

## Ontario education minister promises ‘significant change’ still coming to school boards



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WATCH: Ontario Education Minister Paul Calandra said Monday that “significant change” is coming to the province’s school boards. He said that legislation he is working on will not rely on the notwithstanding clause to abolish trustees.

Ontario’s education minister insists “significant change” is coming to the province’s school boards — but says he is working on legislation that will not rely on the notwithstanding clause to abolish trustees.

Speaking to reporters at Queen’s Park on Monday, Paul Calandra said he was preparing to table education reform in cabinet “very soon,” suggesting speculation he may back down in his fight with [trustees](#) was misguided.

“I know there’s been some hot rumours that change isn’t coming,” he said. “People should expect significant change to the education system going forward.”

Since taking over as education minister last year, Calandra has mused about the future of elected trustees in Ontario.

He’s taken direct control of eight school boards — including the Catholic and public boards in both Toronto and Peel Region — citing mismanagement and infighting among trustees.

The education minister has suggested he could eliminate English public board trustees “in one fell swoop” because they don’t have constitutional protections as afforded to both Catholic and French representatives.

Calandra had previously indicated in December 2025 that he would have his plan to reform school boards ready by early 2026.

“Any legislative process that you do — not just on school boards — goes through a constitutional lens first,” he told reporters on Monday.

“Obviously, on this one, we’re very cognizant of our constitutional responsibilities.... That is why we’ve taken a bit of extra time to ensure that whatever we bring forward is not only in the best interest of students, parents and teachers ... but also meets the constitutional test.”

Asked if he would use the notwithstanding clause to shield himself from a court challenge, the minister said he planned to table legislation that wouldn’t need that extra step.

“I’m not preparing to present legislation that would use the notwithstanding clause,” Calandra said.

“Any legislation that we present will have gone through extensive vetting in advance of that, so I don’t have to bring forward the notwithstanding clause at the same time.”

Details of exactly what Calandra will unveil remain unclear, but he has laid out several red lines of what he does not intend to change.

He has said all 72 separate school boards across the English, Catholic and French systems will remain in place. Rumours of collapsing the boards into just four institutions, he said, are categorically untrue.

Critics have argued that the changes and focus on trustees are a distraction from issues in the classroom, like concerns about special education.