

Education Platforms (information taken directly from party websites)

<u>Green Party</u>	<u>Liberal Party</u>	<u>New Democratic Party</u>	<u>Progressive Conservative Party</u>
<p>Merge the school boards into one system</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Local schools closing. ▪ Kids with special needs told to stay home. ▪ Qualified teachers being told they can't work in publicly-funded schools. ▪ Persistent questions about human rights and discrimination. ▪ \$1.2 to \$1.6 billion wasted every year in duplicate services and unnecessary bussing. ▪ Our school system needs an overhaul. And the status quo parties won't talk about it. ▪ Other provinces have changed the Constitution to end funding for separate schools. ▪ There's nothing stopping Ontario from following their lead. ▪ Your Green MPPs will call on the government to merge the English and French public and Catholic school boards. We'll have one public school system in Ontario with French and English school boards. <p>How will we pay for it?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The GPO wants the \$1.2 to \$1.6 billion that will be saved every year to go back into the classroom. Merging the school boards will allow us to increase funding for special education, keep more schools open, and reduce urban busing. <p>What does this mean for me?</p>	<p>Our 10-Year Goals: By 2025, we will have a modernized child care system, including better affordability, improved safety, higher quality, and greater accessibility. More than 70 per cent of Ontario's adult population will hold postsecondary education credentials.</p> <p>As part of our 10-year plan, a Kathleen Wynne Government will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Help parents with child care and provide our youngest learners with a strong start so that they are ready to succeed at school and in life ▪ Strive for excellence from Kindergarten to Grade 12 ▪ Improve access to postsecondary education, and enhance bridges to jobs and the broader economy, including continuing to offer 30% Off Tuition and increasing the number of apprentices training in Ontario. <p>Strong Leadership Means Investing in Early Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Studies show the return on investment is up to seven to one. That is why we introduced Full-Day Kindergarten and expanded early learning centres. It is why all Ontario four- and five-year-olds will have access to Full-Day Kindergarten by this fall. We will continue increasing the quality of child care and other early learning opportunities. And, 	<p>Keep schools open and foster healthy communities; Bring back physical education teachers and keep children healthy and active</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We will invest in health and physical education initiatives, including hiring up to 1,000 new health and physical education teachers by the end of our mandate. ▪ Create an "Open Schools" fund to prevent school closures and extend after-hour programs ▪ Schools boards will be able to apply for funding to help keep schools threatened with closure open, make necessary renovations, and to repurpose under-utilized space for other community uses. ▪ Schools can also apply to the fund to increase free and low-fee access for non-profit groups to use school space during evenings and weekends. <p>Launch a Student Achievement Program to help students succeed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ An NDP government will invest in student achievement by hiring up to 1,000 more Educational Assistants so that all kids can get the help they need to succeed in the classroom. <p>Invest in student nutrition programs so children begin with a healthy start</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Our plan invests an additional \$15 million 	<p>We all want a great education for our kids. We send them to school every day so they can learn and grow. Our plan focuses on concrete steps that improve student achievement, especially in the areas where we have been falling behind, like math. Simply put: our schools exist to give our children the best possible education and the best shot at a successful life. That principle underlies everything we will do in education.</p> <p>Action – Raise the bar for our students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Raise the expectations and standards in our schools. Our kids will benefit from a system that challenges them and gives them the help they need to succeed. ▪ The current test score standards for competence in reading, writing and math assume that one-quarter of our children won't master these basic skills. Our kids deserve better. ▪ We will raise the targets for reading, writing and math, make Grade 8 science subject to a province-wide standardized test and introduce a strong financial literacy curriculum. ▪ Higher standards mean our schools are preparing more students to lead full

