# QUESTIONS FOR CANDIDATES

# Classroom violence

Frontline educators are reporting increased incidents of anti-social and violent behaviour on the part of their students. Students require a variety of supports and interventions to enable them to be successful learners, particularly students with learning exceptionalities and mental health issues.

*Do you support increasing education funding to support providing additional special education teachers and educational assistants in schools?*

*Do you support increasing education funding to increase school boards’ ability to provide the services of psychologists, behavioural counsellors, child and youth workers, and speech-language pathologists?*

# Class size

Research supports the common-sense notion that class size matters in terms of teachers’ ability to provide individual attention to students and support their success in the classroom.

*Do you support reducing class size, especially in grades 4 to 8, full-day kindergarten, and where students with special needs are integrated into regular classrooms?*

# Standardized testing

The grade 3 and grade 6 EQAO assessments have been in place since 1998. There is a growing consensus among classroom educators and education academics that the current standardized assessment model needs to be changed and that teachers should have more flexibility in terms of choosing which assessment tools to use.

*Do you support cancelling EQAO tests or moving to a random-sample model for EQAO assessments?*

*Do you support giving teachers more professional autonomy in terms of deciding the most appropriate classroom assessments to use?*

# Full-day kindergarten program

Ontario’s full-day kindergarten program will be accessible to all kindergarten-aged children beginning September 2014. The program has experienced some challenges, such as class size and implementation of the play-based approach.

*Do you support capping Kindergarten class size at 26 students?*

*Do you support having both a teacher and an early childhood educator working full-time in the kindergarten program?*

# Teacher-librarians

Teacher-librarians play a critical role in developing student literacy, supporting teachers’ classroom programs, and making the library the technological hub of the school.

*Do you believe that all elementary schools should be staffed with a teacher-librarian?*

# Specialist teachers

Teachers with specialist training in music, drama, visual arts, phys. ed. and guidance significantly contribute to the ability of schools to provide a balanced program, support a diverse curriculum, and meet the individual learning needs of students. Scheduling specialist teachers also provides important additional time for regular classroom teachers to plan their lessons, consult with colleagues, and connect with parents.

*Will you advocate for more specialist teachers in publicly funded elementary schools?*

# Equity in the Classroom

The latest data indicate that 63% of English language elementary schools have English language learners (ELL) with 27% of those schools having 10 or more ELL students. Meanwhile, only 38% of English language elementary schools have English as a Second Language teachers.

*Do you support increasing the grants for ELL students and ensuring that all students who don’t speak either official language when they enrol in school receive support from an ESL teacher?*

# Education funding formula

The provincial education funding formula that supports Kindergarten to Grade 12 public education was introduced in 1998 but has not been subject to an external review since 2002. Over the last two decades, the Ministry of Education has made adjustments to the education grants, but public schools are showing severe signs of underfunding in areas such as special education, Kindergarten and grades 4 to 8 class size, elementary specialist teachers, and capital funding to support school renovations and repair.

*Do you support the government establishing an external review of the provincial funding formula within the first year following the 2018 election?*

# Labour Rights

*Do you support teachers’ and other education workers’ right to strike?*

*Do you support the provincial guidelines for school board hiring of long-term occasional teachers and new permanent contract teachers, which require school boards to fill these positions based on qualifications and their seniority on the school board’s occasional teacher list?*

*Do you support the current plan to increase the hourly minimum wage to $15 effective January 1, 2019?*

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