

2025 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. Election Day is Thursday, February 27, 2025, and OPSBA will be advocating to ensure public education remains a top election issue and encouraging school board trustees to attend any provincial *All Candidates Meetings* in their ridings across the province.

In addition, OPSBA has contacted the four major political party leaders and shared a questionnaire with a series of questions for the parties to answer.

- 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 *February 24, 2025*. The chart attempts to compare our Multi-Year Strategic 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	<u>PC</u>	<u>NDP</u>	<u>Liberal</u>	<u>Green</u>
Student Success, Equity and Well-Being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue a back-to-basics learning strategy for students to build foundational skills in reading, writing and math. (More on page 31 here) • Banning drug injection sites near schools and daycares 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a universal School Food Program • End the practice of streaming and make sure data is being used to support more equitable schools. • Review the funding model to focus on student needs and not numbers of students to support vulnerable students. • Invest in Francophone education in French school boards and French immersion programs in the English system. • Support pathways into the skilled trades from shop classes to those seeking a 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear the special education-related waitlists and assessment backlogs so students have access to appropriate resources and support. • Feed every elementary and secondary school kid a free and healthy lunch every school day by quadrupling funding for school food programs. • Strengthen French education across Ontario by supporting community and cultural partnerships, training, inter-board cooperation and hiring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminate EQAO standardised testing • Remove the requirement for students to have two eLearning credits to graduate high school • Bring allocated time for physical education up to recommendations outlined by Physical Health Education Canada • Ensure the Arts are regularly included in curricula • Immediately double the number of students that can access the Student Nutrition Programs and expand it to be province-wide by 2030

		<p>change later in life, with continued investment in the Skills Development Fund and workers' training centres across the province.</p>	<p>additional French educators.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand access to STEM, robotics, coding, skilled trades, entrepreneurship, economics, financial literacy and civics courses. • Provide opportunities for skilled trades and health care workers through union-led training programs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invest in “ready for kindergarten programs” to provide school readiness to alleviate the challenges schools and families face in transitioning to school • Provide funding to school boards to ensure students and educators have access to mental health supports, when and where they need it • Strengthen the Anti-Racism Directorate to more ambitiously address systemic racism in education, child welfare, health and justice sectors through increased funding, more objective goals, and improved reporting on data outcomes • Require ongoing educational training about 2SLGBTQIA+ identities, gender and sexuality, and examine prejudice, assumptions, and privilege that builds awareness of homo/bi/transphobia and racism for those providing publicly funded services
<p>Local School Board Governance</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commit to mutual respect and collaboration between the Ministry of Education, students, parents, teachers, unions and administrators starting with a commitment to not 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow municipalities the option to use a ranked ballot voting system for elections • Create a diverse, randomly selected Citizens Assembly on electoral reform with a mandate to provide

			blindsided educators with Friday afternoon announcements.	<p>binding recommendations on modernising Ontario's electoral system to ensure that every vote counts and that the legislature reflects the democratic will of the people</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce donation limits for municipal elections and provincial political parties, candidates, and constituency associations to \$1,000 per year per person • Reduce the voting age to 16 years old • 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
Truth and Reconciliation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating new scholarship opportunities for First Nations students interested in pursuing careers in resource development in collaboration with our world class post-secondary institutions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase funding to First Nations school food program. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with Indigenous educators and community leaders to develop more curriculum offerings in Indigenous studies and colonialism • Establish true nation-to-nation relationships with Indigenous peoples • Recognise First Nations' right to self-determination and establish a co-management stewardship model for the development of provincial resources with

