House is much more polarized than I've ever seen it over the years. I've never seen it this polarized. There used to be, I guess, a reasonable debate that went on with people like Bob Welch and Tom Wells and Bill Davis and Roy McMurtry and Larry Grossman, people like that, but it was a civilized debate. It wasn't a hateful debate. There were more nuances, perhaps, than the fundamental ideological differences that took place. With each of those people—I would have said it in those days—I never once quarrelled with the fact that they were for the children, for the system and had a lot of support among teachers in the province.

Boards of education used to have a lot of Conservatives. There are not many of those people who will defend the Conservative Party today because they've been on the front line of it. I ran against Elaine Herzog—or she ran against me; I was the sitting member—in 1985, a top-notch person. She had been a chair of the board of education, she had been a good Davis Conservative, very positive, and if she were with us today, I'm sure she would be appalled by what she has seen happen in education. She was part of a board that really had enthusiasm, that brought people together, that forged a consensus rather than constantly dividing.

I know sometimes it's good politics to bash teachers and I know there's some considerable opposition among teachers that annoys the government from time to time: I understand that. But when you have those people who must deliver education on the front line and you go out of your way from time to time, almost always, to alienate them for political purposes because it does gain you some votes, I think you make a major mistake in education.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr Hampton:** It is actually a pleasure to take part in this debate, because once again there's an opportunity here to explore exactly what has happened to our schools and education system over the last six years. Many people are probably wondering, "Why would the government introduce a bill at this point in time that in effect reopens the wounds in terms of extracurricular activities with secondary schoolteachers, that creates all kinds of headaches for boards of education because they're required to negotiate three-year collective agreements even though the government refuses to tell them how much money they will have three years down the road, that opens wounds with all teachers in terms of a mandatory so-called recertification measure and then, finally, also goes after the support staff in our schools by literally saying to them that the government is going to undermine their right to strike?" If the government were indeed interested in finding some common ground in terms of education, why would they introduce a bill which literally lights fires in about four different places?

For the benefit of people who might be watching, I want to explain why the government would do that.

It is a habit of this government that when they get in trouble on a particular front, they immediately either bring in some legislation which has the effect of scapegoating or attacking certain people out there in our society, or they announce an initiative which has the same effect. So if you go back about four years, when the cuts in the hospitals really started to take their effect and people started to notice the long lineups at emergency wards, the government went out and started attacking nurses. They referred to nurses as out-of-date Hula Hoop workers. So there was the campaign against nurses. Then, when some labour strife started to happen elsewhere in society—there were strikes, there were lockouts, there were difficulties negotiating collective agreements—right away the government went out and started a campaign against labour bosses.

When the government gets into trouble on other fronts, they will mount a campaign against young offenders or against the poorest people in our society, people who are unemployed and who are forced to rely upon social assistance. But you can call it this government's favourite: when it gets into trouble on the education front, it finds a way to attack teachers. That's really what's happening here.

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The government is in trouble in education. It thought that it had a winner for its own ideological purposes when it introduced its tax credits for private schools. It thought that this was somehow going to galvanize all those people who want private schools and they would all come over to the Conservative Party. That was the theory, but the reality now is turning out to be something different.

There have been no less than three public opinion surveys published in the last couple of weeks and they all show essentially the same thing. Strategic Communications has conducted a public opinion survey which finds that 67% of the people in Ontario oppose the voucher for private schools, or the tax credit for private schools, whichever you want to call it. Then a similar survey is completed by the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education—OISE has an international reputation—and it finds that only 26% of people in Ontario are in favour of the government's vouchers for private schools or tax credits for private schools, whatever you want to call it. Finally, Lang Research does another opinion survey which finds, again, that 67% of the people in the province are against the government's decision to provide tax credits for private schools.

Clearly the government is in trouble, and they would like to get the tax credit for private schools, the voucher for private schools, off the front page. How do you do that? You bring in another piece of legislation which attacks support workers, which attacks secondary teachers, which attacks the boards of education, and you create some smoke out there and hope that you can get the tax credit for private schools off the front page.

That's why we're here. That's what this is about. This is an attempt to push something else off the front page, create another battle with teachers, with boards of education, with trustees, with support workers, and hope that that will then dominate the front page and the government can go on attacking the teacher unions, the support worker unions, and, by the way, go after the trustees once again as not being competent, as we've heard so many times now from this government. That's what it's all about. The government wants to draw people's attention away from the fiasco they've created with their scheme to use taxpayers' money to fund private schools.

