

THE 4 SHADOW

SEPT 2011

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

GLEN HODGSON

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IMPORTANT DATES

- *Sept 8th—Advance polling begins*
- *Sept 19th—PD Fund request Forms*
- *Sept 23rd—PD day*
- *Oct 6th—Election Day*

Visit the District 4 website at:
www.nearnorth-osstf.org



Get out and vote!

As you are probably aware, this is a special early edition of the 4Shadow with the primary focus being the Provincial Election. It seems like just yesterday that we wrapped up the Federal campaign and now we are being launched into another round of advertising, sound bites, and messaging from the political parties as they vie for our support.

Once again, despite knowing how busy all of you are at the beginning of the school year, we are going to be asking you to get involved as much as you can with this important campaign. I am one of the senior teachers that “enjoyed” a fairly difficult first couple of years in the profession thanks to the anti-education policies of the Mike Harris government. Although I am not necessarily a fan of the other parties, it has been nice to have enjoyed some relative peace in education in the years since the right wing Conservatives were ousted.

This could end in October.

It appears that this election will be close. The declining popularity of the Liberals, coupled with an upsurge in support for the NDP and the Conservatives could result in a change in government and it might not be one that we welcome.

Curiously enough, all of the Parties seem to be shying away from talking about their goals for our education system should they get elected. This is a little scary.

So, we need to get out and show that we are a force to be reckoned with and that the educational community is politically-active and needs to be respected, both during the campaign and after the results are in.

Although we strongly support voting for candidates that have demonstrated their commitment to a strong public education system and respect towards collective agreements and bargaining, we in D4 stop short of telling you what you should do.

However, I have no problem in saying, that regardless of your political affiliation, you should get involved and make your voice heard. I also fully expect that by the time this election ends, every member of District 4 will be able to say that they exercised their democratic right and voted.

Ontario Liberals plan to extend teachers college

The Liberals plan to double the time aspiring teachers spend in college after completing their university degree, claiming it will improve their education and benefit their future students. Ontario currently requires would-be teachers to spend 40 days in the classroom as part of their training and the extra year would give teachers more classroom time to gain experience on issues like bullying and discipline.

McGuinty committed to elementary summer school

Ontario's Liberals are promising a voluntary summer program to help kids in Grade 1 through Grade 3 get ready for the school year, the latest in a series of education announcements in the week leading up to the start of the election campaign.

Student threatened with 'disciplinary action' if Gay-Straight Alliance advocacy continues

A Catholic school student has been blocked from starting a LGBT support group at her school and was told that if she continues to advocate for gay-straight alliances she will face "disciplinary action." The Principal made it very clear to the student that such groups will never be allowed in any Catholic school.

Technology-centered schools show no improvement on test scores

Millions of dollars worth of the latest technologies are being pumped into schools and classrooms with the hopes that these devices will improve student learning. The proponents suggest that digital devices let students learn at their own pace, teach skills needed in a modern economy and hold the attention of a generation weaned on gadgets. Critics argue that there has been no improvement on test scores and most schools have blind faith in technology with an overemphasis on digital skills.

Students say it's easy to get around school network security

Getting around school security to access social networks is a breeze for most students. One eighth grader, who preferred not to be named, said he coached his school administrator on how to get passed the security to access their Facebook account. "We know more about computers than the teachers do."

Whatever the question is, education is the answer.

An article, written by Orangeville trustee Bob Borden, explores the true purpose of public education. He goes on to warn, in light of the coming provincial election, that we need to vote wisely to send the message that our elected officials can not expedient policy that shifts us away from our core responsibility — our students.

Wisconsin School Districts Issues Layoff Notices To 40% Of Employees

The Wisconsin Education Association Council's executive director Dan Burkhalter argues that the decision to dismiss employees was based on budget cuts resulting from Gov. Scott Walker's "union-busting" legislation.

ELECTIONS ONTARIO IS MAKING VOTING EASY

The provincial election is just weeks away and the government is trying to bring voting methods to the 21st century to make it easier for people to cast ballots. Electors can vote in a myriad of ways over the 29 days leading to election day as follows:

- vote at the nearest returning office starting Sept. 8
- request a ballot through the mail from Elections Ontario
- take advantage of the traditional 10 days of advance polls
- by proxy (someone else votes on your behalf)
- go to your polling station on Election Day, Oct. 6



In addition, assisted voting technology is available at returning offices for people with disabilities. There will still be a paper ballot, but the technology will permit more privacy. To reach out to students and youth, Elections Ontario is allowing students to self-declare, meaning they can claim the community they are studying in as their primary residence and vote.