				fair revenue sharing For more, see pages 50-53 of platform.
<p>Effective Relationships and Sustainable Resourcing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investing \$1.3 billion more to build 30 new schools and 15 school expansions across Ontario, creating more than 25,000 new student spaces and more than 1,600 new licensed child-care spaces. The investment is part of a previously announced plan to provide approximately \$16 billion to support new school construction, renewal and improvement over 10 years. <i>(Note: the \$1.3B was announced in late January)</i> Cutting red tape and standardizing designs to build modern schools faster and cut construction timelines by nearly 50% to meet the unprecedented pace of growth across the province. Continue to prevent school closures from occurring in communities across the province. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invest an additional \$830 million a year to clear the repair backlog within 10 years while keeping up with school maintenance needs. Hire more staff: teachers, educational assistants, ECEs, custodial and skilled trades workers. Make sure students can get to class reliably and on time by fixing student transportation funding. Consult on restoration of one year teacher’s college programs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear the school repair backlog and install heating, air conditioning and air filtration systems in every classroom by doubling annual capital funding for schools. Build 90 new schools over the next four years and ensure that no school needs to use portables. Allow schools to address their unique staffing and infrastructure needs by expanding funding, eligibility and flexibility for the Safe Schools Grant program. Allow every elementary, middle or high school student to have support and supervision in the classroom by establishing a lower student-to teacher and education-worker ratio. Hire more mental health professionals, educational assistants, Early Childhood Educators (ECEs), social workers, child and youth workers and other staff, lowering the ratio of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Immediately increase per-student funding by \$1,500 Establish an independent review of Ontario’s education funding formula so it adequately reflects student needs, and review the formula every five years Ensure the updated formula includes adequate funding for special education assistants, counsellors, social workers, ESL teachers, and other supports to provide equitable access to learning and school activities for all students Provide enhanced funding for de-streaming, including reduced class sizes, dedicated education workers, training, planning time, and resources Ensure the updated funding formula takes into account the unique needs of remote and rural schools Speed up reducing the repair backlog for Ontario public schools and work in consultation with school boards to adopt a Standard of Good Repair Cap grades four to eight class sizes to, at most, 24

			<p>students to education workers in the Core Education Funding.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Close the funding gap of \$1,500 per student in the K-12 sector and ensure future commitments are tied to inflation. • Re-introduce a one-year teaching degree to expeditiously address the teacher shortage. • Hold school boards accountable for spending new and existing funding on priority outcomes such as helping students develop skills for the future, advancing student success and making schools safe. 	<p>students and kindergarten to, at most, 26 students and ensure the class is staffed with a full-time certified teacher and a designated early childhood educator</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To address the growing issue of violence in schools: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Create a multi-stakeholder Safety and Wellbeing at School Action Table mandated to develop a comprehensive Plan ○ Expand funding and eligibility for safe school grants to allow school boards to hire additional qualified staff such as professional student support personnel, educational assistants, and other education workers into the public education system ○ Create a sector-specific regulation for the education sector under the <i>Occupational Health and Safety Act</i> that considers and addresses the unique nature of education workplaces • Invest in increased, quality
--	--	--	--	---

				professional development opportunities for educators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish an Education Task Force that includes education workers and students. The task force will provide input on education policy and funding models, and help to address critical issues, such as staff shortages and the design of special education supports and programs
Other Issues				
<i>Accessibility</i>		Signed the Accessible Ontario Pledge	Signed the Accessible Ontario Pledge	Signed the Accessible Ontario Pledge
<i>Poverty</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Double Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) payments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Permanently double Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) payments over two years, then raise each year to match inflation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Double Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) payments End “aggressive and unfair clawbacks” for people collecting the Canada Disability Benefit, and build 310,000 non-profit and co-op homes including 60,000 supportive units.
<i>Employment</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$1 billion more to expand the Skills Development Fund, for a total of \$2.5 billion, to help train more than one million workers for good-paying jobs in the skilled trades. The province will upload, streamline and accelerate all permitting 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cut youth unemployment by half by creating 40,000 new paid co-op, internship and apprenticeship positions through tax credits for employers who hire young people 	

	<p>associated with building training centres to bring more facilities online and get workers trained faster.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$100 million more for the Better Jobs Ontario Program to support vocational and skills training that will support people transitioning into in-demand jobs and support key labour market needs, including a fast-track stream for jobseekers impacted in trade-impacted sectors <p>For more, see page 12 of platform</p>			
<i>Post-Secondary</i>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminate interest on OSAP loans and raise the income threshold for repayment to \$50,000. • Cap international student enrollment at 10% for each Ontario college and university, and expand campus resources and affordable student residence options. • Fund colleges and universities fairly to help them avoid being heavily dependent on international student enrollment. 	See page 49 of platform
<i>Child Care</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver on \$10/day child care and create 53,000 new public or not-for- 		See page 47 of platform

		profit affordable child care spaces and establish regional Waitlists <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a childcare workforce strategy 		
<i>Children in Care</i>				See page 48 of platform
<i>Autism</i>				See page 48-49 of platform