It might be worth exploring why that has created a problem for the government. First of all, virtually everyone across the province recognizes that the money to fund private schools will come from public schools. There is only one education envelope, and if you're now going to put money into private schools, it's going to come out of the public schools. In fact, the Minister of Education herself has admitted this on several occasions, and I quote her. She said, "We have been very clear that our goal is a good quality public education, and the estimates of \$300 million needed to fund religious schools would be \$300 million that would come out of the public school system." That's the Minister of Education. It's in a letter that she wrote replying to a number of people as to why the government's former position was that it was not in favour of tax credits for vouchers for private schools, because the government itself knew the money was going to come out of the public school system.

People also understand that the tax credit acts as an incentive for parents to move their children from public to private school. So it goes like this: for those parents who perhaps have higher incomes and who have thought from time to time, "I've got a higher income. I could afford to pay some of the private tuition fees," this \$3,500-a-year tax credit or voucher is a big financial incentive. In fact, 15% of parents across the province have said that this \$3,500 a year per child is a significant incentive and they would consider taking their children out of the public school system and putting them in the private school system.

If we lost 15% of the enrolment in the public system, that works out to about 330,000 students. That works out to over \$2 billion a year that would come out of the public system. Parents understand, and most of all directors of education and trustees understand, how the public school system funding formula works. It works on a per student basis. So if your enrolment declines by 2%, then your funding will decline by 2%.

A board in my constituency lost 200 students a year ago. Their enrolment declined and so they lost \$1.4 million of their funding. Why? Multiply the funding formula, \$7,000 per student, times the number of students and you get \$1.4 million. Another board in my constituency lost about 700 of their students. So, multiplying it out, they lost over \$4.5 million of their budget.

That's how the funding formula works. It works on a per student basis. So if you can entice more parents to take their kids out of the public system and move them to the private system, every time a child leaves it's essentially \$7,000 that has exited the public school system. Parents have figured that out and they worry about it, so the government wants to get that issue off the front page.

Finally, the government had an opportunity to limit this tax credit. They initially said, "This is to allow parents of modest means, middle- and modest-income parents—it will give them a chance, if they want, to finance a private school education." We pointed out, "No, this is not about modest-income parents. They wouldn't have the other money in their pocket to fund the rest of the tuition fees. This is about rewarding those people who are already relatively well off." When we spoke with the Ministry of Finance staff, they admitted that, and that's starting to be understood out there by the broad public across Ontario.

For all those reasons, the government is in trouble on the public money tax credits—vouchers—for private schools and they've brought in this legislation to try to move the tax credit issue off the front page.

What is in this bill? Why would it create a lot of controversy out there? Let me deal first of all with teacher re-certification. The issue of teacher testing and re-certification is something the Ontario College of Teachers has been working on for some time. The Ontario College of Teachers has been out there. They've done a lot of surveying, they've met with teacher federations, they've met with academics and they've actually put together a strategy in terms of ongoing teacher professional education, professional development, that the majority of teachers would likely buy into.

You would think that a government of the day, with the Ontario College of Teachers having done all of this work, all of this research, all of this diplomacy, would immediately say, "Let's take the ideas you've developed and let's work to implement them." Is that what the government's doing in this bill? No; not even close. What this government is going to do is to completely brush aside the good work that the College of Teachers has done and they're going to impose their own system. In imposing their own system and pushing aside the model that has some general agreement to it, they know they can start another fight with teachers; ie, they can in effect use that fight to move the issue of a tax credit for private schools off the front page.

Just to tell you how bad this re-certification model that the government has chosen is, you don't have to listen to me. Listen to the chair of the Ontario College of Teachers, Larry Capstick, who says, "The college's support for lifelong professional learning has been demonstrated by its development of the Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession and the Professional Learning Framework for the Teaching Profession. Members of the profession are committed to having all teachers remain up-to-date in their professional knowledge and practice. However, this announcement by

the government will result in a program that is being rushed into implementation, a program that will be expensive to administer."

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That's what the College of Teachers, which spent a lot of time and effort on this work, says. "It is unrealistic to expect that this program"—the government's program—"that ties teacher licensing to completion of professional development can be successfully launched by September." He says that you can't even launch it by September. That's how out of context it is. "The government is demanding that in a little over two months, with no clear funding commitments from the Ministry of Education related to implementation or maintenance, the college puts in place a re-certification program for 40,000 ... teachers, one third of teachers in publicly funded schools."

In other words, the college is saying that what the government has put forward is completely unrealistic, is completely incapable of being implemented, but the government doesn't care. It's not about putting forward something that could be implemented; it's about creating enough of a firestorm so that you can get the issue of public money for private school tax credits off the front page. The government has created enough of a storm about this issue that it's actually having some success in that strategy. It's having some success in pushing the tax credit voucher for private schools on to the back pages and off the 6 o'clock news.

