



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

**Riding: Kitchener- Waterloo**

Question	 Jamie Burton	 Catherine Fife		 Stacey Danckert
<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 and para-professionals, and other education workers play a crucial role in the success of our students. We have supported the improvement of working in learning conditions in our education system and will continue to do so.</p> <p>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 education budget. These</p>	<p>Support staff deserves to be treated with respect by a government that understands their important contribution to our education system. Among their many functions, support staff maintains our buildings, keep schools clean and safe, and provide essential student support. Tim Hudak has a plan to phase out 10,000 non-teaching positions. That's the wrong way to go. We need solutions that make sense. New Democrats will continue to stand up for support staff.</p> <p>When I served as Chair of</p>	<p>No Response Received to date</p>	<p>We would push to increase funding for teaching staff, special education resources, and classroom resources to ensure student success in the school and community. With our proposed cuts to the EQAO and money saved by merging the Catholic and Public School Boards, we would make money available for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hiring more educational assistants</li> <li>• Honour an increase in the number of hours custodians and secretaries have requested to fulfill their duties</li> <li>• Prevent some of</li> </ul>

	<p>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>the Waterloo Region District Board of Education and as President of OPSBA, I understood and respected the important role support staff plays in our education system. We will continue to work with support staff to ensure that there are adequate staffing levels. Government's role is to support all educational staff to help them deliver the best education for our students.</p>		<p>the various school closures slated for across Ontario</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the number of specialized teachers for arts, sciences, technology and libraries</li> </ul>
<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 \$8.1B or 56% per cent. We have invested in hiring 13,500 new teachers and</p>	<p>All Ontario students deserve the opportunity to succeed and we're lucky that our dedicated teachers and staff make our schools some of the best in the world. New Democrats understand the important role of our public education system. My personal belief is that public education is the great equalizer. We will review the funding formula to ensure that students, teachers, and staff have the resources they need to succeed. We also understand that student assessments need to focus on students, not on</p>		<p>The Green Party of Ontario is in favour of calling a citizen's assembly or public commission to determine the best way to end segregation in our current school system and move toward a modern single public French and English school system. By merging the Catholic and public school boards, we can realize ongoing savings of over \$1 billion per year that we can reinvest in the classroom and use to provide better education for our kids. The Green Party of Ontario advocates doing away altogether with the EQAO</p>

	<p>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 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.</p> <p>Our significant investments have supported the hard work of students, educators, and parents and the results speak for themselves. In 2003, only 68% of our students were graduating. Today, the graduation rate is up 15% points to 83%, the highest ever. In 2003, only 54% 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% points to 71% and we will continue to work with</p>	<p>ranking schools. New Democrats support a better and progressive approach to testing that reduces anxiety, and empowers teachers. We believe that class size is an important factor in providing quality education, and we think government should support school boards to make the best use of public space. Regulated non-teaching special education staff plays an important role in supporting our students with special needs. Unfortunately, past government decisions to cut funding and freeze budgets has meant doing more with less for teachers and support staff. In secondary schools, the ratio of special education students to special education teachers has risen dramatically from 48:1 to 66:1; between 2001 and 2013. We need a change. New Democrats recognize that when our students succeed, we all succeed. An Ontario NDP</p>		<p>standardized testing. There are many problems associated with the current emphasis on standardized testing. Redundant student testing costs over \$30 million annually, and actually approaches nearly \$100 million when you include all of the organizations involved with EQAO testing. Since this test tells teachers what they already know, it represents a classic example of unnecessary duplication in government spending. Currently, teachers conduct extensive testing and reporting throughout the year, including 2 term reports and a progress report. Also, school boards administer in-depth reading, writing, and math assessments during the school year. These tests and reports that are in place are more than sufficient to ensure the highest standards of education are maintained in our system. With the money saved through these measures,</p>
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	<p>our partners to keep moving in the right direction.</p> <p>We just released a plan for the system based on extensive consultation with our stakeholders, including OSSTF, entitled "Achieving 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. Our renewed goals for education are:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Achieving</p>	<p>government will deliver results by reviewing education funding to ensure that students with special needs receive necessary, professional support, in a timely manner.</p>		<p>we can ensure a fair public education system, with the funding that is needed to improve issues such as those that pertain to students with special needs.</p>
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	<p>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 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>			
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	<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 can build success. Our success in education is a result of our decade-long partnership with the education sector – a partnership that we value and have supported with increased funding, more teaching and non-teaching staff, and important new investments.</p> <p>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 education budget. These cuts will have devastating effects on our education system and on student achievement. Less support staff like education assistants, psychologists</p>			
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	<p>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. Significant investments have helped support success in teaching and learning and the results speak for themselves.</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>Since 2003, funding for Ontario schools is up \$8.1B 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 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.</p> <p>We believe that every</p>	<p>Ensuring adequate funding is important to encourage our students to reach their full potential. The current funding formula was developed in 1997 and needs to be examined. Andrea Horwath and an Ontario NDP government will review the funding formula to ensure that we provide the support our students, teachers and support staff need. We will also support local school boards so that there are options for underutilized schools. Further, we will invest in schools as community hubs, providing valuable public services and helping to ensure schools stay open, where</p>		<p>See above.</p>

