

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

How do teachers spend their summer vacation?

If the Star's recent editorial, "Teachers Unions Should Get Back to the Bargaining Table" is to be believed, Ontario teachers and their labour representatives are lounging at the beach and "putting their already-booked summer breaks before the kids' welfare."

That characterization does a major disservice to Ontario teachers and the stakes of the current negotiations teachers' unions are engaged in with the Liberal government and their elected trustees.

In July, I sat at the negotiating table trying to establish a contract for teachers who have been without one for more than a year.

We are spending our summer fighting to maintain the quality of education in this province, which can only be protected through a fair deal for teachers. We walked away from the table because the government seemed uninterested in and unprepared for these conversations.

It's a tried and true cliché to say negotiations "shouldn't happen in the media" – but nor should they occur in the dark. Parents deserve to know what we're fighting for, and to understand that it is teachers who have their children's best interests at heart.

We're doing our best to avoid a strike action this fall, but not at any cost to education.

No matter what season it may be – the summer vacation season or the fall election season – teachers care deeply about their students and their schools. And parents should care deeply about the deal teachers get from their government.

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