

2022 Provincial Party Election Platforms vs. OPSBA Priorities

During provincial elections, the Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA) advocates for non-partisan strategies to engage politicians in issues that focus on education and the well-being of children and youth. OPSBA has declared May 18, 2022, as [Education Day](#) in the province of Ontario. Around this day, school board trustees are inviting local candidates from the four major provincial parties to attend provincial *All Candidates Meetings* in their ridings across the province. In addition, OPSBA has contacted the four major political party leaders (PC, NDP, Liberal, and Green) and shared our Priorities and a series of questions for the parties to answer. The answers to our questionnaire will be posted at www.opsba.org when received.

This summary of information is based on party answers to OPSBA's questionnaire, official party platforms/releases, media clips and party announcements made as of **May 12, 2022**. The chart attempts to compare our Priorities against party platforms based on available information and may not contain all information. The order of the parties listed is based on current party standings at Queen's Park.

OPSBA Priority	PC	NDP	Liberal	Green
Advocating for the Whole Child and Student Well Being	<p>The government's 2022-23 Grants for Student Needs announcement outlines its plans for education in the upcoming school year.</p>	<p>Universal mental health benefits program for all Ontarians - \$1.15 billion a year.</p> <p>Create Mental Health Ontario, a new coordinating organization that will take the lead on identifying and publicly reporting on mental health needs, developing a comprehensive wait list for services, bringing in province-wide mental health standards, creating a basket of services, and making sure that mental health and addiction programs are delivered comprehensively across Ontario.</p> <p>Reduce the waitlist for children's mental health to 30 days and implement the Make Kids Count Action Plan as laid out by the Children's Health Coalition. The plan calls for an investment of \$130 million over the next three years to build intensive treatment and specialized consultation services, increase access to psychotherapy and counselling, family therapy and supports, and scale 24-hour crisis support services to ensure children and youth experiencing a crisis have an alternative to going to the emergency department.</p>	<p>Provide free menstrual products in schools, libraries, transit stations.</p> <p>Put new technology and devices in classrooms to close the digital divide, increasing the existing budget for such resources.</p> <p>Reversing budget cuts to after-hours community programs in schools.</p> <p>Remove the mandatory requirement for two online credits for graduation, while pledging to create high-quality online options for high school students.</p> <p>"Catholic schools will face repercussions for 'intolerant' actions like a recent anti-abortion poster contest in a Woodstock Grade 8 class if Liberals win Ontario's June 2 election, party leader Steven Del Duca warns...While Catholic schools should not be stripped of public funding for anti-abortion or anti-LGBTQ actions, the next premier of Ontario needs to send strong signals that such activities are 'not acceptable,' he</p>	<p>Reduce children and youth mental health wait times to 30 days or less by hiring more front-line workers.</p> <p>Invest in expanding services for youth who face service gaps as they age out of the youth system of care.</p> <p>Make the appropriate investments so students can easily connect to community mental health professionals at or near primary and secondary schools.</p> <p>"Green Leader Mike Schreiner said anti-abortion activities in publicly funded Catholic school classrooms are 'inappropriate.'" – Toronto Star, May 5, 2022</p> <p>Ensure that mental health, wellness and resiliency training are included across the entire education system. Implement a comprehensive curriculum that covers</p>

