

SPRING 2026

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CHAPTER 13/16 NEWSLETTER

ARM



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Iain Beaton, President District, 13/16

Well, it certainly has been a long, cold, snowy winter. But now the sap is running, the birds are singing, the sun is shining longer, and spring may finally have arrived.

But Ebenezer Scrooge and the Grinch still loom large, in the form of Paul Calandra, our Minister of Education (and MPP for Markham-Stouffville). Last issue, I commented on his unwarranted takeovers of several School Boards, which have continued. More recently, as the Legislature finally reconvened, he ramped up his attacks on teachers and education workers.

First, he issued a letter to all educators across the province, warning them to ensure that graduations were not politicized. No reason was given for this pronouncement - it was only later that a reference was made to the Hamilton Board's communication to principals reminding them to consider equity and reconciliation when planning graduation events. Such considerations are part of leadership expectations and general education policy, but Calandra sees these as dangerous. Later, teachers who lost their jobs due to inflammatory statements were suggested as motivations for the Minister's letter - but why

threaten the entire education community because of a couple of isolated incidents? And, coming back to graduations - is this meant to prevent comments that student valedictorians might make about the world or the education system they are living through?

Clearly, in Calandra's mind, it is not just a couple of bad apples. In late March, as teacher affiliates were having a breakfast with MPPs at Queen's Park, Calandra strode in and gave a patronizing speech that included the statement that while 95% made students their priority, he would not hesitate to fire the other 5%. First, where did the 5% figure come from? Second, since when does the Minister of Education have the right to fire teachers? Yes, he has appointed supervisors to several School Boards, and there is talk of getting rid of trustees entirely, but there still are legal contracts to abide by. His dictatorial delusions out-Trump his own boss.

This is not to say that Calandra, and his party, are not a threat. Their desire to demean and diminish public education is real. Under-funding has been an ongoing strategy for destabilizing public education. The recent budget claims an increase in

funding for education, but it still is not enough to cover inflation - and it also includes funding for daycare transferred from another ministry, inflating the false impression of an actual increase. And the tone and language of the disHonourable Minister demonstrates disrespect for educators, the public education system, and indeed, for all the students he claims to serve.

ARM's efforts to meet MPPs about Home Care has had some success, but Paul Calandra was too busy (disrupting, disrespecting, and attempting to dismantle the public education system) to meet with us before the provincial parliament resumed on March 23. Close to a dozen MPPs across the province did agree to meet with ARM members, however.

And, on March 26, members of ARM Council went to Queen's Park, where they met with 3 MPPs and delivered a press conference. It was a busy, rewarding afternoon. Please visit the [ARM Council website](#) to read about it and view the Press Conference.



HEALTH & WELLNESS

RETIRED EDUCATION WORKERS CALL FOR BETTER HOME CARE IN ONTARIO

Press Release for the press conference at Queen's Park (March 26, 2026)

The Active Retired Members of the Ontario Secondary School Teachers Federation called on the provincial government to commit to improvement in Home Care services at a press conference promoting a report on the results of a survey done of the group's members.

"Our survey revealed several areas of concern," said Bruce Awad, an ARM Chapter president from Windsor. "Two thirds of the survey respondents needed more hours than were provided by the government, and most of them paid out-of-pocket for additional hours of home care services. Almost 20% of all respondents spent at least \$300 per week."



For the hours that are provided through government funding, workforce shortages are a related concern. "Our survey shows that inconsistent arrival times, changes to who arrives for a particular service, and even the failure to show up at all, are frequent problems", said Awad.

The *ARM OSSTF/FEESO Report on Issues in Home Care in Ontario* reports that recently Ontario was unable to meet 40% of home care requests due to a shortage of PSWs and nurses. "PSWs, who provide the majority of home care, are paid significantly less than PSWs in hospitals and long-term care facilities," Awad said. "The private for-profit companies providing the home care services pass on only a fraction of the government funding to the frontline staff."



The report draws a connection between worker shortages and the standard of care. Inconsistent PSWs disrupt the continuity of care, and 60% of those surveyed report having different workers day to day. One third reported problems with the quality of care they received.

ARM is recommending that government-funded hours for home care services be increased at least 15% beyond current levels. They also want a larger percentage of the per-hour funding to go to pay PSWs and nurses. In addition, they are calling for an office that will accept and investigate complaints concerning the provision of home care support in Ontario.