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A neighbourhood school. ▪ Merging the school boards makes it more likely that your kids can walk, bike, or cartwheel to the nearest school. 	<p>we will continue to fight for a national partner to expand access to child care.</p> <p>Providing Better Childcare</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We will re-introduce the Child Care Modernization Act, our comprehensive legislation to modernize the delivery of child care, including improved safety, higher quality, and greater accessibility. <p>Funding Child Care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We will support the Child Care Modernization Act by investing to protect licensed child care spaces and subsidies and improve the quality of care. We will provide wage increases of \$1 an hour in 2015 and \$1 an hour in 2016 for child care workers working outside the public school system. <p>Completing the Implementation of Full-Day Kindergarten</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Full-Day Kindergarten will be available to all 265,000 four- and five-year olds by September 2014. Full-Day Kindergarten helps improve a child's social skills, language and learning, and saves a family up to \$6,500 in child care costs per child per year. <p>Fighting for a National Child Care Partner</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We call on all federal parties to adopt a national child care program in their 2015 election platforms and will work with a willing federal partner to increase access to and the quality of licensed childcare as core elements of such a program. 	<p>per year in student nutrition and local food initiatives, to promote healthy eating and provide nutritious breakfasts and lunches.</p> <p>Invest in safe and affordable childcare spaces</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We will provide critical relief funding to help childcare providers and parents in our first year in government. ▪ Our plan will also provide ongoing funding to prevent the closure of childcare centres in 18 communities. <p>Freeze post-secondary tuition and make student loans interest-free</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Undergraduate tuition fees will be frozen at 2014 levels. ▪ Provincial student loans will be made interest-free. 	<p>lives and get good jobs and it means leaving no student behind.</p> <p>Action – Improve Student Achievement in Math</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Give every student a top quality math education, turning around the decline in our students' math scores over the last ten years. This is our kids' most pressing challenge at school these days. ▪ We will upgrade the curriculum to ensure that students are taught proven math techniques, like memorizing multiplication tables, ending the failed curriculum fad of waiting for students to “discover” multiplication and division on their own. ▪ In grades 4-6, we will increase the use of specialized math teachers. We do not assume that every teacher has the right background to teach French or music – math education deserves equal care. ▪ And we will attract more university graduates with math and science backgrounds into teaching, including at the elementary level, providing special financial incentives if these are required. ▪ Our plan will restore Ontario's reputation as one of the top jurisdictions in the world in math and

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	<p>Strong leadership means investing in excellence in our publicly funded school systems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ninety-five per cent of children in Ontario attend a publicly funded school. Ontario students continued to perform above the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) average in every category in the 2012 Program for International Assessment test. Few other jurisdictions can boast such a high level of confidence in their school system. However, in today's fast-paced and ever-changing world, we need to focus on preparing students for success in a hi-tech, globalized economy. We need to build on the basics – literacy and numeracy – while recognizing that problem-solving, creativity and entrepreneurship are key to future success. That is why we will focus on fostering creativity and innovation, and invest in technology and experiential learning opportunities for students. <p>Focusing on learning that responds to today's society and economy. This includes:</p> <p>Promoting experiential learning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We will promote educational opportunities – things like learning outside the classroom, dual credits, co-operative education, specialist high skills majors, hands-on learning, online education, project-based learning, and other tools to prepare 		<p>science education, to attract good, high-paying jobs.</p> <p>Action – Protect Core Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Protect the core services that our children rely on by reducing some non-core areas of spending. ▪ Years of aggressive program expansion have left our schools struggling to meet their basic functions. In Ontario, we spend \$8.5 billion more on education than we did ten years ago, to teach 250,000 fewer students. ▪ Despite all the spending our schools have only middling results. We can do better. ▪ In education, like all areas of government, choices have to be made about what approaches offer the best results. ▪ The Drummond Commission concluded that some current education spending wasn't producing value for students. We agree. What we will do is protect the most important things in our schools. Our children deserve that. <p>Action – Help those who need it the most</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Invest in schools and individual students who need the extra help. Too many students are struggling to meet the provincial standards. ▪ According to the government, there are 300 elementary schools where less