		<p>Increase in-school support by hiring more mental health workers, child and youth workers, and other education workers. We will create a new position at the school board to assess and improve the delivery of mental health care in our schools.</p> <p>Work with teachers to improve workplace violence reporting and develop training materials to ensure education workers, and kids, are safe at school.</p> <p>Build on Ontario’s Provincial and Demonstration schools’ track record of success, especially in helping students who are deaf, blind or deaf-blind, and students with severe learning disabilities who need greater support.</p> <p>Implement a Working Group on Teacher Shortage in the French-Language School System.</p> <p>Respect the constitutional right of French school boards to control their own learning, and scrap plans to take online course content out of the hands of French-language school boards.</p> <p>Review the process for approval of new schools to ensure that students province-wide are able to access French-language learning.</p> <p>Ensure front-line teachers play a role in curriculum development, and that they are provided with time and support to learn and implement it.</p>	<p>added Wednesday. ‘This is not the right time for us to have a decision about how we can further undermine or disrupt publicly funded education,’ Del Duca told reporters in Etobicoke when asked about the possibility of withdrawing millions in public funding for Catholic schools or imposing other financial penalties.” – Toronto Star, May 5, 2022</p> <p>Reinstate an optional Grade 13.</p> <p>Offer classes on mental health, financial literacy, taxes and more.</p> <p>End academic streaming.</p> <p>Make report cards easier to understand.</p> <p>End EQAO tests and replace it with a new assessment strategy.</p> <p>Reduce wait times for special education.</p> <p>Update curriculum to reflect a more modern and diverse Ontario.</p> <p>More support for French learning and increase funding for language lessons of all kinds since knowing multiple languages is so important in our globally-connected world.</p> <p>Ensure no student waits more for critical mental health help.</p> <p>Hire 1,000 more mental health workers for students and staff.</p>	<p>issues such as mental wellness, coping skills, and stress management.</p> <p>Replicate networks such as the Guelph and Wellington County ACEs Coalition province-wide to increase programming available to prevent the effects of adverse childhood experiences.</p> <p>Invest in Youth Wellness Hubs province-wide as a one-stop shop for employment, health, education, recreation and housing support. Our goal should be to have at least one in each community across Ontario.</p> <p>Support in-person learning and oppose any move toward mandatory e-learning or hybrid learning models.</p> <p>Eliminate the EQAO standardised testing and update the elementary curriculum to reduce prescribed student outcomes.</p> <p>Increase funding for enhanced outdoor education, greenspace in school yards, and enhanced curriculum content on critical environmental topics such as food literacy and climate change.</p> <p>Implement a province-wide nutritious school lunch program.</p> <p>Address racism in schools with mandatory collection and reporting of race-based data for student, teacher and staff populations, as well as</p>
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<p>Supporting Trustees as Leaders in Education</p>		<p>Establish a Partnership Table with representation from workers' unions, school board trustees, principals and other education stakeholders.</p>	<p>Reconvene the Education Partnership Table and listen to associations, school boards, unions, municipalities and parent groups on the commitments we're making around learning.</p>	<p>Allow municipalities the option to use a ranked ballot voting system for elections.</p> <p>Create limits for municipal elections whereby no person may contribute more than \$1000 to all candidates, combined.</p> <p>Make funding available for non-profit organisations that provide additional training and mentorship opportunities for women, Black, Indigenous, racialised, and 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals who are considering running for political office.</p>

<p>Strengthening Positive Labour Relations</p>		<p>Repeal Bill 124, <i>Protecting a Sustainable Public Sector for Future Generations Act</i>: “Restore respect and fair compensation for the people who deliver education.”</p> <p>Cap classes for Grades 4 through 8 at 24. Reduce high school class sizes.</p> <p>Cap Full Day Kindergarten class size at 26, and maintain the Teacher-ECE team.</p> <p>Roll back changes to the governance of the Ontario College of Teachers.</p>	<p>Cut class sizes province-wide, capping them at 20 students for every grade – this would also require the hiring of 10,000 teachers, the Liberals say, adding they would recruit teachers from other provinces, help qualified teachers immigrate to Ontario, and attract some of the 80,000 Ontario certified teachers not currently employed by schools back to teaching. They would also support teacher education programs – particularly for French-language educators.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put new technology and devices in classrooms to close the digital divide • Reverse the Ford Conservatives’ budget cuts to after-hours community programs in schools. <p>Hire 5,000 more special education workers.</p>	<p>Reduce the voting age to 16 years old.</p> <p>Cap grades 4 to 8 class sizes to at least 24 students and kindergarten to at least 26 students.</p> <p>Work with school boards to ensure recruitment and retention practices for staff are transparent and reflect the diversity of Ontario’s population and ensure culturally relevant and responsive programming is included in mandatory staff training.</p> <p>Create incentives to increase the number of French-speaking individuals in teachers college programs.</p>
<p>Advocating for Sustainable and Equitable Education Funding</p>	<p>The government’s 2022-23 Grants for Student Needs announcement outlines its financial plans for education in the upcoming school year.</p> <p>Balance the budget in 2027-28.</p>	<p>Work with parents, front-line educators, students, and educational experts to overhaul the education funding formula, starting with a comprehensive public review to be completed within one year.</p> <p>Hire 20,000 Teachers and Education Workers and invest in in-school remedial learning programs to help students recover after two years of learning disruptions.</p>	<p>Spend \$10 billion to build and repair schools, with funding coming from cancellation of the planned Highway 413. This would include building 200 new schools, and repairing, upgrading and rebuilding an additional 4,500. All schools would receive new ventilation systems, if they are needed.</p> <p>Put schools and community hubs in the same building and encourage schools and community services to share buildings so students and their families can easily</p>	<p>Establish an independent review of Ontario’s education funding formula, and review the formula every five years.</p> <p>Ensure the updated formula includes adequate funding for ESL grants, special education assistants, counsellors, and other specific supports to provide equitable access to learning and school activities for all students.</p>

