



Ontario Catholic School
Trustees' Association

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May 31, 2018

MEMORANDUM

TO: Chairpersons and Directors of Education
- All Catholic District School Boards

FROM: Beverley Eckensweiler, President

SUBJECT: **2018 Provincial Election - Summary of Party Platforms**

On Wednesday May 30, the PC Party of Ontario released its election platform document. The Liberal Party released their election platform on Saturday May 26 and the NDP on April 16, 2018. Below is a summary of the key education funding and policy commitments as outlined in these election platform documents.

PC Party of Ontario (https://www.ontariopc.ca/plan_for_the_people)

The PC platform indicates that the overall priority for the education system is to return to a “back to basics” curriculum and consult with parents and teachers to ensure students have the skills to meet the challenges of work and life. The specific priorities are:

- Eliminate “discovery” mathematics curriculum and inquiry-based learning in schools;
- Ban cell phones in all elementary and secondary schools;
- Ensure mathematics education is mandatory in teachers’ college programs;
- Fix the EQAO testing regime and implement a standardized testing program;
- Restore Ontario’s previous “sex-ed” curriculum and consult parents on a new, age appropriate curriculum;
- Continue the current moratorium on school closures until the PARG review process is reformed;
- Invest \$3.8 billion over 10 years in mental health supports, housing and addictions treatment;
- Provide an additional \$38 million in funding for children with autism spectrum disorder (total is \$100 million over the course of the mandate).

Fiscal Accountability

The PC Platform also indicates that it will conduct an audit of the spending of each ministry in government through the creation of an “independent commission of inquiry” that will review the province’s fiscal situation and propose solutions to address the problems it uncovers. Further, a PC government will also conduct a “value for money audit” of every government program to find efficiencies. Finally, a PC government would expand the Auditor General’s authority to include all government advertising and deliver a balanced budget “on a responsible timeline”.

NDP Election Platform (<https://www.ontariondp.ca/platform>)

- Reform the education funding formula to:
 - a. reduce violence in classrooms by giving boards and staff more resources
 - b. curb class sizes and support our most vulnerable students;
 - c. restructure special education funding on actual needs of students and not overall populations. This will mean overall funding increases for students with special educational needs.
- Increase hiring of teachers and educational assistants;
- Cap kindergarten classroom sizes at 26 students;
- Develop a 10- year capital plan for schools and invest \$16 billion to repair schools;
- Adjust the rules around Education Development Charges so they can be used to fund new schools;
- Eliminate EQAO tests and administration and reinvest \$40 million in student mental health initiatives. Move to a random sample method;
- Reform curriculum to instruct students in: inclusive history, including Indigenous history, the history of Black Ontarians, our province’s history with the Underground Railroad, and Caribbean and African experiences. Also continue the current curriculum reform process and include career counseling, financial literacy and mathematics;
- Hire 400 new mental health workers to ensure every high school has access to mental health supports;
- Develop a comprehensive autism-support strategy, in full collaboration with families, caregivers, people with autism and experts in the field;
- Create a 10-year \$1 billion fund for bringing broadband service to rural and northern Ontario and secure agreements with the federal government to match this funding.
- Introduce a uniform Business Education Tax rate and continue the Education Tax Reduction Plan adjusted to equalize rates.

Liberal Election Platform (<https://platform.ontarioliberal.ca/full-platform>)

- Bring new classroom emphasis on problem-solving, critical thinking, communication and collaboration;
- Modernize student learning assessment by updating the tools available to teachers to assess student program in real time and by consulting with parents and the Education Quality and Accountability Office on improvements to large-scale assessment;
- Dedicate one professional development day per year to math teaching and learning, create more math supports outside the school day and expand online math tutoring resources and homework help;
- Explore curriculum links for the Edible Gardens Program, which creates experiential learning for student in agriculture, environmental sciences and healthy living;
- Support heritage language education;
- Enhance students' access to arts education in dance, drama, music and the visual arts, including a \$3 million investment to refurbish musical instruments;
- Implement a revised curriculum in September 2018 for all students that reflects the contributions, cultures and perspectives of Indigenous peoples, including the role of treaties and the history of residential schools;
- Add 2,000 new teachers and education workers, including more Education Assistants to support kids with exceptionally high needs and more specialists, including behavioural specialists and speech language pathologists;
- Add 450 guidance teachers in elementary schools to help students transition to high school and start career planning;
- Improve access to high-speed Internet at publicly funded schools, including connecting an additional 250,000 students at 850 schools by the end of 2018 and connecting all classrooms by 2021;
- Develop an accessibility standard to address barriers that prevent students with disabilities from reaching their full potential;
- Place mental health workers in all high schools to improve access to mental health supports;
- Invest almost \$16 billion over 10 years in new and improved schools;
- Double funding to school boards for locally determined well-being programs, such as breakfast programs and bullying prevention;
- Continue to expand opportunities for a delivery of 60 minutes of daily physical activity tied to the school day.

If you have any questions, please contact Steve Andrews at sandrews@ocsta.on.ca.