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	<p>students for success after high school.</p> <p>Investing in technology.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We are investing \$150 million over three years in technology and learning tools, such as new digital tablets, netbooks, cameras, software and professional development for teachers. This fund will support the way today's students learn and prepare them for good jobs in the global economy. <p>Learning the skills for success.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In the classroom, we will focus on skills like creativity, collaboration, problem solving, and entrepreneurialism. We will expand the availability of certification in Innovation, Creativity and Entrepreneurship. <p>More global-oriented learning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We will bring a more global focus to students' experiences and learning opportunities. We will set a long-term goal that will see significantly more Ontario students graduate with international experience and knowledge of another language. ▪ We will promote practical educational opportunities to prepare students for success after high school <p>Improving Math Scores.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We will continue to implement our Math Action Plan to ensure we make progress in this critical area. We will review the math curriculum, help more teachers specialize in teaching math, provide better help for 		<p>than half of the students are passing provincial tests.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We must also do more to help kids with special needs. All kids benefit when those with special needs have the attention they deserve because it allows teachers to meet the needs of those individual students and the needs of the entire class. ▪ We will invest some of the savings we achieve elsewhere in the budget in extra support for schools that are struggling and children with special needs who are having a hard time keeping up. <p>Action – Make mental health care a priority</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Stop treating mental health as an afterthought in the system. Mental health care is a fundamental part of health care. It cannot be treated exclusively as a social service, as if a disorder in the brain is a less legitimate health problem than one in any other part of the body. ▪ Good mental health is just as important as good physical health. Mental health issues affect people in every part of society, with huge economic and social costs, and devastating impacts on families. ▪ Homelessness in our cities is a

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	<p>students who are struggling, and continue to give free online homework help for students in Grades 7-10.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We will achieve a balance that makes sure students understand basic math concepts, gain arithmetic skills (such as knowing multiplication tables), and develop the thinking skills required for advanced problem solving. <p>We will promote the wellbeing of all students by:</p> <p>Helping kids be more active and healthy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We will work with school boards and non-profits to support a comprehensive approach to wellness in our schools. This includes ongoing work to support accepting school climates, supporting mental health in our schools, and renewing our focus on healthy eating and physical activity. Through intramural sports, before- and after-school, and other activities, we will set a longer-term goal of providing students with the opportunity to participate in 60 minutes of physical activity connected to their school day. We will support this approach with a new recognition program to celebrate healthy, active schools across Ontario. <p>Providing free, nutritious breakfasts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We will expand the Student Nutrition Program, making it available at 340 more schools for an additional 56,000 children. 		<p>symptom of the system's inability to help the people who need it most.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Suicide is the second-leading cause of death among people 15-25 years of age. Our families and young people are crying out for help, but not nearly enough is being done. ▪ We will take the fragmented services now offered and replace them with a comprehensive approach to help some of our most vulnerable citizens. <p>Action – Keep our children active</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure that our children get 45 minutes of physical activity every weekday, through school-based activities and after-school sports. ▪ We will work with school boards to meet this essential target. Active kids live happier and healthier lives, and they learn better too. ▪ We recognize that good health is about more than just health care. By improving prevention and wellness, we can ultimately reduce the unnecessary use of health care resources and build a healthier Ontario.

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	<p>Focusing on struggling students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We will continue to focus on closing achievement gaps for groups of students experiencing less success. <p>Preparing high school graduates for success We will better prepare students for the workforce by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Guaranteeing that every Grade 7-12 student has access to their own online career planning tool, so that students leave secondary school with a clear path for their initial postsecondary destination, be it apprenticeship training, college, Experience Ontario, university or the workplace. ▪ Supporting guidance counsellors to better prepare students for future careers. ▪ Replacing the current Grade 10 Careers curriculum with one that helps students explore possible careers in a more hands-on way. ▪ Working with schools, school boards, guidance counsellors and business and labour in communities to identify Skills Champions who can mentor students throughout school toward apprenticeship and a successful career. <p>Launching Experience Ontario</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In partnership with communities and the private sector, we would launch Experience Ontario, a nine-month paid community work and service program, to support graduating high school students before they 		

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	<p>go on to apprenticeship, work, or postsecondary education. Through the Jobs and Prosperity Fund, we would invest \$10 million to support this program.</p> <p>Provide better access to postsecondary education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Our initiatives to continue to offer 30% Off Tuition, provide additional undergraduate spaces and renew our campuses are described in the Opportunity for All: A Jobs and Investment Plan for Ontario section of our plan. ▪ We will also make online learning easier, with Ontario Online offering courses for credit in 2015. 		

Information compiled by Shelley Laskin, Chair, OPSBA Policy Development Work Team