		<p>Hire more custodians and maintenance staff and establish a province-wide standard for cleaning and school repairs.</p> <p>Base special education funding on needs with timely needs assessments. This will mean overall funding increases for students with special educational needs, helping schools, teachers and education assistants.</p> <p>Clear the school repair backlog: Address the backlog, with a plan to clear it within 10 years.</p> <p>Double the Rural and Northern Education Fund.</p> <p>Upgrade public school buildings to make them carbon neutral and climate resilient. Bring the same principles to new school buildings, to ensure they meet international energy efficiency standards.</p>	<p>access services, especially in rural and Northern Ontario.</p> <p>Review and update how elementary and high schools get funded, by refreshing the funding formula, including a review to ensure equitable access to Education Development Charges. (Consider the needs of Franco-Ontarians, students with special needs, people living in rural and Northern Ontario and those in fast-growing neighbourhoods in this new formula.)</p>	<p>Ensure the updated funding formula takes into account the unique needs of remote and rural schools.</p> <p>Address the repair backlog for Ontario public schools.</p> <p>Allocate funds to ensure schools are able to comply with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA).</p> <p>Provide funding for schools to make energy efficiency and ventilation improvements.</p> <p>Make funding available so that schools can buy zero emission electric school buses to replace retired diesel buses.</p> <p>Restore funding, improve communication and outreach, and provide reduced fees for the community use of schools to ensure their availability as important hubs in our communities.</p>
<p>Advancing Reconciliation: First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education</p>		<p>Work with Indigenous leaders and educators to ensure that Ontario’s school curricula appropriately reflects Indigenous experiences and histories.</p> <p>Encourage the recruitment of Indigenous school board trustees to ensure Indigenous people are represented in school decision making.</p> <p>Boost funding for Indigenous language education.</p>	<p>Bring back and expand Indigenous history, languages and culture lessons – including learning about residential schools. There is mention of this being “mandatory.”</p> <p>Make it easier to choose a First Nations language class.</p>	<p>Restore funding for the Indigenous curriculum program and work with Indigenous educators and community leaders to develop a mandatory curriculum on colonialism and residential schools, treaties, and Indigenous histories and experiences.</p> <p>Work with the federal government to implement the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.</p>

				<p>Make the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation a statutory holiday.</p> <p>Work with the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation to identify, collect, and provide copies of all records relevant to the history and legacy of the residential school system in Ontario.</p> <p>Reform child welfare and protection services to address the overrepresentation of Indigenous children in provincial care by ensuring Indigenous communities are served by Indigenous-led providers. Produce annual reports on the number and proportion of Indigenous children who are in care.</p>
Additional Specific Issues in Education				
Autism			<p>Implement a needs-based Ontario Autism Program for every child, including Applied Behavioural Analysis, occupational therapy, mental health and speech and language pathology</p> <p>Hire 5,000 more special education workers and reduce wait times for school services for students with autism</p> <p>Implement a direct billing option for autism therapy</p> <p>Conduct a comprehensive reform of special education and better transition people into adult services</p>	<p>Address the growing waitlist for Ontario Autism Program (OAP) core services by building the capacity of autism providers, and funding the OAP to bring families into the program as rapidly as possible.</p> <p>Fund OAP increases every year as inflation and the number of children registered in the program increases.</p> <p>Establish an ultimate wait time benchmark for diagnosis and access to core services once registered in the program.</p> <p>Work with the federal Government and other provinces in the development of a</p>

			<p>Establish an independent review of autism services to document and learn from past failures, funded from outside the Ontario Autism Program budget</p>	<p>National Autism Strategy to develop standards and a funding model to provide supports and services for autistic people of all ages.</p> <p>Provide educators multi-discipline training to help them address student sensory and behavioural issues and adopt teaching strategies that support students with a wide spectrum of accommodation needs.</p> <p>Build on the work done with the OAP toward a new Ontario Disability Support Program that would provide funding for therapeutic and respite services and supports for people with all disabilities, beginning with children and youth.</p>
Child care		<p>Wage floor of \$25 for all early childhood educators and \$20 for all other child care program staff.</p> <p>Implement a “Workforce Strategy” leading to a wage grid and decent work standards for childcare workers.</p> <p>Explore ways to work with the federal government to speed up the implementation of \$10-a-day child care.</p> <p>Licensed Home Child Care: Begin to build a community-driven model of child care across the province, connecting and supporting licensed child care centres, licensed home child care, and Early ON centres. Provide stable base funding for licensed home child care providers and offer them the option of contributing to a pension and a benefits plan.</p>	<p>\$10-a-day before and after school care and provide a parental leave top up</p>	<p>Work with the federal government to ensure continued funding for universal access to high-quality, \$10-a-day childcare in all communities so women have more opportunity to re-enter the workforce.</p> <p>Provide Early Childcare Educators, more than 95% of whom are women, with a fair wage of at least \$25 per hour.</p>

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