	<p>Ontario child deserves access to an excellent education, and has the right to a supportive learning environment. Despite a period of fiscal restraint, our funding for Special Education is 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.</p> <p>This year, we are also making changes to the High Needs Amount included in our special education funding to be even more responsive to student needs. We are ensuring school boards have the resources they need to deliver high quality programs to our most vulnerable students.</p> <p>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>	possible.		
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<p>4. What will happen to full day kindergarten if your party forms the next government?</p>	<p>Full day Kindergarten is the most significant transformation in our education system in a generation. Starting this fall, all four- and five-year-olds will have access to FDK 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 Queens and McMaster, proves that children in full-day kindergarten programs are better prepared to start Grade 1. 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 to cuts and</p>	<p>Full day kindergarten is an important investment for Ontario families, and teachers have seen the results first hand. Improvements in language, reading, and communications skills are all attributable to full day kindergarten. Tim Hudak wants to cut full day kindergarten, that's the wrong way to go. New Democrats strongly supported introducing full-day kindergarten and we believe it makes sense to improve on our success. We need to look at class sizes, and to what successful boards are doing. An Ontario NDP government will also address issues with roll out and class sizes. Locally, the seamless day has been an important step in the development of the model of schools as community hubs.</p>		<p>The Green Party of Ontario fully supports the implementation of a full-day Early Learning Program. The Green Party will encourage administrators, teachers and parents to be part of the process to make the transition to full-day Early Learning as effective and efficient as possible.</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 increase the child to adult ratio in FDK from 1:13 to 1:20 and would eliminate thousands of teaching jobs. We don't think that is the way forward and 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>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 schools boards. School boards are making important decisions to ensure they can deliver excellent programming in communities where the number of students is declining.</p> <p>To ease this challenge, in the 2014 Budget we</p>	<p>Our students need to be prepared to succeed in a global economy. Funding cuts, freezes, and a funding formula from 1997 have left teachers to do more with less. The Ontario NDP believes there's a better way. We understand that it is important to offer Ontario students a range of programs, supports and resources.</p> <p>We will review the funding formula ensuring that the resources are available for</p>		<p>Much of this issue would be greatly alleviated by merging the school boards such that space and programs can be optimized for the number of students and not disadvantaged by wasted spending on empty seats.</p>

	<p>committed to providing 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 right-sizing of school facilities to ensure our investments are support programming that is proven to improve student outcomes.</p> <p>We have also benefited from advice from our education partners about how to modernize our system and be increasingly efficient in delivering an excellent education.</p> <p>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</p>	<p>our students and teachers. We believe that it makes sense to work together to build a school system that prepares students to be engaged, active, and innovative citizens.</p>		
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	<p>diverse need of Ontario's students.</p> <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</p>			
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	programming and student outcomes.			
6. What will your party do to restore full funding to adult education programs across Ontario?	<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 \$116M will be provided to 61 school boards to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• support adult and continuing education programs, and</li> <li>• recognize prior learning for mature students.</li> </ul> <p>We have increased funding for adult education and continuing education programs by about \$54M, or 53%, since 2002–03.</p> <p>Continuing education programs in school boards provide flexible delivery of Student Success initiatives: such as Specialist High Skills Major, Dual Credits, and Co-op through adult day school; and alternative education, continuing education, night, and summer schools.</p>	<p>Adult education and skills training have an important place in our economy. Ontario has lost almost 35% of its manufacturing jobs. It makes sense to recognize the role adult education has in skills training as the labour market changes. Adult education has an important role to play in equipping Ontarians with the skills they need to transition between jobs. The Ontario NDP will look at the funding level for adult education programs across Ontario to ensure that workers can have the necessary skills to find good, full-time jobs.</p>		<p>We believe that tuition fees in Ontario – some the highest in the country – makes post-secondary education inaccessible and leaves students with unsustainable levels of debt. We support a freeze in tuition and tying future increases to inflation. We also will continue to invest in post-secondary education institutions to ensure the quality of education is maintained. We support tax credits for businesses who participate in training, apprenticeship and mentorship programs so that young workers have the skills needed to create and obtain the jobs of the future. These programs can also help benefit people wishing to train for a new career. We would revise the College of Trades Act to reduce the ratio of apprentices to journeymen to one-to-one, like most other provinces, in order to open more jobs and training opportunities for</p>

	<p>We will continue to work closely with all those involved in delivering Adult education programs, including the appropriate Ministries and key stakeholders to ensure better coordination of programs and access to adult services.</p>			<p>our youth and workers seeking new career options.</p>