



Candidates in all of OSSTF District 24 Ridings were sent a list of questions. Below you will find their responses.

Riding: Guelph

| Question |  Liz Sandals |  James Gordon |  |  |
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| <p>Educational Support Staff have a wide and varied role within the Education system as it relates to enhancing and supporting learning for all students. How would your party ensure student success is not compromised by having inadequate staffing levels in these roles?</p> | <p>Educational assistants, education professionals, paraprofessionals, and other educational workers play a crucial role in the success of our students. Working together, we have built one of the best education systems in the world. That is why we have supported the improvement of working and learning conditions in our education system and will continue to do so. It is unfortunate that the Tim Hudak PCs have committed to increasing class size, firing at least 9,000 teachers and 9,700 support staff, and cutting \$1.5 billion from the</p> | <p>Liberal cuts to education since Liz Sandals became education minister have already compromised the quality of education in this province, and Tim Hudak's Conservative Party seems determined to further put our children's education at risk. His 100,000 job cuts to the public sector would certainly impact support staff within our education system immensely. The NDP position on this is simple. We agree that cutbacks in funding for school support staff is not an option if we are to provide a safe, clean, welcoming environment conducive to learning. The</p> | <p>No Response Received to date</p> | <p>No Response Received to date</p> |

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| | <p>education budget. These cuts will have devastating effects on our education system and on student achievement. Less support staff like education assistants, psychologists, and speech-language pathologists will mean less support for special education and less support for students with special needs.</p> <p>We have chosen a different path. As a result of our investments, school boards have hired more than 5,000 educational assistants and 4,000 professionals and paraprofessionals in addition to increasing school maintenance staff, school office staff, and more library and guidance teaching and non-teaching staff.</p> <p>We know that these investments make a difference. The caring adults in schools across the province who ensure student success need the safe, accepting, inclusive and clean environments that only educational</p> | <p>NDP's approach to education is one of inclusivity and quality. Being based in those two principles, the NDP's approach to various issues within education can often seem repetitive, however the NDP believe that if we focus on providing a quality education which is accessible to all our students will thrive.</p> <p>Cutbacks to any area of front-line education are short-term fixes that will cost us dearly in the long run. We are committed to ensuring that we are offering the highest quality education possible to Ontario's students. For every dollar we invest now in our children's future, we get a positive return with an educated and healthy work force. By conducting a full review of the education funding model, we can address the shortfalls of the current system and find solutions to overcome the barriers preventing us from offering adequate staffing. The NDP is willing to invest in</p> | | |
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| | support staff can provide. | the long-term sustainability of our public education system. The quick-fix funding cuts suggested by the other parties does compromise student success and that's a compromise that we are not willing to make. | | |
| <p>2. How will your party strengthen the public education system in Ontario? In particular, how will your government ensure students with special needs receive the necessary professional support provided through regulated non-teaching special education staff?</p> | <p>The Ontario Liberal plan for education is focused on working collaboratively with our partners in education to deliver better results for students. Working together, we have implemented full-day kindergarten and our schools are now recognized among the best in the world. We will build on that record to meet tomorrow's challenges in education.</p> <p>Since 2003, funding for Ontario schools is up \$8.1 billion or 56 per cent. We have invested in hiring 13,500 new teachers and over 9,000 support staff; reducing class sizes; creating innovative, new programs like Specialist High Skill Majors and Dual Credits; and supporting programs to make our</p> | <p>The state of special education services in Ontario schools is simply unacceptable. 35,000 elementary and secondary students are stuck on waiting lists for special education services. For every secondary school specialist assistant there are 58 students in the system. This is unacceptable and both the Liberals and Conservatives would drive these numbers even higher. New Democrats have facebook: JamesGordonNDP twitter: @JamesGordonNDP info@jamesgordonndp .ca 519 341 3641</p> <p>Pa id for a nd a uthorized by the G uelph NOP Provincial Constituency Association. always upheld principles of</p> | | |