GET TO KNOW YOUR CANDIDATES



Parry Sound
Muskoka



Cindy Waters

<http://cindywaters.liberal.ca/>



Alex Zygniuk

<http://ndpparrysoundmuskoka.ca/>



Matt Richter

<http://www.psmgreenparty.ca/>



Norm Miller

<http://www.normmillermpp.ca/>

Nipissing



Catherine Whiting

<http://votewhiting.ca/>



Henri Giroux

<http://ontariondp.com/en/candidates/henri-giroux>



Scott Haig

<http://nipissinggreens.ca/index.php/green-party-of-ontario/scott-haig>



Victor Fedeli

<http://fedeli.com/>

Timiskaming
Cochrane



Denis Bonin

<http://denisbonin.ca/>



John Vanthof

<http://ontariondp.com/en/candidates/john-vanthof>



Tina Danese

<http://www.gpo.ca/riding/92/candidate>



Randy Aulbrook

<http://randyaulbrook.com/>

CLICK ON A PARTY LEADER TO VIEW THEIR PLATFORM VIDEO



A MESSAGE FROM KEN CORAN

The Liberal 2011 Election Platform, released just as students of all ages are beginning a new school year, confirms that Dalton McGuinty and his party are committed to ensuring that Ontario's education system remains world class.

Ken Coran, President of the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF/FEESO) stated, "The Liberal Platform acknowledges that the success of our students will shape the future of Ontario. This vision of the future, which is the main plank of the Liberal platform, ensures that students will receive a well-rounded education that equips them with the knowledge, attitudes, skills and sense of community that they will need to compete successfully in the global economy."

Coran continued, "The education platform is good news for students of all ages and their families. From early childhood to post-secondary education, it is clear that this is a solid, achievable plan based on realistic approaches and sound strategies. The platform continues to build a future for our children and avoids a short-term focus on superficial issues that distract us from our real goal—protecting and enhancing public education."

"We all want good jobs, safe and vibrant communities to live in, a dynamic public education system to learn in, a strong health care system to rely on and real opportunities to build secure futures. This platform lays out a plan for achieving those goals," concluded Coran.

\$100.00 CONTEST!

We need your email!

D4 is going to a paperless newsletter. That means, the only ways you will get the 4Shadow is by sending us your *non-board* email or by downloading it monthly from the D4 website (www.nearnorth-osstf.org). To encourage you to send us your email, we are offering a \$100.00 prize. All you need to do is send us your non-board email by the end of September. One lucky person will win a \$100.00 gift certificate from **Staples**.

What if we already have your email? No worries, your name will automatically be placed in the draw.

Your email can be passed along through your Branch President or you can email it directly to nearnorth4shadow@hotmail.com

POLITICAL ACTION PLAN

A provincial election is now just a few weeks away. As we all know, the results of this election could mean a drastic change in the course of public education in the province of Ontario. D4's Political Action Plan is to encourage members to get involved and to get out and vote. Seeing as 50% of our members were hired after the Harris regime, it would be important to encourage those members to speak with a teacher that did work under those conditions. Interestingly, an OSSTF survey revealed that around 50% of our members do not believe that this election will have a personal impact on them as a classroom teacher. That is scary.

We do have around 300 members in our TBU, which does not sound like a lot, but if each of us brought our spouse/partner, any eligible children we have, parents, friends, neighbors, and/or relatives, we could easily multiply our voting power.

Please speak with your Branch President to see how you can help!

WEBSITES OF THE MONTH	OSSTF TBU District 4 Executive 2011-2012		OSSTF DISTRICT 4 TBU
<p>www.elections.on.ca</p> <p>http://wemakevotingeasy.ca/</p> <p>www.peopleforeducation.com/</p> <p>www.ourstudents.ca/</p> <p>http://www.workingfamilies.ca/</p> <p>www.nearnorth-osstf.org</p>	<p>Glen Hodgson- President</p> <p>Santo Cucullo- VP North Region</p> <p>Rob Graham- VP South Region</p> <p>Glen Hodgson- Provincial Councillor</p> <p>Richard Wolfram- Chief Negotiator</p> <p>Christina Weirsma-Treasurer</p> <p>Chris Chabot-Secretary</p>	<p>Steve Todoroff AHSS rep</p> <p>Ray Rheault -CSS rep</p> <p>Lloyd McMillan-FJM rep</p> <p>Parker Robinson-NSS rep</p> <p>Stevan McCallum-PSHS rep</p> <p>Kevin Henehan-WFSS rep</p> <p>Anthony Loreto-WSS rep</p> <p>Chris Bell-OTBU rep</p>	<p>347 Sherbrooke St Suite 207 North Bay, Ontario P1B 2C1 Phone: 705-472-1408 Fax: 705-472-0759 Email: osstf@cogeco.net</p>
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