Just to quote further from the College of Teachers:

"When we talk about re-certification, we're talking about people's licences to teach, their ability to earn a living. Such a program must be driven by the realities of setting up a complex system that is administratively feasible, publicly credible, professionally acceptable, legally defensible and economically feasible." The college provided the Minister of Education with advice on the government's teacher testing plans in April 2000 following an extensive consultation with education stakeholders and the public across the province. The college is now being given approximately 10 weeks to implement the government's initiative. The college has explained to the ministry's teacher testing project staff the work needed to register course providers, approve courses, develop an appeal process for the providers who are not registered and set up a system to receive information from providers. In addition, the college has to inform teachers and those soon to enter the profession about the new requirements and develop a Web site to keep track of the professional learning activities of almost 180,000 college members in seven mandated areas."

In other words, to successfully implement a real teacher certification program that has integrity, that is legally defensible, financially feasible, that is professionally acceptable, publicly credible, is going to require a lot more than 10 weeks. But, again, the government isn't interested in meeting any of those standards.

Finally, I want to quote the conclusion of the college's comments, where they say, "I fear that the government does not recognize many of the very real implementation issues brought forward by the college. But even more disturbing is the fact that the government is introducing changes to the Ontario College of Teachers Act without any consultation with the college council."

I think it's pretty clear that anybody who is interested in having a teacher re-certification process that met any of these measures wouldn't have done what this government's done. But alas, it's not about having a teacher re-certification process that has credibility, that can be implemented, that is legally defensible, that has any credibility whatsoever. It's not about that. It's about trying to start a fight and get that nasty question of tax credits for private schools off the front page.

Then there's the issue of secondary school teacher workload and extracurricular activities. With much fanfare just before the budget, the government announced that they had created the room so that there could be a coming together, a meeting of the minds of secondary school teachers, of secondary school administrators, of boards of education and the government itself. The government announced that with much fanfare. But immediately after the budget we discovered that despite the government's announcement, with much fanfare, the money wasn't there to do it. The money simply wasn't there to accomplish it. In fact, the announcement that was made literally fell apart. It amounted to nothing.

So what is the government doing now? Last year they brought in Bill 74 and they said to high school teachers, "We are going to force you to provide extracurricular activities." That didn't work. Everyone knew that was not going to work. You cannot force someone to go out there and give of themselves, give of their own integrity in terms of coaching basketball, hockey, football or volleyball or in terms of conducting the school band or drama. You can't force that kind of talent from people. It either flows willingly or it doesn't work. Some of the Conservative members sitting across from me acknowledge that. They know that from their own experience. The government announced that they thought they were going to put together the ingredients for a settlement earlier this spring, but that was hollow. So what is the government doing here? It is going to go back to the old hammer-and-tongs method. It is going to try to force people to provide extracurricular activities.

A friend of mine who teaches said to me, "You know what? I'm going to go into the principal's office, all five feet, six inches of me, and I'm going to volunteer to coach the senior boys' basketball team." She said that to

illustrate the absurdity of the government's position, that a young woman who is five feet, six inches and who has never played basketball simply would not be able to provide—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker:** Order. I realize there are only a couple of minutes left, but the rules still apply right up until the final moment. I would ask you to adhere to them.

Please continue.

*Interjection.*

**Mr Hampton:** Sorry, Bert, I didn't know that. I thought you were 5 feet, seven and a half inches.

This young woman did that to show the absurdity of the government's position. Anyone would realize that at five feet, six inches tall, never having had any experience with basketball, to be forced to coach the senior boys' basketball team is theatre of the absurd. But that's where this government is headed, and they're headed in this direction once again. But they're going to be tricky this time. They're now going to say that it is the board's responsibility. The board of education is now going to be forced to provide extracurricular activities. What can the board of education do in order to provide extracurricular activities? The only thing they can do to find the time in teachers' schedules is to increase class sizes. That's the only thing they can do. That's the only option open to them. They're going to say to teachers and to school administrators and to board officials, "You must provide extracurricular activities. But in order to find the room, in order to find teachers who have enough time to provide extracurricular activities, you have to increase the size of all your classes." Then they're going to say, "Well, this is the board's problem."

The board didn't create this problem. This government has created this problem. Now they're simply trying to find someone else to blame, trying to create some more fireworks.

*Interjections.*

**Mr Hampton:** I've obviously struck a nerve with the Conservative caucus here.

*Interjections.*

**Mr Hampton:** Murdoch, leave it alone or I'll get on to you.

**The Acting Speaker:** Order. I am beginning to realize how little use the ultimate threat of the Chair is at this time of night, which is of course to remove people from the chamber. I would point out to the House that it is now after 9:30. Therefore this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 1:30 of the clock.

*The House adjourned at 2130.*

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