

# Vote crucial to education

## Orangeville Citizen

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When your children head back to school Tuesday, you can play a major positive role in what happens to them. How you vote on Oct. 10 is crucial to their education because this is an area where the Conservatives and Liberals differ dramatically in their philosophies. John Tory has already announced that he would take \$500 million out of the publicly funded school system, which educates 97 percent of our children, and give it to private religious schools.

That will take children in our community backward to the scandalous days of the last Tory regime when the government admitted that it couldn't afford textbooks for them. Class sizes will go back up, test scores would go back down.

I have heard the pride in the voices of parents in this riding whose children received the highest test scores in their board. More work needs to be done but we cannot afford to jeopardize the progress made.

Ontario has moved forward - what an amazing change it is from the days when the Tories said they couldn't afford textbooks and suggestions were made by our Tory government that teachers who were short of books could simply duplicate them using a copier.

The saddest part of the textbook fiasco is that the Tory government was telling the truth when it said it couldn't afford them. Fiscal mismanagement had them well on their way to the colossal \$5.6 billion dollar deficit they were still hiding from the public.

You have undoubtedly noticed that for the last four years under the Liberals your children have been able to go to school every day except when they were snowed in. Contrast that to the lost learning days that you and your children were subjected to the last time the Tories were in power, and the biggest school strike in North American history ensued.

If you look at the shadow cabinet John Tory has put together at Queen's Park, you will notice that its members are the very same gang Mike Harris used to short-change your children the last time around.

The work has started but is by no means finished. We need more teachers and more local schools. What your kids need after Oct. 10 is a Liberal at the decision-making table of the next McGuinty government, fighting to continue the improvements in education for children in Dufferin-Caledon. Surely, you have had enough of the kind of Tory disdain that looks on the riding as a "safe seat" where party big wigs can come to get elected and then ignore the riding and its children for years on end, or where yet another Tory backbencher will be left with no say in what goes on here.

John Tory has abandoned public education the way he abandoned this riding. His scheme to fund private segregated religious schools is a disastrous and irreversible step backwards for our schools.

I wish you all the best this school year and congratulate the teachers, students and parents in this riding that have helped build a smarter Ontario.

Betsy Hall Local Liberal Candidate