"Most Ontarians want to remain at home as they age, and as

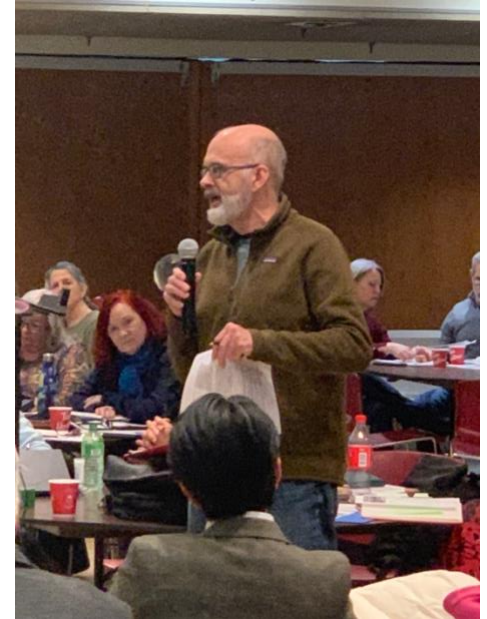
their health declines,” said Awad. “Too much of the burden still rests on family caregivers to allow this to happen. Government attention, and public funding, need to be shifted away from long-term care facilities and towards home care services that permit Ontarians to age with dignity.”

ONTARIO HEALTH COALITION

By Rita More

On January 24 and 25, 2026, the Ontario Health Coalition (OHC) once again held its Annual meeting in Toronto. People concerned about public health care came from around the province to discuss concerns about our health care system. This year there was a palpable feeling of crisis. Alberta is forging ahead with privatization of its health care and increasingly Ontario is following their lead.

Private clinics are receiving Ontario taxpayer’s money while public hospitals are being underfunded. This approach can look good in the short term, but will cost us accessible, affordable and accountable health care in the long term. For educators in Ontario who lived through the Mike Harris years, creating a crisis in order to convince the public that profound changes are needed is a familiar approach. It is an approach that leads a few to become very rich while the majority lose services and control over money meant to be used for the public good.



Iain Beaton, president of ARM Durham/York Regions addressing the Ontario Health Coalition AGM about Arm’s Report on Issues in Home Care in Ontario

To read more about what the Ontario Health Coalition does, please check their website at: ontariohealthcoalition.ca. You can put your name on their mailing list if you are interested in actions in your area.



To help save public health care in Canada, call or write your federal Member of Parliament and tell them you want them to enforce the Canada Health Act in every province.

ARM/MRA

ARM IS TURNING 30!

Come to the Birthday Party on Monday, May 11, 2026.

On Monday, May 11, ARM will be celebrating its 30th anniversary online. Every ARM member will be receiving an invitation. Scheduled to run from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., it will include greetings from OSSTF/FEESO president Martha Hradowy, a short history of ARM, and a presentation from Charlie Angus. Angus, a former NDP MP, has been writing and speaking about Resistance for the past year, and his speech should be informative, opinionated, and well worth hearing.



We encourage you to RSVP to the invitation, and hope to see you online May 11.

EVENTS

AMPA 2026 had a guest speaker from Alberta who provided a summary of the events surrounding the recent teachers' strike there, and the subsequent use of the Notwithstanding Clause by the Danielle Smith government. Notable in the business of the Annual Meeting was approval of a dues increase (0.1% of salary), as well as an increase in the target amount for the Member Protection Account from \$140 million to \$210 million, which means the special levy will remain for some time.

Photos from AMPA March 2026:



Iain Beaton, president of ARM Durham/York Regions [left] and Manfred Netzel at the ARM table



The Addams Family:

Last year, fifteen chapter 13/16 members were entertained by "Man of La Mancha". This year, we moved from dreams of chivalry to screams and comedy. On Thursday, April 2, several Chapter 13/16 members attended OnStage Uxbridge's production of *The Addams Family, the Musical*. The characters of Morticia and Gomez Addams were captivating as they revealed the problems when family members keep secrets. The entire cast, ghoulish as many of them were, delighted the audience with great singing, choreography, acting and, of course, a live band. Yes - they were creepy, kooky, mysterious, spooky and altogether ooky!

Addams Family Cast



Addams Family Band



ARTICLE AUTHORS FOR THIS ISSUE:

Iain Beaton, ARM Chapter 13/16 President
[President's Message; Retired Education Workers
Call for Better Home Care in Ontario; ARM is 30
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Cyndie Jacobs, ARM Communications
[The Addams Family]

Rita More
[Ontario Health Coalition]

Newsletters will be published:
Fall/Spring/Summer
Copy Editor: Cyndie Jacobs
Layout Editor: Karen Jagoe

ARM Executive Members:

Iain Beaton, President
Cyndie Jacobs, Communications
Mike Atkins

John Pownall, Treasurer
Cristal Diemer-Ewles



Happy Spring!

Contact Information:

If you have any questions regarding any of the material published in this issue, or if you have any suggestions for future articles, please do not hesitate to contact us via email at: chapter13and16@gmail.com