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| | <p>schools safer and more accepting spaces. Our 2014 budget committed more than \$11 billion in capital grants to school boards to continue building better places to learn across the province. Our significant investments have supported the hard work of students, educators, and parents and the results speak for themselves. In 2003, only 68 per cent of our students were graduating. Today, the graduation rate is up 15 percentage points to 83 per cent, the highest ever. In 2003, only 54 per cent of our learners in grades 3 and 6 were meeting or exceeding the provincial standard in reading, writing and mathematics. Today, that number has increased 16 per cent points to 71 per cent and we will continue to work with our partners to keep moving in the right direction. We just released a plan for the system based on extensive consultation with our stakeholders, including OSSTF, entitled "Achieving</p> | <p>inclusivity and accessibility for all, in every sector of our society. We can strengthen our system by ensuring that no one is further marginalized because they require extra assistance. To do this we must ensure that funding is in place for adequate support, and we feel that a complete review of the education funding formula is necessary to accomplish this.</p> | | |
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| | <p>Excellence". To support the new vision for education, the Province will be investing \$150 million over three years in technology and learning tools such as new digital tablets, netbooks, cameras, software, and professional development for teachers. The vision builds on the education system's three current priorities: increasing student achievement, closing gaps in student achievement, and increasing public confidence in publicly funded education. Our plan raises expectations both for the system and for the potential of our children and students.</p> <p>Our renewed goals for education are:</p> <p>Achieving Excellence: Children and students of all ages will achieve high levels of academic performance, acquire valuable skills and demonstrate good citizenship. Educators will be supported in learning continuously and will be</p> | | | |
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| | <p>recognized as among the best in the world.</p> <p>Ensuring Equity: All children and students will be inspired to reach their full potential, with access to rich learning experiences that begin at birth and continue into adulthood.</p> <p>Promoting Well-Being: All children and students will develop enhanced mental and physical health, a positive sense of self and belonging, and the skills to make positive choices.</p> <p>Enhancing Public Confidence: Ontarians will continue to have confidence in a publicly funded education system that helps develop new generations of confident, capable and caring citizens.</p> <p>These four goals are interconnected – success in one contributes to success in the others. Our progress over the last 10 years tells us that when educators, students, parents, and our many other partners work together on clear goals, we</p> | | | |
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| | <p>can build success. We choose a different path. Despite a period of fiscal restraint the Special Education Grant is projected to be approximately \$2.7 billion in 2013–14. This is an increase of \$1.05 million or 67 per cent since 2002–03. The grant continues to be enveloped and protected and provides for the incremental costs of programs and services for students with special education needs. We are ensuring that school boards have the resources they need to hire the necessary staff to deliver high-quality programs and services to our most vulnerable students.</p> | | | |
| <p>3. How will your party revise the education funding formula to ensure that school boards receive full and adequate funding so that Educational support staff and special education staff can meet the learning needs for all students?</p> | <p>We believe that every Ontario child deserves access to an excellent education, and has the right to a supportive learning environment. Since 2003, funding for Ontario schools is up \$8.1 billion or 56 per cent. We have invested in hiring 13,500 new teachers and over 9,000 support staff;</p> | <p>Continuing from the last question, we are concerned that without a full funding formula review that we are in danger of becoming a two-tiered education system without equal access for all, regardless of economic status, language barriers, or physical and mental challenges. In an effort to</p> | | |

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| | <p>reducing class sizes; creating innovative, new programs like Specialist High Skill Majors and Dual Credits; and supporting programs to make our schools safer and more accepting spaces. And our 2014 budget committed to provide more than \$11 billion in capital grants to school boards to continue building better places to learn across the province. Supported by these investments and led by the professionalism of Ontario's teachers and education workers, Ontario has become a global leader in education and a highly successful model for other jurisdictions. We are proud of our record in education. Our strong partnership with educators and our continued investments in publicly funded education have delivered higher graduation rates, smaller class sizes, and improved student outcomes. Despite a period of fiscal restraint, our funding for Special Education is</p> | <p>match funding needs, the Liberals government has seen student activity fees increased 200 percent since 2001 and parents are expected to fundraise more and more to pay for school programs and supplies. Under an NDP government, a new funding model would start with equality, accessibility, inclusivity, and sustainability and we would ensure that schools are adequately funded to provide the quality, comprehensive education our children deserve. We would also revisit Bill 160, and ensure that all education workers have full bargaining rights to achieve adequate wages for the incredible services they provide. Teachers work on average 53 hours per week in increasingly difficult conditions and growing classroom sizes. If teachers and other education support workers do not have contracts that keep them thriving, then they cannot deliver the quality of education that</p> | | |
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| | <p>projected to increase to more than \$2.7 billion this year. Our investments have resulted in an increase of \$1.05 billion or 67 per cent since 2002–03. This year, we are also making changes to the High Needs Amount (HNA) included in our special education funding to be even more responsive to student needs. The change will increase the focus on supporting student outcomes, while responding to requests for a more fair and equitable High Needs Amount allocation. We are ensuring school boards have the resources they need to deliver high quality programs to our most vulnerable students. Our funding changes will help schools be more responsive to the needs of students receiving special education programs and services, and increase the focus on supporting student outcomes.</p> | <p>students deserve. In a new funding model, the NDP would phase out standardized testing, freeing up time to adequately address the curriculum and student's special needs as well as freeing up funds to cover more specialized education within the system.</p> | | |
| <p>4. What will happen to full day kindergarten if your party forms the next</p> | <p>Full day Kindergarten is the most significant transformation in our</p> | <p>Full day kindergarten would continue when the NDP forms the next</p> | | |

