# CANDIDATE ENDORSEMENT

# MAKING THE DECISION - INVOLVING YOUR MEMBERS

Making a decision to endorse a candidate is an important one. You need to take into account both the circumstances in ridings in your local boundaries as well as the provincial strategy determined by ETFO.

Inform your members about your decision. With the new election finance rules prohibiting union donations, ETFO locals have less ability to provide support to endorse candidates, so make sure to develop a member mobilization plan to support any candidate endorsement decision.

Be sure the candidates you are planning to endorse want to be endorsed by a local of the Elementary Teachers’ Federation of Ontario. And then involve your members in getting your endorsed candidates elected.

| **DECISION** | **MEMBERSHIP INVOLVEMENT** | **NOTES** |
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| RESPONSIBILITY  As an executive, meet and decide who will have carriage of the provincial election activities, including any work required to make a decision about which candidate(s) to support. In most cases this will be the Political Action Committee (PAC). | Use a general meeting, your newsletter, your website, and/or your stewards, to inform your members about:   1. your local’s planned election activities; 2. any intention to endorse candidates, and 3. other election activities which other groups, such as labour or environmental groups, are undertaking in your communities. | Even though the whole executive will make the decision about who to support, one person - your political action chair, your president - must be designated as responsible for the process. In all likelihood your PAC- expanded as necessary - will be the responsible committee. |

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| CANDIDATES’ POSITIONS  Determine the candidates’ positions on issues your local and your members consider important.  Obtain information about candidates’ positions either through a written survey or through a personal interview.  ETFO will publish a newsletter outlining the parties’ positions on key issues. | Your local may want to invite candidates to speak to ETFO members and give members an opportunity to ask questions.  You may want to participate in or host an all-candidates meeting (see *All-Candidates’ Meetings*). | Whether you endorse or not, you will want to be able to let your members know where candidates stand on the issues. |
| TO ENDORSE OR NOT  Decide whether you will endorse any candidates.  Some locals have a number of ridings within their jurisdiction. It may not be feasible or desirable to endorse candidates in all ridings.  Locals may wish to focus their endorsements on ridings where unfriendly incumbents won with slim pluralities in the previous election and where friendly incumbents may be in danger of losing (won by a slim margin in the previous election). |  | Don’t rely only on the historical data. If incumbent MPPs don’t run for re-election, the riding may no longer be “safe”. A high profile candidate running against an incumbent MPP could also have a significant impact on voter decisions.  REMEMBER, SOME CANDIDATES MAY NOT WANT TEACHER UNION ENDORSEMENTS. |
| WHO TO ENDORSE  Bring a recommendation for a decision to the executive.  The executive makes the decision about which candidate(s) to endorse. | Ask members if they are willing to work for candidates being supported by the local. An endorsement is good, but providing on-the-ground help is also important. | The executive might make the decision to endorse a candidate because:   1. the candidate has been supportive of public education. 2. the candidate is running for a party with a history of support for public education. 3. the candidate is running for a party with some support in the riding. 4. the candidate is being endorsed by other unions, including teacher unions. |
| PROVIDING SUPPORT  The PAC now gets involved in ensuring that the decision is acted upon and that ETFO demonstrates that when teachers work to get someone elected, they succeed. | Contact all members who indicated an interest in participating and follow-up with them. As the election gets closer you might also want to ask again for volunteers. | Use the Member Election Involvement Survey in the *ETFO Pre-election Strategies and Resources Binder* to develop a database of members willing to work in the election. |

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