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| <p>government?</p> | <p>education system in a generation. Starting this fall, all four- and five-year-olds will have access to full day kindergarten. Their families will save about \$6,500 in child care costs. The plan is the first of its kind in North America and it is important for Ontario's future prosperity. That is why we have invested over \$1.5 billion to support the implementation of full-day kindergarten and will continue to support this transformational program. The results of the investment are clear. Recent research from Queen's and McMaster, proves that children in full-day kindergarten programs are better prepared to start Grade one. We will continue to rely on discussions with our partners as well as research and evidence to inform how we can best implement the program across the province. The PC plan for education is a plan of cuts and</p> | <p>government. At the same time, we recognize that under the Liberals the implementation of the new full day model has been problematic. We hear from teachers that it was rolled out quickly without being mindful of individual school's needs. The transition has meant overloads within the system. With full day kindergarten being implemented at the same time as cutbacks to teaching assistants and an increase in classroom sizes, teachers are doing an amazing job coping with difficult conditions. The NDP wants to help make this transition an easier one for teachers and students. We also recognize that for many families, all day kindergarten does not solve all their child care needs. To better nurture children before they enter the public school system, the NDP will invest 100 million dollars in emergency funds to assure affordable child care,</p> | | |
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| | <p>disruption. It would change an FDK model we know is working and has delivered positive results for kids. It would require seven more children for every adult in the classroom and would eliminate thousands of teaching jobs. We don't think that is the way forward, and we are committed to support the success of our youngest learners. In fact, this year we made funding to FDK ongoing and permanent by including it in the Grants for Student Needs for all school boards.</p> | <p>connect funding to inflation, prevent hikes to fees and ensure a retention of qualified staff.</p> | | |
| <p>5. With declining enrollment, schools have been faced with tough decisions on what programs can be offered. What steps would your party take to address this pressure? What programs do you see as the highest priority?</p> | <p>The number of school-aged children in Ontario has been decreasing in recent years, and enrolment is currently declining in 53 of 72 school boards. School boards are making important decisions to ensure they can deliver excellent programming in communities where the number of students is declining. To ease this challenge, in the 2014 Budget we committed to providing</p> | <p>A strong public education system is the cornerstone of a vibrant, equitable society. Budgets are tight and the government must carefully consider where money is best spent but the Ontario NDP believes in ensuring education remains a priority and an investment in our future. Under the Liberals we are already experiencing a dramatic loss in qualified music teachers and librarians, and as a result students are not receiving</p> | | |

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| | <p>more than \$11 billion over the next 10 years for elementary and secondary education infrastructure. This funding will target critical needs in the sector. It includes a \$750 million capital consolidation funding to support the management of school assets and facilities to ensure our investments are supporting programs that are proven to improve student outcomes. We have also benefited from advice from our education partners about how to modernize our system and become more efficient while increasing the number of education workers. During recent consultations, we heard that E-learning and the use of digital technology, including e-books, are on the rise in Ontario schools and that it provides an opportunity to deliver a balanced and varied learning experience and resources to address the diverse need of Ontario's students.</p> | <p>a comprehensive education. I do not believe that it is Ontarians' long term economic interest to compromise on education our students are receiving now. All students deserve a rich and varied education which exposes them to as many avenues as possible and ignites an interest and passion for learning. Programs such as special education, English as a second language, the arts and physical education are all vital to ensuring our students remain happy, healthy and well-rounded individuals who have a passion for learning. New Democrats are committed to helping schools remove the financial barriers of offering enriched education by providing funding for these types of courses in schools and alleviating the financial burden of offering such courses on schools. We will institute the financial accountability office promised but not delivered by the Liberals, and instead of cutbacks in</p> | | |
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| | <p>We believe that if done equitably, technology has the potential to provide new learning opportunities for students across the province, particularly in northern and rural boards. We have recently released a renewed vision for the system based on extensive consultation with our stakeholders, including OSSTF, entitled "Achieving Excellence". To support this new vision for education, we are investing \$150 million over the next three years in technology and learning tools such as new digital tablets, netbooks, cameras, software and professional development for teachers.</p> <p>This \$150 million investment will build on teaching and learning innovations that are already surfacing in schools across Ontario and will support new avenues to improved programming and student outcomes.</p> <p>With an increase of \$8.1 billion in funding to school</p> | <p>education, we hope to raise the needed revenues by being better stewards of our tax revenues. Education is not a sector in which we feel more cuts are beneficial.</p> | | |
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| | <p>boards over the past decade, it is important that we work with our school board leaders to ensure they have the resources, the capacity, and the expertise, to manage their budgets in a way that supports our goal of improved student achievement.</p> | | | |
| <p>6. What will your party do to restore full funding to adult education programs across Ontario?</p> | <p>Since 2003, we have committed to providing our adult learners with the programs and services they need to reach their full potential. And, in 2014–15, a projected \$116 million will be provided to 61 school boards to support adult and continuing education programs, and recognize prior learning for mature students. We have increased funding for adult education and continuing education programs by about \$54 million, or 53 per cent, since 2002–03. We are also providing adult learners with innovative programs available in Ontario high schools such as Specialist High Skills Major, Dual</p> | <p>Every Ontarian has the right to a quality public education and this right must meaningfully extend to adult learners. According to Statistics Canada, 20 percent of adult Ontarians lack literacy and numeracy skills necessary in everyday life. Many of those who do not finish school come from communities which are marginalized within our society such as Aboriginal and immigrant communities. Further marginalizing ESL and GED students by denying them access to further education is not part of our vision for Ontario. Full funding must be restored, and we believe that the</p> | | |

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| | Credits, and Co-op. Adults can access these through adult day school, alternative education, continuing education, night, and summer schools. | results of that investment will pay for itself in the long term by strengthening our workforce and helping to reduce poverty and to better integrate newcomers into society. | | |
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